THE
COLLECTED DIALOGUES OF
PLATO
INCLUDING THE LETTERS
Edited by
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and
HUNTINGTON CAIRNS
With Introduction and Prefatory Notes
BOLLINGEN SERIES LXXI
PANTHEON BOOKS
## CONTENTS

**EDITORIAL NOTE**  
 xi

**INTRODUCTION, by Huntington Cairns**  
 xiii

**SOCRATES' DEFENSE (APOLOGY)**  
 Translated by Hugh Tredennick  
3

**CRITO**  
 Translated by Hugh Tredennick  
27

**PHAEDO**  
 Translated by Hugh Tredennick  
40

**CHARMIDES**  
 Translated by Benjamin Jowett  
99

**LACHES**  
 Translated by Benjamin Jowett  
123

**LYSIS**  
 Translated by J. Wright  
145

**EUTHYPHRO**  
 Translated by Lane Cooper  
169

**MENEXENUS**  
 Translated by Benjamin Jowett  
186

**LESSER HIPPIAS**  
 Translated by Benjamin Jowett  
200

**ION**  
 Translated by Lane Cooper  
215
viii

CONTENTS

GORGAS
Translated by W. D. Woodhead

PROTAGORAS
Translated by W. K. C. Guthrie

MENO
Translated by W. K. C. Guthrie

EUTHYDEMUS
Translated by W. H. D. Rouse

CRATYLUS
Translated by Benjamin Jowett

PHAEDRUS
Translated by R. Hackforth

SYMPHOROUS
Translated by Michael Joyce

REPUBLIC
Translated by Paul Shorey

THEAETETUS
Translated by F. M. Cornford

PARMENIDES
Translated by F. M. Cornford

SOPHIST
Translated by F. M. Cornford

STATESMAN
Translated by J. B. Skemp

PHILEBUS
Translated by R. Hackforth

TIMAEUS
Translated by Benjamin Jowett

CRITIAS
Translated by A. E. Taylor

LAWS
Translated by A. E. Taylor

APPENDIX

EPINOMIS
Translated by A. E. Taylor

GREATER HIPPIAS
Translated by Benjamin Jowett

LETTERS
Translated by L. A. Post

INDEX

1086
Socrates: What about the part of us which is mutilated by wrong actions and benefited by right ones? Is life worth living with this part ruined? Or do we believe that this part of us, whatever it may be, in which right and wrong operate, is of less importance than the body?

Crito: Certainly not.

Socrates: It is really more precious?

Crito: Much more.

Socrates: In that case, my dear fellow, what we ought to consider is not so much what people in general will say about us but how we stand with the expert in right and wrong, the one authority, who represents the actual truth. So in the first place your proposition is not correct when you say that we should consider popular opinion in questions of what is right and honorable and good, or the opposite. Of course one might object, All the same, the people have the power to put us to death.

Crito: No doubt about that! Quite true, Socrates. It is a possible objection.

Socrates: But so far as I can see, my dear fellow, the argument which we have just been through is quite unaffected by it. At the same time I should like you to consider whether we are still satisfied on this point, that the really important thing is not to live, but to live well.

Crito: Why, yes.

Socrates: And that to live well means the same thing as to live honorably or rightly?

Crito: Yes.

Socrates: Then in the light of this agreement we must consider whether or not it is right for me to try to get away without an official discharge. If it turns out to be right, we must make the attempt; if not, we must let it drop. As for the considerations you raise about expense and reputation and bringing up children, I am afraid, Crito, that they represent the reflections of the ordinary public, who put people to death, and would bring them back to life if they could, with equal indifference to reason. Our real duty, I fancy, since the argument leads that way, is to consider one question only, the one which we raised just now. Shall we be acting rightly in paying money and showing gratitude to these people who are going to rescue me, and in escaping or arranging the escape ourselves, or shall we really be acting wrongly in doing all this? If it becomes clear that such conduct is wrong, I cannot help thinking that the question whether we are sure to die, or to suffer any other ill effect for that matter, if we stand our ground and take no action, ought not to weigh with us at all in comparison with the risk of doing what is wrong.

Crito: I agree with what you say, Socrates, but I wish you would consider what we ought to do.

Socrates: Let us look at it together, my dear fellow; and if
SOCRATES: It is a fact, then, they would say, that you are breaking covenants and undertakings made with us, although you made them under no compulsion or misunderstanding, and were not compelled to decide in a limited time. You had seventy years in which you could have left the country, if you were not satisfied with us or felt that the agreements were unfair. You did not choose Sparta or Crete—your favorite models of good government—or any other Greek or foreign state. You could not have absented yourself from the city less if you had been lame or blind or decrepit in some other way. It is quite obvious that you stand by yourself above all other Athenians in your affection for this city and for us its laws. Who would care for a city without laws? And now, after all this, are you not going to stand by your agreement? Yes, you are, Socrates, if you will take our advice, and then you will at least escape being laughed at for leaving the city.

We invite you to consider what good you will do to yourself or your friends if you commit this breach of faith and stain your conscience. It is fairly obvious that the risk of being banished and either losing their citizenship or having their property confiscated will extend to your friends as well. As for yourself, if you go to one of the neighboring states, such as Thebes or Megara, which are both well governed, you will enter them as an enemy to their constitution, and all good patriots will eye you with suspicion as a destroyer of law and order. Incidentally you will confirm the opinion of the jurors who tried you that they gave a correct verdict; a destroyer of laws might very well be supposed to have a destructive influence upon young and foolish human beings. Do you intend, then, to avoid well-governed states and the higher forms of human society? And if you do, will life be worth living? Or will you approach these people and have the impudence to converse with them? What arguments will you use, Socrates? The same which you used here, that goodness and integrity, institutions and laws, are the most precious possessions of mankind? Do you not think that Socrates and everything about him will appear in a disreputable light? You certainly ought to think so.

But perhaps you will retire from this part of the world and go to Crito's friends in Thessaly? That is the home of indiscipline and laxity, and no doubt they would enjoy hearing the amusing story of how you managed to run away from prison by arraying yourself in some costume or putting on a shepherd's smock or some other conventional runaway's disguise, and altering your personal appearance. And will no one comment on the fact that an old man of your age, probably with only a short time left to live, should dare to cling so greedily to life, at the price of violating the most stringent laws? Perhaps not, if you avoid irritating anyone. Otherwise, Socrates, you will hear a good many humiliating comments. So you will live as the toady and slave of all the populace, literally 'roistering in Thessaly,' as though you had
sure that if they heard what you said, most people would think—and our fellow countrymen would heartily agree—that it was a very good hit at the philosophers to say that they are half dead already, and that they, the normal people, are quite aware that death would serve the philosophers right.

And they would be quite correct, Simmias—except in thinking that they are ‘quite aware.’ They are not at all aware in what sense true philosophers are half dead, or in what sense they deserve death, or what sort of death they deserve. But let us dismiss them and talk among ourselves. Do we believe that there is such a thing as death?

Most certainly, said Simmias, taking up the role of answering.

Is it simply the release of the soul from the body? Is death nothing more or less than this, the separate condition of the body by itself when it is released from the soul, and the separate condition by itself of the soul when released from the body? Is death anything else than this?

No, just that.

Well then, my boy, see whether you agree with me. I fancy that this will help us to find out the answer to our problem. Do you think that it is right for a philosopher to concern himself with the so-called pleasures connected with food and drink?

Certainly not, Socrates, said Simmias.

What about sexual pleasures?

No, not at all.

And what about the other attentions that we pay to our bodies? Do you think that a philosopher attaches any importance to them? I mean things like providing himself with smart clothes and shoes and other bodily ornaments; do you think that he values them or despises them—in so far as there is no real necessity for him to go in for that sort of thing?

I think the true philosopher despises them, he said.

Then it is your opinion in general that a man of this kind is not concerned with the body, but keeps his attention directed as much as he can away from it and toward the soul?

Yes, it is.

So it is clear first of all in the case of physical pleasures that the philosopher frees his soul from association with the body, so far as is possible, to a greater extent than other men?

It seems so.

And most people think, do they not, Simmias, that a man who finds no pleasure and takes no part in these things does not deserve to live, and that anyone who thinks nothing of physical pleasures has one foot in the grave?

That is perfectly true.

Now take the acquisition of knowledge. Is the body a hindrance or not, if one takes it into partnership to share an investigation?
the soul from attaining to truth and clear thinking? Is not this the person, Simmias, who will reach the goal of reality, if anybody can?

What you say is absolutely true, Socrates, said Simmias.

All these considerations, said Socrates, must surely prompt serious philosophers to review the position in some such way as this. It looks as though this were a bypath leading to the right track. So long as we keep to the body and our soul is contaminated with this imperfection, there is no chance of our ever attaining satisfactorily to our object, which we assert to be truth. In the first place, the body provides us with innumerable distractions in the pursuit of our necessary sustenance, and any diseases which attack us hinder our quest for reality. Besides, the body fills us with loves and desires and fears and all sorts of fancies and a great deal of nonsense, with the result that we literally never get an opportunity to think at all about anything. Wars and revolutions and battles are due simply and solely to the body and its desires. All wars are undertaken for the acquisition of wealth, and the reason why we have to acquire wealth is the body, because we are slaves in its service. That is why, on all these accounts, we have so little time for philosophy. Worst of all, if we do obtain any leisure from the body's claims and turn to some line of inquiry, the body intrudes once more into our investigations, interrupting, disturbing, distracting, and preventing us from getting a glimpse of the truth. We are in fact convinced that if we are ever to have pure knowledge of anything, we must get rid of the body and contemplate things by themselves with the soul by itself. It seems, to judge from the argument, that the wisdom which we desire and upon which we profess to have set our hearts will be attainable only when we are dead, and not in our lifetime. If no pure knowledge is possible in the company of the body, then either it is totally impossible to acquire knowledge, or it is only possible after death, because it is only then that the soul will be separate and independent of the body. It seems that so long as we are alive, we shall continue closest to knowledge if we avoid as much as we can all contact and association with the body, except when they are absolutely necessary, and instead of allowing ourselves to become infected with its nature, purify ourselves from it until God himself gives us deliverance. In this way, by keeping ourselves uncontaminated by the follies of the body, we shall probably reach the company of others like ourselves and gain direct knowledge of all that is pure and uncontaminated—that is, presumably, of truth. For one who is not pure himself to attain to the realm of purity would no doubt be a breach of universal justice.

Something to this effect, Simmias, is what I imagine all real lovers of learning must think themselves and say to one another. Don't you agree with me?

Most emphatically, Socrates.
Very well, then, said Socrates, if this is true, there is good reason for anyone who reaches the end of this journey which lies before me to hope that there, if anywhere, he will attain the object to which all our efforts have been directed during my past life. So this journey which is now ordained for me carries a happy prospect for any other man also who believes that his mind has been prepared by purification.

It does indeed, said Simmias.

And purification, as we saw some time ago in our discussion, consists in separating the soul as much as possible from the body, and accustoming it to withdraw from all contact with the body and concentrate itself by itself, and to have its dwelling, so far as it can, both now and in the future, alone by itself, freed from the shackles of the body. Does not that follow?

Yes, it does, said Simmias.

Is not what we call death a freeing and separation of soul from body?

Certainly, he said.

And the desire to free the soul is found chiefly, or rather only, in the true philosopher. In fact the philosopher's occupation consists precisely in the freeing and separation of soul from body. Isn't that so?

Apparently.

Well then, as I said at the beginning, if a man has trained himself throughout his life to live in a state as close as possible to death, would it not be ridiculous for him to be distressed when death comes to him?

It would, of course.

Then it is a fact, Simmias, that true philosophers make dying their profession, and that to them of all men death is least alarming. Look at it in this way. If they are thoroughly dissatisfied with the body, and long to have their souls independent of it, when this happens would it not be entirely unreasonable to be frightened and distressed? Would they not naturally be glad to set out for the place where there is a prospect of attaining the object of their lifelong desire—which is wisdom—and of escaping from an unwelcome association? Surely there are many who have chosen of their own free will to follow dead lovers and wives and sons to the next world, in the hope of seeing and meeting there the persons whom they loved. If this is so, will a true lover of wisdom who has firmly grasped this same conviction—that he will never attain to wisdom worthy of the name elsewhere than in the next world—will he be grieved at dying? Will he not be glad to make that journey? We must suppose so, my dear boy, that is, if he is a real philosopher, because then he will be of the firm belief that he will never find wisdom in all its purity in any other place. If this is so, would it not be quite unreasonable, as I said just now, for such a man to be afraid of death?
that if this was so, it was a sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must exist in some place from which they are reborn.

It seems to me, Socrates, he said, that this follows necessarily from our agreement.

I think there is another way too, Cebes, in which you can see that we were not wrong in our agreement. If there were not a constant correspondence in the process of generation between the two sets of opposites, going round in a sort of cycle, if generation were a straight path to the opposite extreme without any return to the starting point or any deflection, do you realize that in the end everything would have the same quality and reach the same state, and change would cease altogether?

What do you mean?

Nothing difficult to understand, replied Socrates. For example, if 'falling asleep' existed, and 'waking up' did not balance it by making something come out of sleep, you must realize that in the end everything would make Endymion look foolish. He would be nowhere, because the whole world would be in the same state—asleep. And if everything were combined and nothing separated, we should soon have Anaxagoras' 'all things together.' In just the same way, my dear Cebes, if everything that has some share of life were to die, and if after death the dead remained in that form and did not come to life again, would it not be quite inevitable that in the end everything should be dead and nothing alive? If living things came from other living things, and the living things died, what possible means could prevent their number from being exhausted by death?

None that I can see, Socrates, said Cebes. What you say seems to be perfectly true.

Yes, Cebes, he said, if anything is true, I believe that this is, and we were not mistaken in our agreement upon it. Coming to life again is a fact, and it is a fact that the living come from the dead, and a fact that the souls of the dead exist.

Besides, Socrates, rejoined Cebes, there is that theory which you have often described to us—that what we call learning is really just recollection. If that is true, then surely what we recollect now we must have learned at some time before, which is impossible unless our souls existed somewhere before they entered this human shape. So in that way too it seems likely that the soul is immortal.

How did the proofs of that theory go, Cebes? broke in Simmias. Remind me, because at the moment I can’t quite remember.

One very good argument, said Cebes, is that when people are asked questions, if the question is put in the right way they can give a perfectly correct answer, which they could not possibly do unless they had some knowledge and a proper grasp of the subject. And then if you confront people with a diagram or anything like that, the way in which they react is an unmistakable proof that the theory is correct.
point which you mention has been proved already. But in spite of this I believe that you and Simmias would like to spin out the discussion still more. You are afraid, as children are, that when the soul emerges from the body the wind may really puff it away and scatter it, especially when a person does not die on a calm day but with a gale blowing.

Cebes laughed. Suppose that we are afraid, Socrates, he said, and try to convince us. Or rather don’t suppose that it is we that are afraid. Probably even in us there is a little boy who has these childish terrors. Try to persuade him not to be afraid of death as though it were a bogy.

What you should do, said Socrates, is to say a magic spell over him every day until you have charmed his fears away.

But, Socrates, said Simmias, where shall we find a magician who understands these spells now that you... are leaving us?

Greece is a large country, Cebes, he replied, which must have good men in it, and there are many foreign races too. You must ransack all of them in your search for this magician, without sparing money or trouble, because you could not spend your money more opportunely on any other object. And you must search also by your own united efforts, because it is probable that you would not easily find anyone better fitted for the task.

We will see to that, said Cebes. But let us return to the point where we left off, if you have no objection.

Of course not. Why should I?

Thank you, said Cebes.

We ought, I think, said Socrates, to ask ourselves this. What sort of thing is it that would naturally suffer the fate of being dispersed? For what sort of thing should we fear this fate, and for what should we not? When we have answered this, we should next consider to which class the soul belongs, and then we shall know whether to feel confidence or fear about the fate of our souls.

Quite true.

Would you not expect a composite object or a natural compound to be liable to break up where it was put together? And ought not anything which is really in composite to be the one thing of all others which is not affected in this way?

That seems to be the case, said Cebes.

Is it not extremely probable that what is always constant and invariable is in composite, and what is inconstant and variable is composite?

That is how it seems to me.

Then let us return to the same examples which we were discussing before. Does that absolute reality which we define in our discussions remain always constant and invariable, or not? Does absolute equality or beauty or any other independent entity which really exists...
ever admit change of any kind? Or does each one of these uniform
and independent entities remain always constant and invariable,
ever admitting any alteration in any respect or in any sense?
They must be constant and invariable, Socrates, said Cebes.
Well, what about the concrete instances of beauty—such as men,
horses, clothes, and so on—or of equality, or any other members of
a class corresponding to an absolute entity? Are they constant, or are
they, on the contrary, scarcely ever in the same relation in any sense
either to themselves or to one another?
With them, Socrates, it is just the opposite; they are never free
from variation.
And these concrete objects you can touch and see and perceive
by your other senses, but those constant entities you cannot possibly
apprehend except by thinking; they are invisible to our sight.
That is perfectly true, said Cebes.
So you think that we should assume two classes of things, one
visible and the other invisible?
Yes, we should.
The invisible being invariable, and the visible never being the
same?
Yes, we should assume that too.
Well, now, said Socrates, are we not part body, part soul?
Certainly.
Then to which class do we say that the body would have the
closer resemblance and relation?
Quite obviously to the visible.
And the soul, is it visible or invisible?
Invisible to men, at any rate, Socrates, he said.
But surely we have been speaking of things visible or invisible to
our human nature. Do you think that we had some other nature in
view?
No, human nature.
What do we say about the soul, then? Is it visible or invisible?
Not visible.
Invisible, then?
Yes.
So soul is more like the invisible, and body more like the visible?
That follows inevitably, Socrates.
Did we not say some time ago that when the soul uses the instru-
mentality of the body for any inquiry, whether through sight or
hearing or any other sense—because using the body implies using
the senses—it is drawn away by the body into the realm of the varia-
ble, and loses its way and becomes confused and dizzy, as though it
were fuddled, through contact with things of a similar nature?
Certainly.
But when it investigates by itself, it passes into the realm of the
pure and everlasting and immortal and changeless, and being of a
kindred nature, when it is once independent and free from interfer-
ence, consorts with it always and strays no longer, but remains, in
that realm of the absolute, constant and invariable, through contact
with beings of a similar nature. And this condition of the soul we call
wisdom.

An excellent description, and perfectly true, Socrates.

Very well, then, in the light of all that we have said, both now
and before, to which class do you think that the soul bears the closer
resemblance and relation?

I think, Socrates, said Cebes, that even the dullest person would
agree, from this line of reasoning, that the soul is in every possible
way more like the invariable than the variable.

And the body?
To the other.

Look at it in this way too. When soul and body are both in the
same place, nature teaches the one to serve and be subject, the other
to rule and govern. In this relation which do you think resembles
the divine and which the mortal part? Don’t you think that it is the
nature of the divine to rule and direct, and that of the mortal to be
subject and serve?

I do.

Then which does the soul resemble?

Obviously, Socrates, soul resembles the divine, and body the
mortal.

Now, Cebes, he said, see whether this is our conclusion from all
that we have said. The soul is most like that which is divine, im-
mortal, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, and ever self-consistent and
invariable, whereas body is most like that which is human, mortal,
multiform, unintelligible, dissoluble, and never self-consistent. Can
we adduce any conflicting argument, my dear Cebes, to show that this
is not so?

No, we cannot.

Very well, then, in that case is it not natural for body to disinte-
grate rapidly, but for soul to be quite or very nearly indissoluble?

Certainly.

Of course you know that when a person dies, although it is natu-
ral for the visible and physical part of him, which lies here in the
visible world and which we call his corpse, to decay and fall to pieces
and be dissipated, none of this happens to it immediately. It remains
as it was for quite a long time, even if death takes place when the
body is well nourished and in the warm season. Indeed, when the
body is dried and embalmed, as in Egypt, it remains almost intact for
an incredible time, and even if the rest of the body decays, some parts
of it—the bones and sinews and anything else like them—are prac-
tically everlasting. That is so, is it not?
But the soul, the invisible part, which goes away to a place that is, like itself, glorious, pure, and invisible—the true Hades or unseen world—into the presence of the good and wise God, where, if God so wills, my soul must shortly go—will it, if its very nature is such as I have described, be dispersed and destroyed at the moment of its release from the body, as is the popular view? Far from it, my dear Simmias and Cebes. The truth is much more like this. If at its release the soul is pure and carries with it no contamination of the body, because it has never willingly associated with it in life, but has shunned it and kept itself separate as its regular practice—in other words, if it has pursued philosophy in the right way and really practiced how to face death easily—this is what ‘practicing death’ means, isn’t it? Most decidedly.

Very well, if this is its condition, then it departs to that place which is, like itself, invisible, divine, immortal, and wise, where, on its arrival, happiness awaits it, and release from uncertainty and folly, from fears and uncontrolled desires, and all other human evils, and where, as they say of the initiates in the Mysteries, it really spends the rest of time with God. Shall we adopt this view, Cebes, or some other?

This one, by all means, said Cebes.

But, I suppose, if at the time of its release the soul is tainted and impure, because it has always associated with the body and cared for it and loved it, and has been so beguiled by the body and its passions and pleasures that nothing seems real to it but those physical things which can be touched and seen and eaten and drunk and used for sexual enjoyment, and if it is accustomed to hate and fear and avoid what is invisible and hidden from our eyes, but intelligible and comprehensible by philosophy—if the soul is in this state, do you think that it will escape independent and uncontaminated?

That would be quite impossible, he said.

On the contrary, it will, I imagine, be permeated by the corporeal, which fellowship and intercourse with the body will have ingrained in its very nature through constant association and long practice.

Certainly.

And we must suppose, my dear fellow, that the corporeal is heavy, oppressive, earthly, and visible. So the soul which is tainted by its presence is weighed down and dragged back into the visible world, through fear, as they say, of Hades or the invisible, and hovers about tombs and graveyards. The shadowy apparitions which have actually been seen there are the ghosts of those souls which have not got clear away, but still retain some portion of the visible, which is why they can be seen.

That seems likely enough, Socrates.

Yes, it does, Cebes. Of course these are not the souls of the good,
but of the wicked, and they are compelled to wander about these places as a punishment for their bad conduct in the past. They continue wandering until at last, through craving for the corporeal, which unceasingly pursues them, they are imprisoned once more in a body. And as you might expect, they are attached to the same sort of character or nature which they have developed during life.

What sort do you mean, Socrates?

Well, those who have cultivated gluttony or selfishness or drunkenness, instead of taking pains to avoid them, are likely to assume the form of donkeys and other perverse animals. Don’t you think so?

Yes, that is very likely.

And those who have deliberately preferred a life of irresponsible lawlessness and violence become wolves and hawks and kites, unless we can suggest any other more likely animals.

No, the ones which you mention are exactly right.

So it is easy to imagine into what sort of animals all the other kinds of soul will go, in accordance with their conduct during life.

Yes, certainly.

I suppose that the happiest people, and those who reach the best destination, are the ones who have cultivated the goodness of an ordinary citizen—what is called self-control and integrity—which is acquired by habit and practice, without the help of philosophy and reason.

How are these the happiest?

Because they will probably pass into some other kind of social and disciplined creature like bees, wasps, and ants, or even back into the human race again, becoming decent citizens.

Very likely.

But no soul which has not practiced philosophy, and is not absolutely pure when it leaves the body, may attain to the divine nature; that is only for the lover of wisdom. This is the reason, my dear Simmias and Cebes, why true philosophers abstain from all bodily desires and withstand them and do not yield to them. It is not because they are afraid of financial loss or poverty, like the average man who thinks of money first, nor because they shrink from dishonor and a bad reputation, like those who are ambitious for distinction and authority.

No, those would be unworthy motives, Socrates, said Cebes.

They would indeed, he agreed. And so, Cebes, those who care about their souls and do not subordinate them to the body dissociate themselves firmly from these others and refuse to accompany them on their haphazard journey, and, believing that it is wrong to oppose philosophy with her offer of liberation and purification, they turn and follow her wherever she leads.

What do you mean, Socrates?
I will explain, he said. Every seeker after wisdom knows that up to the time when philosophy takes it over his soul is a helpless prisoner, chained hand and foot in the body, compelled to view reality not directly but only through its prison bars, and wallowing in utter ignorance. And philosophy can see that the imprisonment is ingeniously effected by the prisoner’s own active desire, which makes him first accessory to his own confinement. Well, philosophy takes over the soul in this condition and by gentle persuasion tries to set it free. She points out that observation by means of the eyes and ears and all the other senses is entirely deceptive, and she urges the soul to refrain from using them unless it is necessary to do so, and encourages it to collect and concentrate itself by itself, trusting nothing but its own independent judgment upon objects considered in themselves, and attributing no truth to anything which it views indirectly as being subject to variation, because such objects are sensible and visible but what the soul itself sees is intelligible and invisible. Now the soul of the true philosopher feels that it must not reject this opportunity for release, and so it abjures as far as possible from pleasures and desires and griefs, because it reflects that the result of giving way to pleasure or fear or desire is not as might be supposed the trivial misfortune of becoming ill or wasting money through self-indulgence, but the last and worst calamity of all, which the sufferer does not recognize.

What is that, Socrates? asked Cebes.

When anyone’s soul feels a keen pleasure or pain it cannot help supposing that whatever causes the most violent emotion is the plainest and truest reality, which it is not. It is chiefly visible things that have this effect, isn’t it?

Quite so.

Is it not on this sort of occasion that soul passes most completely into the bondage of body?

How do you make that out?

Because every pleasure or pain has a sort of rivet with which it fastens the soul to the body and pins it down and makes it corporeal, accepting as true whatever the body certifies. The result of agreeing with the body and finding pleasure in the same things is, I imagine, that it cannot help becoming like it in character and training, so that it can never get entirely away to the unseen world, but is always saturated with the body when it sets out, and so soon falls back again into another body, where it takes root and grows. Consequently it is excluded from all fellowship with the pure and uniform and divine.

Yes, that is perfectly true, Socrates, said Cebes.

It is for these reasons, Cebes, that true philosophers exhibit self-control and courage—not for the reasons which are generally supposed. Or do you think that the popular view is right?

No, certainly not.
No, indeed. A philosopher's soul will take the view which I have described. It will not first expect to be set free by philosophy, and then allow pleasure and pain to reduce it once more to bondage, thus taking upon itself an endless task, like Penelope when she undid her own weaving. No, this soul secures immunity from its desires by following reason and abiding always in her company, and by contemplating the true and divine and un conjecturable, and drawing inspiration from it, because such a soul believes that this is the right way to live while life endures, and that after death it reaches a place which is kindred and similar to its own nature, and there is rid forever of human ills. After such a training, my dear Simmias and Cebes, the soul can have no grounds for fearing that on its separation from the body it will be blown away and scattered by the winds, and so disappear into thin air, and cease to exist altogether.

There was silence for some time after Socrates had said this. He himself, to judge from his appearance, was still occupied with the argument which he had just been stating, and so were most of us, but Simmias and Cebes went on talking in a low voice.

When Socrates noticed them he said, Why, do you feel that my account is inadequate? Of course it is still open to a number of doubts and objections, if you want to examine it in detail. If it is something else that you two are considering, never mind, but if you feel any difficulty about our discussion, don't hesitate to put forward your own views, and point out any way in which you think that my account could be improved. And by all means make use of my services too, if you think I can help at all to solve the difficulty.

Very well, Socrates, said Simmias, I will be quite open with you. We have both been feeling difficulties for some time, and each of us has been urging the other to ask questions. We are anxious to have your answers, but we did not like to bother you, for fear of annoying you in your present misfortune.

When Socrates heard this he laughed gently and said, I am surprised at you, Simmias. I shall certainly find it difficult to convince the outside world that I do not regard my present lot as a misfortune if I cannot even convince you, and you are afraid that I am more irritable now than I used to be. Evidently you think that I have less insight into the future than a swan; because when these birds feel that the time has come for them to die, they sing more loudly and sweetly than they have sung in all their lives before, for joy that they are going away into the presence of the god whose servants they are. It is quite wrong for human beings to make out that the swans sing their last song as an expression of grief at their approaching end. People who say this are misled by their own fear of death, and fail to reflect that no bird sings when it is hungry or cold or distressed in any other way—not even the nightingale or swallow or hoopoe, whose song is supposed to be a lament. In my opinion neither they nor the swans
me that I myself had formed the same opinion. What I really need now is another proof, right from the beginning, to convince me that when a man dies his soul does not die with him. Tell me, how did Socrates pick up the trail again? And did he show any sign of being upset, like the rest of you, or did he quietly come to the rescue of the argument? And did he rescue it effectively or not? Tell us every detail as accurately as you can.

PHAEDO: I can assure you, Echecrates, that Socrates often astonished me, but I never admired him more than on this particular occasion. That he should have been ready with an answer was, I suppose, nothing unusual, but what impressed me was, first, the pleasant, kindly, appreciative way in which he received the two boys’ objections, then his quick recognition of how the turn of the discussion had affected us, and lastly the skill with which he healed our wounds, rallied our scattered forces, and encouraged us to join him in pursuing the inquiry.

ECHECRATES: How did he do that?

PHAEDO: I will tell you. I happened to be sitting to the right of his bed, on a footstool, and he was much higher than I was. So he laid his hand on my head and gathered up the curls on my neck—he never missed a chance of teasing me about my curls—and said, "Tomorrow, I suppose, Phaedo, you will cut off this beautiful hair."

I expect so, Socrates, I said.

Not if you take my advice.

Why not? I asked.

Because I shall cut off mine today, and you ought to do the same, said Socrates, that is, if we let our argument die and fail to bring it to life again. What is more, if I were you, and let the truth escape me, I should make a vow like the Argives’ never to let my hair grow again until I had defeated the argument of Simmias and Cebes in a return battle.

But, I objected, not even Heracles can take on two at once.

You had better call upon me to be your Iolaus, he said, while the daylight lasts.

Very well, I said, but I am Iolaus appealing to Heracles, not Heracles to Iolaus.

The effect will be just the same, he said. But first there is one danger that we must guard against.

What sort of danger? I asked.

Of becoming misologic, he said, in the sense that people become misanthropic. No greater misfortune could happen to anyone than that of developing a dislike for argument. Misology and misanthropy arise in just the same way. Misanthropy is induced by believing in somebody quite uncritically. You assume that a person is absolutely truthful and sincere and reliable, and a little later you find that he is shoddy and unreliable. Then the same thing happens again. After
There is no question of its conflicting with them, either in movement or in sound or in any other way.

None at all.

Very well, then, is it not the nature of every attunement to be an attunement in so far as it is tuned?

I don't understand.

Surely, said Socrates, if it is tuned more, that is, in a greater degree—supposing this to be possible—it must be more of an attunement, and if it is tuned less, that is, in a lesser degree, it must be less of an attunement.

Quite so.

And is this the case with the soul—that one soul is, even minutely, more or less of a soul than another?

Not in the least.

Now please give me your closest attention, said Socrates. Do we say that one kind of soul possesses intelligence and goodness, and is good, and that another possesses stupidity and wickedness, and is evil? And is this true?

Yes, it is true.

Then how will a person who holds that the soul is an attunement account for the presence in it of goodness and badness? Will he describe them as yet another attunement or lack of it? Will he say that the good soul is in tune, and not only is an attunement itself, but contains another, whereas the bad soul is out of tune and does not contain another attunement?

I really could not say, replied Simmias, but obviously anyone who held that view would have to say something of the sort.

But we have already agreed, said Socrates, that no soul can be more or less of a soul than another, and this is the same as agreeing that no attunement can be more of an attunement and in a greater degree, or less of an attunement and in a lesser degree, than another. Is that not so?

Certainly.

And that what is neither more nor less of an attunement is neither more nor less in tune. Is that so?

Yes.

Does that which is neither more nor less in tune contain a greater or smaller proportion of attunement, or an equal one?

An equal one.

Then since no soul is any more or less than just a soul, it is neither more nor less in tune.

That is so.

Under this condition it cannot contain a greater proportion of discord or attunement.

Certainly not.

And again under this condition can one soul contain a greater
It was a wonderful hope, my friend, but it was quickly dashed. As I read on I discovered that the fellow made no use of mind and assigned to it no causality for the order of the world, but adduced causes like air and æther and water and many other absurdities. It seemed to me that he was just about as inconsistent as if someone were to say, The cause of everything that Socrates does is mind—and then, in trying to account for my several actions, said first that the reason why I am lying here now is that my body is composed of bones and sinews, and that the bones are rigid and separated at the joints, but the sinews are capable of contraction and relaxation, and form an envelope for the bones with the help of the flesh and skin, the latter holding all together, and since the bones move freely in their joints the sinews by relaxing and contracting enable me somehow to bend my limbs, and that is the cause of my sitting here in a bent position. Or again, if he tried to account in the same way for my conversing with you, adducing causes such as sound and air and hearing and a thousand others, and never troubled to mention the real reasons, which are that since Athens has thought it better to condemn me, therefore I for my part have thought it better to sit here, and more right to stay and submit to whatever penalty she orders. Because, by dog, I fancy that these sinews and bones would have been in the neighborhood of Megara or Boeotia long ago—impelled by a conviction of what is best!—if I did not think that it was more right and honorable to submit to whatever penalty my country orders rather than take to my heels and run away. But to call things like that causes is too absurd. If it were said that without such bones and sinews and all the rest of them I should not be able to do what I think is right, it would be true. But to say that it is because of them that I do what I am doing, and not through choice of what is best—although my actions are controlled by mind—would be a very lax and inaccurate form of expression. Fancy being unable to distinguish between the cause of a thing and the condition without which it could not be a cause! It is this latter, as it seems to me, that most people, groping in the dark, call a cause—attaching to it a name to which it has no right. That is why one person surrounds the earth with a vortex, and so keeps it in place by means of the heavens, and another props it up on a pedestal of air, as though it were a wide platter. As for a power which keeps things disposed at any given moment in the best possible way, they neither look for it nor believe that it has any supernatural force. They imagine that they will someday find a more mighty and immortal and all-sustaining Atlas, and they do not think that anything is really bound and held together by goodness or moral obligation. For my part, I should be delighted to learn about the workings of such a cause from anyone, but since I have been denied knowledge of it, and have been unable either to discover it myself or to learn about it from another, I have worked out my own
makeshift approach to the problem of causation. Would you like me to give you a demonstration of it, Cebes?

I should like it very much indeed.

Well, after this, said Socrates, when I was worn out with my physical investigations, it occurred to me that I must guard against the same sort of risk which people run when they watch and study an eclipse of the sun; they really do sometimes injure their eyes, unless they study its reflection in water or some other medium. I conceived of something like this happening to myself, and I was afraid that by observing objects with my eyes and trying to comprehend them with each of my other senses I might blind my soul altogether. So I decided that I must have recourse to theories, and use them in trying to discover the truth about things. Perhaps my illustration is not quite apt, because I do not at all admit that an inquiry by means of theory employs 'images' any more than one which confines itself to facts. But however that may be, I started off in this way, and in every case I first lay down the theory which I judge to be soundest, and then whatever seems to agree with it—with regard either to causes or to anything else—I assume to be true, and whatever does not I assume not to be true. But I should like to express my meaning more clearly, because at present I don't think that you understand.

No, indeed I don't, said Cebes, not a bit.

Well, said Socrates, what I mean is this, and there is nothing new about it. I have always said it; in fact I have never stopped saying it, especially in the earlier part of this discussion. As I am going to try to explain to you the theory of causation which I have worked out myself, I propose to make a fresh start from those principles of mine which you know so well—that is, I am assuming the existence of absolute beauty and goodness and magnitude and all the rest of them. If you grant my assumption and admit that they exist, I hope with their help to explain causation to you, and to find a proof that soul is immortal.

Certainly I grant it, said Cebes. You need lose no time in drawing your conclusion.

Then consider the next step, and see whether you share my opinion. It seems to me that whatever else is beautiful apart from absolute beauty is beautiful because it partakes of that absolute beauty, and for no other reason. Do you accept this kind of causality?

Yes, I do.

Well, now, that is as far as my mind goes; I cannot understand these other ingenious theories of causation. If someone tells me that the reason why a given object is beautiful is that it has a gorgeous color or shape or any other such attribute, I disregard all these other explanations—I find them all confusing—and I cling simply and straightforwardly and no doubt foolishly to the explanation that the one thing that makes that object beautiful is the presence in it or
association with it, in whatever way the relation comes about, of
absolute beauty. I do not go so far as to insist upon the precise details
—only upon the fact that it is by beauty that beautiful things are
beautiful. This, I feel, is the safest answer for me or for anyone else to
give, and I believe that while I hold fast to this I cannot fall; it is safe
e for me or for anyone else to answer that it is by beauty that beautiful
things are beautiful. Don't you agree?

Yes, I do.

Then is it also by largeness that large things are large and larger
things larger, and by smallness that smaller things are smaller?

Yes.

So you too, like myself, would refuse to accept the statement
that one man is taller than another 'by a head,' and that the shorter
man is shorter by the same. You would protest that the only view
which you yourself can hold is that whatever is taller than some­
thing else is so simply by tallness—that is, because of tallness—
and that what is shorter is so simply by shortness, that is, because of
shortness. You would be afraid, I suppose, that if you said that one
man is taller than another by a head, you would be faced by a logi­
cal objection—first that the taller should be taller and the shorter
shorter by the same thing, and secondly that the taller person should
be taller by a head, which is a short thing, and that it is unnatural that
a man should be made tall by something short. Isn't that so?

Cebes laughed and said, Yes, it is.

Then you would be afraid to say that ten is more than eight 'by
two,' or that two is the cause of its excess over eight, instead of
saying that it is more than eight by, or because of, being a larger num­
ber, and you would be afraid to say that a length of two feet is
greater than one foot by a half, instead of saying that it is greater by
its larger size—because there is the same danger here too?

Quite so.

Suppose next that we add one to one. You would surely avoid say­
ing that the cause of our getting two is the addition, or in the case
c of a divided unit, the division. You would loudly proclaim that you
know of no other way in which any given object can come into being
except by participation in the reality peculiar to its appropriate uni­
versal, and that in the cases which I have mentioned you recognize
no other cause for the coming into being of two than participation in
duality, and that whatever is to become two must participate in this,
and whatever is to become one must participate in unity. You would
dismiss these divisions and additions and other such niceties, leaving
them for persons wiser than yourself to use in their explanations,
while you, being nervous of your own shadow, as the saying is, and of
your inexperience, would hold fast to the security of your hypothesis
e and make your answers accordingly. If anyone should fasten upon
the hypothesis itself, you would disregard him and refuse to answer
till you could consider whether its consequences were mutually con-
I am saying all this because I want you to share my point of view. It seems to me not only that the form of tallness itself absolutely declines to be short as well as tall, but also that the tallness which is in us never admits smallness and declines to be surpassed. It does one of two things. Either it gives way and withdraws as its opposite shortness approaches, or it has already ceased to exist by the time that the other arrives. It cannot stand its ground and receive the quality of shortness in the same way as I myself have done. If it did, it would become different from what it was before, whereas I have not lost my identity by acquiring the quality of shortness—I am the same man, only short—but my tallness could not endure to be short instead of tall. In the same way the shortness that is in us declines ever to become or be tall, nor will any other quality, while still remaining what it was, at the same time become or be the opposite quality; in such a situation it either withdraws or ceases to exist.

I agree with you entirely, said Cebes.

At this point one of the company—I can't remember distinctly who it was—said, Look here! Didn't we agree, earlier in the discussion, on the exact opposite of what you are saying now—that the bigger comes from the smaller and the smaller from the bigger, and that it is precisely from their opposites that opposites come? Now the view seems to be that this is impossible.

Socrates had listened with his head turned toward the speaker. It was brave of you to refresh my memory, he said, but you don't realize the difference between what we are saying now and what we said then. Then we were saying that opposite things come from opposite things; now we are saying that the opposite itself can never become opposite to itself—neither the opposite which is in us nor that which is in the real world. Then, my friend, we were speaking about objects which possess opposite qualities, and calling them by the names of the latter, but now we are speaking about the qualities themselves, from whose presence in them the objects which are called after them derive their names. We maintain that the opposites themselves would absolutely refuse to tolerate coming into being from one another.

As he spoke he looked at Cebes. I suppose that nothing in what he said worried you too, Cebes?

No, not this time, said Cebes, though I don't deny that a good many other things do.

So we are agreed upon this as a general principle, that an opposite can never be opposite to itself.

Absolutely.

Then consider this point too, and see whether you agree about it too. Do you admit that there are such things as heat and cold?

Yes, I do.

Do you think they are the same as snow and fire?

Certainly not.
In the same way I assume that if what is not cold were imperishable, when anything cold approached fire, it could never go out or cease to exist; it would depart and be gone unharmed.

That must be so.

b Are we not bound to say the same of the immortal? If what is immortal is also imperishable, it is impossible that at the approach of death soul should cease to be. It follows from what we have already said that it cannot admit death, or be dead—just as we said that three cannot be even, nor can odd; nor can fire be cold, nor can the heat which is in the fire. But, it may be objected, granting, as has been agreed, that odd does not become even at the approach of even, why should it not cease to exist, and something even take its place? In reply to this we could not insist that the odd does not cease to exist—because what is not even is not imperishable—but if this were conceded, we could easily insist that, at the approach of even, odd and three retire and depart. And we could be equally insistent about fire and heat and all the rest of them, could we not?

c Certainly.

So now in the case of the immortal, if it is conceded that this is also imperishable, soul will be imperishable as well as immortal.

d Otherwise we shall need another argument.

There is no need on that account, said Cebes. If what is immortal and eternal cannot avoid destruction, it is hard to see how anything else can.

And I imagine that it would be admitted by everyone, said Socrates, that God at any rate, and the form of life, and anything else that is immortal, can never cease to exist.

Yes indeed, by all men certainly, and even more, I suppose, by the gods.

e Then since what is immortal is also indestructible, if soul is really immortal, surely it must be imperishable too.

Quite inevitably.

So it appears that when death comes to a man, the mortal part of him dies, but the immortal part retires at the approach of death and escapes unharmed and indestructible.

Evidently.

Then it is as certain as anything can be, Cebes, that soul is immortal and imperishable, and that our souls will really exist in the next world.

Well, Socrates, said Cebes, for my part I have no criticisms, and no doubt about the truth of your argument. But if Simmias here or anyone else has any criticism to make, he had better not keep it to himself, because if anyone wants to say or hear any more about this subject, I don't see to what other occasion he is to defer it.

As a matter of fact, said Simmias, I have no doubts myself either now, in view of what you have just been saying. All the same, the
company with it or guide it, and it wanders alone in utter desolation until certain times have passed, whereupon it is borne away of necessity to its proper habitation. But every soul that has lived throughout its life in purity and soberness enjoys divine company and guidance, and each inhabits the place which is proper to it. There are many wonderful regions in the earth, and the earth itself is neither in nature nor in size such as geographers suppose it to be—so someone has assured me.

How can you say that, Socrates? said Simmias. I myself have heard a great many theories about the earth, but not this belief of yours. I should very much like to hear it.

Why, really, Simmias, I don't think that it calls for the skill of a Glaucus to explain what my belief is, but to prove that it is true seems to me to be too difficult even for a Glaucus. In the first place I should probably be unable to do it, and in the second, even if I knew how, it seems to me, Simmias, that my life is too short for a long explanation. However, there is no reason why I should not tell you what I believe about the appearance of the earth and regions in it.

Well, said Simmias, even that will do. This is what I believe, then, said Socrates. In the first place, if the earth is spherical and in the middle of the heavens, it needs neither air nor any other such force to keep it from falling; the uniformity of the heavens and the equilibrium of the earth itself are sufficient to support it. Any body in equilibrium, if it is set in the middle of a uniform medium, will have no tendency to sink or rise in any direction more than another, and having equal impulses will remain suspended. This is the first article of my belief.

And quite right too, said Simmias.

Next, said Socrates, I believe that it is vast in size, and that we who dwell between the river Phasis and the Pillars of Hercules inhabit only a minute portion of it—we live round the sea like ants or frogs round a pond—and there are many other peoples inhabiting similar regions. There are many hollow places all round the earth, places of every shape and size, into which the water and mist and air have collected. But the earth itself is as pure as the starry heaven in which it lies, and which is called aether by most of our authorities. The water, mist, and air are the dregs of this aether, and they are continually draining into the hollow places in the earth. We do not realize that we are living in its hollows, but assume that we are living on the earth's surface. Imagine someone living in the depths of the sea. He might think that he was living on the surface, and seeing the sun and the other heavenly bodies through the water; he might think that the sea was the sky. He might be so sluggish and feeble that he had never reached the top of the sea, never emerged and raised his head from the sea into this world of ours, and seen for himself—or even heard
from someone who had seen it—how much purer and more beautiful it really is than the one in which his people lives. Now we are in just the same position. Although we live in a hollow of the earth, we assume that we are living on the surface, and we call the air heaven, as though it were the heaven through which the stars move. And this point too is the same, that we are too feeble and sluggish to make our way out to the upper limit of the air. If someone could reach to the summit, or put on wings and fly aloft, when he put up his head he would see the world above, just as fishes see our world when they put up their heads out of the sea. And if his nature were able to bear the sight, he would recognize that that is the true heaven and the true light and the true earth. For this earth and its stones and all the regions in which we live are marred and corroded, just as in the sea everything is corroded by the brine, and there is no vegetation worth mentioning, and scarcely any degree of perfect formation, but only caverns and sand and measureless mud, and tracts of slime wherever there is earth as well, and nothing is in the least worthy to be judged beautiful by our standards. But the things above excel those of our world to a degree far greater still. If this is the right moment for an imaginative description, Simmias, it will be worth your while to hear what it is really like upon the earth which lies beneath the heavens.

Yes, indeed, Socrates, said Simmias, it would be a great pleasure to us, at any rate, to hear this description.

Well, my dear boy, said Socrates, the real earth, viewed from above, is supposed to look like one of these balls made of twelve pieces of skin, variegated and marked out in different colors, of which the colors which we know are only limited samples, like the paints which artists use, but there the whole earth is made up of such colors, and others far brighter and purer still. One section is a marvelously beautiful purple, and another is golden. All that is white of it is whiter than chalk or snow, and the rest is similarly made up of the other colors, still more and lovelier than those which we have seen. Even these very hollows in the earth, full of water and air, assume a kind of color as they gleam amid the different hues around them, so that there appears to be one continuous surface of varied colors. The trees and flowers and fruits which grow upon this earth are proportionately beautiful. The mountains too and the stones have a proportionate smoothness and transparency, and their colors are lovelier. The pebbles which are so highly prized in our world—the jaspers and rubies and emeralds and the rest—are fragments of these stones, but there everything is as beautiful as they are, or better still. This is because the stones there are in their natural state, not damaged by decay and corroded by salt water as ours are by the sediment which has collected here, and which causes disfigurement and disease to stones and earth, and animals and plants as well. The earth itself is adorned not only
with all these stones but also with gold and silver and the other metals, for many rich veins of them occur in plain view in all parts of the earth, so that to see them is a sight for the eyes of the blessed.

There are many kinds of animals upon it, and also human beings, some of whom live inland, others round the sea, and others in islands surrounded by air but close to the mainland. In a word, as water and the sea are to us for our purposes, so is air to them, and as air is to us, so the æther is to them. Their climate is so temperate that they are free from disease and live much longer than people do here, and in sight and hearing and understanding and all other faculties they are as far superior to us as air is to water or æther to air in clarity.

They also have sanctuaries and temples which are truly inhabited by gods, and oracles and prophecies and visions and all other kinds of communion with the gods occur there face to face. They see the sun and moon and stars as they really are, and the rest of their happiness is after the same manner.

Such is the nature of the earth as a whole and of the things that are upon it. In the earth itself, all over its surface, there are many hollow regions, some deeper and more widely spread than that in which we live, others deeper than our region but with a smaller expanse, some both shallower than ours and broader. All these are joined together underground by many connecting channels, some narrower, some wider, through which, from one basin to another, there flows a great volume of water—monstrous unceasing subterranean rivers of waters both hot and cold—and of fire too, great rivers of fire, and many of liquid mud, some clearer, some more turbid, like the rivers in Sicily that flow mud before the lava comes, and the lava stream itself. By these the several regions are filled in turn as the flood reaches them.

All this movement to and fro is caused by an oscillation inside the earth, and this oscillation is brought about by natural means, as follows.

One of the cavities in the earth is not only larger than the rest, but pierces right through from one side to the other. It is of this that Homer speaks when he says, 'Far, far away, where lies earth’s deepest chasm,' while elsewhere both he and many other poets refer to it as Tartarus. Into this gulf all the rivers flow together, and from it they flow forth again, and each acquires the nature of that part of the earth through which it flows. The cause of the flowing in and out of all these streams is that the mass of liquid has no bottom or foundation; so it oscillates and surges to and fro, and the air or breath that belongs to it does the same, for it accompanies the liquid both as it rushes to the further side of the earth and as it returns to this. And just as when we breathe we exhale and inhale the breath in a continu-

\[Iliad\] 8.14.
the newly dead reach the place to which each is conducted by his
guardian spirit, first they submit to judgment, both those who have
lived well and holily, and those who have not. Those who are judged
to have lived a neutral life set out for Acheron, and embarking in
those vessels which await them, are conveyed in them to the lake, and
there they dwell, and undergoing purification are both absolved by
punishment from any sins that they have committed, and rewarded
for their good deeds, according to each man’s deserts. Those who on
account of the greatness of their sins are judged to be incurable, as
having committed many gross acts of sacrilege or many wicked and
lawless murders or any other such crimes—these are hurled by their
appropriate destiny into Tartarus, from whence they emerge no more.
Others are judged to have been guilty of sins which, though
great, are curable—if, for example, they have offered violence to fa-
ther or mother in a fit of passion, but spent the rest of their lives in
penitence, or if they have committed manslaughter after the same
fashion. These too must be cast into Tartarus, but when this has
been done and they have remained there for a year, the surge casts
them out—the manslayers down Cocytus and the offenders against
their parents down Pyriphlegethon. And when, as they are swept
along, they come past the Acherusian Lake, there they cry aloud and
call upon those whom they have killed or misused, and calling, beg
and entreat for leave to pass from the stream into the lake, and be re-
ceived by them. If they prevail, they come out and there is an end of
their distress, but if not, they are swept away once more into Tartarus
and from there back into the rivers, and find no release from their
sufferings until they prevail upon those whom they have wronged, for
this is the punishment which their judge has appointed for them.
But those who are judged to have lived a life of surpassing holi-
ness—these are they who are released and set free from confinement
in these regions of the earth, and passing upward to their pure abode,
c make their dwelling upon the earth’s surface. And of these such as
have purified themselves sufficiently by philosophy live thereafter al-
together without bodies, and reach habitations even more beautiful,
which it is not easy to portray—nor is there time to do so now. But
the reasons which we have already described provide ground enough,
as you can see, Simmias, for leaving nothing undone to attain during
life some measure of goodness and wisdom, for the prize is glorious
and the hope great.

Of course, no reasonable man ought to insist that the facts are
exactly as I have described them. But that either this or something
very like it is a true account of our souls and their future habitations
—since we have clear evidence that the soul is immortal—this, I
think, is both a reasonable contention and a belief worth risking, for
the risk is a noble one. We should use such accounts to inspire our-
selves with confidence, and that is why I have already drawn out my tale so long.

There is one way, then, in which a man can be free from all anxiety about the fate of his soul—if in life he has abandoned bodily pleasures and adornments, as foreign to his purpose and likely to do more harm than good, and has devoted himself to the pleasures of acquiring knowledge, and so by decking his soul not with a borrowed beauty but with its own—with self-control, and goodness, and courage, and liberality, and truth—has fitted himself to await his journey to the next world. You, Simmias and Cebes and the rest, will each make this journey someday in the future, but for me the fated hour, as a tragic character might say, calls even now. In other words, it is about time that I took my bath. I prefer to have a bath before drinking the poison, rather than give the women the trouble of washing me when I am dead.

When he had finished speaking, Crito said, Very well, Socrates. But have you no directions for the others or myself about your children or anything else? What can we do to please you best?

Nothing new, Crito, said Socrates, just what I am always telling you. If you look after yourselves, whatever you do will please me and mine and you too, even if you don’t agree with me now. On the other hand, if you neglect yourselves and fail to follow the line of life as I have laid it down both now and in the past, however fervently you agree with me now, it will do no good at all.

We shall try our best to do as you say, said Crito. But how shall we bury you?

Any way you like, replied Socrates, that is, if you can catch me and I don’t slip through your fingers.

He laughed gently as he spoke, and turning to us went on, I can’t persuade Crito that I am this Socrates here who is talking to you now and marshaling all the arguments. He thinks that I am the one whom he will see presently lying dead, and he asks how he is to bury me! As for my long and elaborate explanation that when I have drunk the poison I shall remain with you no longer, but depart to a state of heavenly happiness, this attempt to console both you and myself seems to be wasted on him. You must give an assurance to Crito for me—the opposite of the one which he gave to the court which tried me. He undertook that I should stay, but you must assure him that when I am dead I shall not stay, but depart and be gone. That will help Crito to bear it more easily, and keep him from being distressed on my account when he sees my body being burned or buried, as if something dreadful were happening to me, or from saying at the funeral that it is Socrates whom he is laying out or carrying to the grave or burying. Believe me, my dear friend Crito, misstatements are not merely jarring in their immediate context; they also have a bad effect
myself ridiculous in my own eyes if I clung to life and hugged it when it has no more to offer. Come, do as I say and don't make difficulties. At this Crito made a sign to his servant, who was standing near by. The servant went out and after spending a considerable time returned with the man who was to administer the poison. He was carrying it ready-prepared in a cup.

When Socrates saw him he said, Well, my good fellow, you understand these things. What ought I to do?

Just drink it, he said, and then walk about until you feel a weight in your legs, and then lie down. Then it will act of its own accord.

As he spoke he handed the cup to Socrates, who received it quite cheerfully, Echecrates, without a tremor, without any change of color or expression, and said, looking up under his brows with his usual steady gaze, What do you say about pouring a libation from this drink? Is it permitted, or not?

We only prepare what we regard as the normal dose, Socrates, he replied.

I see, said Socrates. But I suppose I am allowed, or rather bound, to pray the gods that my removal from this world to the other may be prosperous. This is my prayer, then, and I hope that it may be granted.

With these words, quite calmly and with no sign of distaste, he drained the cup in one breath.

Up till this time most of us had been fairly successful in keeping back our tears, but when we saw that he was drinking, that he had actually drunk it, we could do so no longer. In spite of myself the tears came pouring out, so that I covered my face and wept brokenheartedly—not for him, but for my own calamity in losing such a friend. Crito had given up even before me, and had gone out when he could not restrain his tears. But Apollodorus, who had never stopped crying even before, now broke out into such a storm of passionate weeping that he made everyone in the room break down, except Socrates himself, who said, Really, my friends, what a way to behave! Why, that was my main reason for sending away the women, to prevent this sort of disturbance, because I am told that one should make one's end in a tranquil frame of mind. Calm yourselves and try to be brave.

This made us feel ashamed, and we controlled our tears. Socrates walked about, and presently, saying that his legs were heavy, lay down on his back—that was what the man recommended. The man—he was the same one who had administered the poison—kept his hand upon Socrates, and after a little while examined his feet and legs, then pinched his foot hard and asked if he felt it. Socrates said no. Then he did the same to his legs, and moving gradually upward in this way let us see that he was getting cold and numb. Presently he felt him again and said that when it reached the heart, Socrates would be gone.
any other work of any of the many other arts? Can you show me any such result of them? You cannot.

That is true, I said, but still I can show you that each of these sciences has a subject which is different from the science. The art of computation, for instance, has to do with odd and even numbers in their numerical relations to themselves and to each other. Is not that true?

Yes.
And the odd and even numbers are not the same with the art of computation?

They are not.

The art of weighing, again, has to do with lighter and heavier, but the art of weighing is one thing, and the heavy and the light are another. Do you admit that?

Yes.

Now, I want to know, what is that which is not wisdom, and of which wisdom is the science?

You are just falling into the old error, Socrates, he said. You come asking wherein wisdom or temperance differs from the other sciences, and then you try to discover some respect in which it is like them. But it is not, for all the other sciences are of something else, and not of themselves. Wisdom alone is a science of other sciences and of itself. And of this, as I believe, you are very well aware, and you are only doing what you denied that you were doing just now, trying to refute me, instead of pursuing the argument.

And what if I am? How can you think that I have any other motive in refuting you but what I should have in examining into myself? This motive would be just a fear of my unconsciously fancying that I knew something of which I was ignorant. And at this moment, I assure you, I pursue the argument chiefly for my own sake, and perhaps in some degree also for the sake of my other friends. For would you not say that the discovery of things as they truly are is a good common to all mankind?

Yes, certainly, Socrates, he said.

Then, I said, be cheerful, sweet sir, and give your opinion in answer to the question which I asked, never minding whether Critias or Socrates is the person refuted. Attend only to the argument, and see what will come of the refutation.

I think that is reasonable, he replied, and I will do as you say. Tell me, then, I said, what you mean to affirm about wisdom.

I mean to say that wisdom is the only science which is the science of itself as well as of the other sciences.

But the science of science, I said, will also be the science of the absence of science.

Very true, he said.

Then the wise or temperate man, and he only, will know himself,
That is evident, he said.

But then what profit, Critias, I said, is there any longer in wisdom or temperance which yet remains, if this is wisdom? If, indeed, as we were supposing at first, the wise man were able to distinguish what he knew and did not know, and that he knew the one and did not know the other, and to recognize a similar faculty of discernment in others, there would certainly be a great advantage in being wise, for then we should never make a mistake, but should pass through life the unerring guides of ourselves and of those who are under us. We should not attempt to do what we did not know, but we should find out those who know, and hand the business over to them and trust in them. Nor should we allow those who were under us to do anything which they were not likely to do well, and they would be likely to do well just that of which they had knowledge. And the house or state which was ordered or administered under the guidance of wisdom, and everything else of which wisdom was the lord, would be sure to be well ordered, for with truth guiding and error eliminated, in all their doings men must do nobly and well, and doing well means happiness. Was not this, Critias, what we spoke of as the great advantage of wisdom—to know what is known and what is unknown to us?

Very true, he said.

And now you perceive, I said, that no such science is to be found anywhere.

I perceive, he said.

May we assume then, I said, that wisdom, viewed in this new light as a knowledge of knowledge and ignorance, has this advantage—that he who possesses such knowledge will more easily learn anything which he learns, and that everything will be clearer to him, because, in addition to the several objects of knowledge, he sees the science, and this also will better enable him to test the knowledge which others have of what he knows himself, whereas the inquirer who is without this knowledge may be supposed to have a feebler and less effective insight? Are not these, my friend, the real advantages which are to be gained from wisdom? And are not we looking and seeking after something more than is to be found in her?

It may be, he said.

Perhaps it may, I said, or perhaps again we have been inquiring to no purpose—as I am led to infer, because I observe that if this is wisdom, some strange consequences would follow. Let us, if you please, assume the possibility of this science of sciences, and not refuse to allow that, as was originally suggested, wisdom is the knowledge of what we know and do not know. Assuming all this, let us consider more closely, Critias, whether wisdom, such as this, would do us much good. For we were wrong, I think, in supposing, as we were saying just now, that such wisdom ordering the government of house or state would be a great benefit.
How so? he said.
Why, I said, we were far too ready to admit the great benefits which mankind would obtain from their severally doing the things which they knew, and committing the things of which they are ignorant to those who were better acquainted with them.
Were we not right in making that admission?
I think not.
How very strange, Socrates!
There, I said, I most emphatically agree with you, and I was thinking as much just now when I said that strange consequences would follow, and that I was afraid we were on the wrong track. For however sure we may be that this is wisdom, I certainly cannot make out what good this sort of thing does to us.
What do you mean? he said. I wish that you could make me understand what you mean.
I dare say that what I am saying is nonsense, I replied, and yet if a man has any feeling of what is due to himself, he cannot let the thought which comes into his mind pass away unheeded and unexamined.
I like that, he said.
Hear, then, I said, my own dream—whether coming through the horn or the ivory gate, I cannot tell. The dream is this. Let us suppose that wisdom is such as we are now defining, and that she has absolute sway over us. Then, each action will be done according to the arts or sciences, and no one professing to be a pilot when he is not, no physician or general or anyone else pretending to know matters of which he is ignorant, will deceive or elude us. Our health will be improved; our safety at sea, and also in battle, will be assured; our coats and shoes, and all other instruments and implements will be skillfully made, because the workmen will be good and true. Aye, and if you please, you may suppose that prophecy will be a real knowledge of the future, and will be under the control of wisdom, who will deter deceivers and set up the true prophets in their place as the revealers of the future. Now I quite agree that mankind, thus provided, would live and act according to knowledge, for wisdom would watch and prevent ignorance from intruding on us in our work. But whether by acting according to knowledge we shall act well and be happy, my dear Critias—this is a point which we have not yet been able to determine.
Yet I think, he replied, that if you discard knowledge, you will hardly find the crown of happiness in anything else.
Well, just answer me one small question, I said. Of what is this knowledge? Do you mean a knowledge of shoemaking?
God forbid.
Or of working in brass?
Certainly not.
Or in wool, or wood, or anything of that sort?
No, I do not.

Then, I said, we are giving up the doctrine that he who lives according to knowledge is happy, for these live according to knowledge, and yet they are not allowed by you to be happy. But I think that you mean to confine happiness to those who live according to knowledge of some particular thing, such for example as the prophet, who, as I was saying, knows the future. Is it of him you are speaking or of someone else?

Yes, I mean him, but there are others as well.

Who? I said. Evidently someone who knows the past and present as well as the future, and is ignorant of nothing. Let us suppose that there is such a person, and if there is, you will allow that he is the most knowing of all living men.

Certainly he is.

Yet I should like to know one thing more. Which of the different kinds of knowledge makes him happy? Or do all equally make him happy?

Not all equally, he replied.

But which most tends to make him happy? The knowledge of what past, present, or future thing? Is it, for example, the knowledge of the game of draughts?

Nonsense, draughts indeed!

Or of computation?

No.

Or of health?

That is nearer the truth, he said.

And that knowledge which is nearest of all, I said, is the knowledge of what?

The knowledge with which he discerns good and evil.

You villain! I said. You have been carrying me round in a circle, and all this time hiding from me the fact that it is not the life according to knowledge which makes men act rightly and be happy, not even if it be knowledge of all the sciences, but one science only, that of good and evil. For, let me ask you, Critias, whether, if you take away this science from the others, medicine will not equally give health, and shoemaking equally produce shoes, and the art of the weaver clothes—whether the art of the pilot will not equally save our lives at sea, and the art of the general in war?

Equally.

And yet, my dear Critias, none of these things will be well or beneficially done, if the science of the good be wanting.

True.

But this science, it seems, is not wisdom or temperance, but a science of human advantage—not a science of other sciences, or of ignorance, but of good and evil. And if this be of advantage, then wisdom or temperance must be something else.
And why, he replied, will not wisdom be of advantage? For, however much we assume that wisdom is a science of sciences, and has a sway over other sciences, surely she will have this particular science of the good under her control, and in this way will benefit us. And will wisdom give health? I said. Is not this rather the effect of medicine? Or does wisdom do the work of any of the other arts—do they not each of them do their own work? Have we not long ago asseverated that wisdom is only the knowledge of knowledge and of ignorance, and of nothing else?

It seems so. Then wisdom will not be the producer of health?
Certainly not.
We found that health belonged to a different art?
Yes.
Nor does wisdom give advantage, my good friend, for that again we have just now been attributing to another art.
Very true.
How then can wisdom be advantageous, when it produces no advantage?
Apparently it cannot, Socrates.
You see, then, Critias, that I was not far wrong in fearing that I was making no sound inquiry into wisdom—I was quite right in deprecating myself, for that which is admitted to be the best of all things would never have seemed to us useless, if I had been good for anything at an inquiry. But now I have been utterly defeated, and have failed to discover what that is to which the lawgiver gave this name of temperance or wisdom. And yet many more admissions were made by us than could be fairly granted, for we admitted that there was a science of science, although the argument said no, and protested against us. And we admitted further that this science knew the works of the other sciences—although this too was denied by the argument—because we wanted to show that the wise man had knowledge of what he knew and of what he did not know. We generously made the concession, and never even considered the impossibility of a man knowing in a sort of way that which he does not know at all. According to our admission, he knows that which he does not know—than which nothing, as I think, can be more irrational. And yet, after finding us so easy and good-natured, the inquiry is still unable to discover the truth, but mocks us to a degree, and has insolently proved the inutility of temperance or wisdom if truly described by a definition such as we have spent all this time in discussing and fashioning together—which result, as far as I am concerned, is not so much to be lamented.

But for your sake, Charmides, I am very sorry—that you, having such beauty and such wisdom and temperance of soul, should have no profit nor good in life from your wisdom and temperance. And still
more am I grieved about the charm which I learned with so much pain, and to so little profit, from the Thracian, in order to produce a thing which is nothing worth. I think indeed that there is a mistake, and that I must be a bad inquirer, for wisdom or temperance I believe to be really a great good. And happy are you, Charmides, if you possess it. Wherefore examine yourself, and see whether you have this gift and can do without the charm, for if you can, I would rather advise you to regard me simply as a fool who is never able to reason out anything, and to rest assured that the more wise and temperate you are, the happier you will be.

Charmides said, I am sure that I do not know, Socrates, whether I have or have not this gift of wisdom and temperance, for how can I know whether I have a thing, of which even you and Critias are, as you say, unable to discover the nature? Yet I do not quite believe you, and I am sure, Socrates, that I do need the charm, and as far as I am concerned, I shall be willing to be charmed by you daily, until you say that I have had enough.

Very good, Charmides, said Critias. If you do this I shall have a proof of your temperance—that is, if you allow yourself to be charmed by Socrates, and never desert him in things great or small.

You may depend on my following and not deserting him, said Charmides. If you who are my guardian command me, I should be very wrong not to obey you.

And I do command you, he said.

Then I will do as you say, and begin this very day.

You, sirs, I said, what are you conspiring about?

We are not conspiring, said Charmides. We have conspired already.

And you are about to use violence, without even giving me a hearing in court?

Yes, I shall use violence, he replied, since he orders me, and therefore you had better consider what you will do.

But the time for consideration has passed, I said. When you are determined on anything, and in the mood of violence, you are irresistible.

Do not you resist me then, he said.

I shall not resist you then, I replied.
the expedition to Cyprus, and who sailed to Egypt and diverse other places, and they should be gratefully remembered by us, because they compelled the king in fear for himself to look to his own safety instead of plotting the destruction of Hellas.

And so the war against the barbarians was fought out to the end by the whole city on their own behalf, and on behalf of their countrymen. There was peace, and our city was held in honor. And then, as prosperity makes men jealous, there succeeded a jealousy of her, and jealousy begot envy, and so she became engaged against her will in a war with the Hellenes. On the breaking out of war, our citizens met the Lacedaemonians at Tanagra, and fought for the freedom of the Boeotians; the issue was doubtful, and was decided by the engagement which followed. For when the Lacedaemonians had gone on their way, leaving the Boeotians, whom they were aiding, on the third day after the Battle of Tanagra, our countrymen conquered at Oenophyta, and rightly restored those who had been unrighteously exiled. And they were the first after the Persian War who fought on behalf of liberty in aid of Hellenes against Hellenes. They were brave men, and freed those whom they aided, and were the first too who were honorably interred in this sepulcher by the state.

Afterward there was a mighty war, in which all the Hellenes joined, and devastated our country, which was very ungrateful of them. And our countrymen, after defeating them in a naval engagement and taking their leaders, the Spartans, at Sphagia, when they might have destroyed them, spared their lives, and gave them back, and made peace, considering that they should war with their fellow countrymen only until they gained a victory over them, and not because of the private anger of the state destroy the common interest of Hellas—but that with barbarians they should war to the death. Worthy of praise are they also who waged this war, and are here interred, for they proved, if anyone doubted the superior prowess of the Athenians in the former war with the barbarians, that their doubts had no foundation—showing by their victory in the civil war with Hellas, in which they subdued the other chief state of the Hellenes, that they could conquer singlehanded those with whom they had been allied in the war against the barbarians.

After the peace there followed a third war, which was of a terrible and desperate nature, and in this many brave men who are here interred lost their lives—many of them had won victories in Sicily, whither they had gone over the seas to fight for the liberties of the Leontines, to whom they were bound by oaths, but owing to the distance the city was unable to help them, and they lost heart and came to misfortune, their very enemies and opponents winning more renown for valor and temperance than the friends of others. Many also fell in naval engagements at the Hellespont, after having in one day taken all the ships of the enemy, and defeated them in other naval
Hellenes, when enslaved either by one another or by the barbarians, and did accordingly. This was our feeling, while the Lacedaemonians were thinking that we who were the champions of liberty had fallen, and that their business was to subject the remaining Hellenes. And why should I say more? For the events of which I am speaking happened not long ago and we can all of us remember how the chief peoples of Hellas, Argives and Boeotians and Corinthians, came to feel the need of us, and, what is the greatest miracle of all, the Persian king himself was driven to such extremity as to come round to the opinion, that from this city, of which he was the destroyer, and from no other, his salvation would proceed.

And if a person desired to bring a deserved accusation against our city, he would find only one charge which he could justly urge—that she was too compassionate and too favorable to the weaker side. And in this instance she was not able to hold out or keep her resolution of refusing aid to her injurers when they were being enslaved, but she was softened, and did in fact send out aid, and delivered the Hellenes from slavery, and they were free until they afterward enslaved themselves, whereas to the Great King she refused to give the assistance of the state, for she could not forget the trophies of Marathon and Salamis and Plataea, but she allowed exiles and volunteers to assist him, and they were his salvation. And she herself, when she was compelled, entered into the war, and built walls and ships, and fought with the Lacedaemonians on behalf of the Parians. Now the king fearing this city and wanting to stand aloof, when he saw the Lacedaemonians growing weary of the war at sea, asked of us, as the price of his alliance with us and the other allies, to give up the Hellenes in Asia, whom the Lacedaemonians had previously handed over to him—he thinking that we should refuse, and that then he might have a pretense for withdrawing from us. About the other allies he was mistaken, for the Corinthians and Argives and Boeotians, and the other states, were quite willing to let them go, and swore and covenanted that, if he would pay them money, they would make over to him the Hellenes of the continent, and we alone refused to give them up and swear. Such was the natural nobility of this city, so sound and healthy was the spirit of freedom among us, and the instinctive dislike of the barbarian, because we are pure Hellenes, having no admixture of barbarism in us. For we are not like many others, descendants of Pelops or Cadmus or Aegyptus or Danaus, who are by nature barbarians, and yet pass for Hellenes, and dwell in the midst of us, but we are pure Hellenes, uncontaminated by any foreign element, and therefore the hatred of the foreigner has passed unadulterated into the lifeblood of the city. And so, notwithstanding our noble sentiments, we were again isolated, because we were unwilling to be guilty of the base and unholy act of giving up Hellenes to barbarians. And we were in the same case as when we were subdued.
before, but, by the favor of heaven, we managed better, for we ended the war without the loss of our ships or walls or colonies; the enemy was only too glad to be quit of us. Yet in this war we lost many brave men, such as were those who fell owing to the ruggedness of the ground at the Battle of Corinth, or by treason at Lechaeum. Brave men, too, were those who delivered the Persian king, and drove the Lacedaemonians from the sea. I remind you of them, and you must celebrate them together with me, and do honor to their memories.

Such were the actions of the men who are here interred, and of others who have died on behalf of their country; many and glorious things I have spoken of them, and there are yet many more, and more glorious, things remaining to be told—many days and nights would not suffice to tell of them. Let them not be forgotten, and let every man remind their descendants that they also are soldiers who must not desert the ranks of their ancestors, or from cowardice fall behind. Even so I exhort you this day, and in all future time, whenever I meet with any of you, shall continue to remind and exhort you, O ye sons of heroes, that you strive to be the bravest of men. And I think that I ought now to repeat what your fathers desired to have said to you who are their survivors, when they went out to battle, in case anything happened to them. I will tell you what I heard them say, and what, if they had only speech, they would fain be saying, judging from what they then said. And you must imagine that you hear them saying what I now repeat to you.

Sons, the event proves that your fathers were brave men, for we might have lived dishonorably, but have preferred to die honorably rather than bring you and your children into disgrace, and rather than dishonor our own fathers and forefathers—considering that life is not life to one who is a dishonor to his race, and that to such a one neither men nor gods are friendly, either while he is on the earth or after death in the world below. Remember our words, then, and what ever is your aim let virtue be the condition of the attainment of your aim, and know that without this all possessions and pursuits are dishonorable and evil. For neither does wealth bring honor to the owner, if he be a coward; of such a one the wealth belongs to another, and not to himself. Nor do beauty and strength of body, when dwelling in a base and cowardly man, appear comely, but the reverse of comely, making the possessor more conspicuous, and manifesting forth his cowardice. And all knowledge, when separated from justice and virtue, is seen to be cunning and not wisdom; wherefore make this your first and last and constant and all-absorbing aim—to exceed, if possible, not only us but all your ancestors in virtue, and know that to excel you in virtue only brings us shame, but that to be excel led by you is a source of happiness to us. And we shall most likely be defeated, and you will most likely be victors in the contest, if you learn so to order your lives as not to abuse or waste the reputation
of your ancestors, knowing that to a man who has any self-respect, nothing is more dishonorable than to be honored, not for his own sake, but on account of the reputation of his ancestors. The honor of parents is a fair and noble treasure to their posterity, but to have the use of a treasure of wealth and honor, and to leave none to your successors, because you have neither money nor reputation of your own, is alike base and dishonorable. And if you follow our precepts you will be received by us as friends, when the hour of destiny brings you hither, but if you neglect our words and are disgraced in your lives, no one will welcome or receive you. This is the message which is to be delivered to our children.

Some of us have fathers and mothers still living, and we would urge them, if, as is likely, we shall die, to bear the calamity as lightly as possible, and not to condole with one another, for they have sorrows enough, and will not need anyone to stir them up. While we gently heal their wounds, let us remind them that the gods have heard the chief part of their prayers, for they prayed, not that their children might live forever, but that they might be brave and renowned. And this, which is the greatest good, they have attained. A mortal man cannot expect to have everything in his own life turning out according to his will, and they, if they bear their misfortunes bravely, will be truly deemed brave fathers of the brave. But if they give way to their sorrows, either they will be suspected of not being our parents, or we of not being such as our panegyrists declare. Let not either of the two alternatives happen, but rather let them be our chief and true panegyrists, who show in their lives that they are true men, and had men for their sons. Of old the saying, 'Nothing too much,' appeared to be, and really was, well said. For he whose happiness rests with himself, if possible, wholly, and if not, as far as possible, who is not hanging in suspense on other men, or changing with the vicissitude of their fortune, has his life ordered for the best. He is the temperate and valiant and wise, and when his riches come and go, when his children are given and taken away, he will remember the proverb, 'Neither rejoicing overmuch nor grieving overmuch,' for he relies upon himself. And such we would have our parents to be—that is our word and wish, and as such we now offer ourselves, neither lamenting overmuch, nor fearing overmuch, if we are to die at this time. And we entreat our fathers and mothers to retain these feelings throughout their future life, and to be assured that they will not please us by sorrowing and lamenting over us. But, if the dead have any knowledge of the living, they will displease us most by making themselves miserable and by taking their misfortunes too much to heart, and they will please us best if they bear their loss lightly and temperately. For our life will have the noblest end which is vouchsafed to man, and should be glorified rather than lamented. And if they will direct their minds to the care and nurture of our wives and children, they will
soonest forget their misfortunes, and live in a better and nobler way,
d and be dearer to us.

This is all that we have to say to our families, and to the state
we would say, Take care of our parents and of our sons—let her
worthily cherish the old age of our parents, and bring up our sons in
the right way. But we know that she will of her own accord take care
of them, and does not need any exhortation of ours.

This, O ye children and parents of the dead, is the message
e which they bid us deliver to you, and which I do deliver with the ut-
most seriousness. And in their name I beseech you, the children, to
imitate your fathers, and you, parents, to be of good cheer about
yourselves, for we will nourish your age, and take care of you both
publicly and privately in any place in which one of us may meet one
of you who are the parents of the dead. And the care of you which the
city shows, you know yourselves, for she has made provision by law
concerning the parents and children of those who die in war; the
highest authority is specially entrusted with the duty of watching
over them above all other citizens, and they will see that the fathers
and mothers have no wrong done to them. The city herself shares in
the education of the children, desiring as far as it is possible that
their orphanhood may not be felt by them. While they are children
she is a parent to them, and when they have arrived at man's estate
she sends them to their several duties, in full armor clad; and bring-
ing freshly to their minds the ways of their fathers, she places in
their hands the instruments of their fathers' virtues. For the sake of
the omen, she would have them from the first begin to rule over their
own houses arrayed in the strength and arms of their fathers. And
as for the dead, she never ceases honoring them, celebrating, in com-
mon for all, rites which become the property of each, and in addition
to this, holding gymnastic and equestrian contests, and musical
festivals of every sort. She is to the dead in the place of a son and heir,
and to their sons in the place of a father, and to their parents and
elder kindred in the place of a guardian—ever and always caring for
them. Considering this, you ought to bear your calamity the more
gently, for thus you will be most endeared to the dead and to the living,
and your sorrows will heal and be healed. And now do you and all,
having lamented the dead in common according to the law, go your
d ways.

You have heard, Menexenus, the oration of Aspasia the Milesian.

MENEXENUS: Truly, Socrates, I marvel that Aspasia, who is
only a woman, should be able to compose such a speech—she must be
a rare one.

SOCRATES: Well, if you are incredulous, you may come with
me and hear her.

MENEXENUS: I have often met Aspasia, Socrates, and know
what she is like.
ION: Yes, Socrates, upon my word I do. It gives me joy to listen to you wise men.

SOCRATES: I only wish you were right in saying that, Ion. But 'wise men!' That means you, the rhapsodists and actors, and the men whose poems you chant, while I have nothing else to tell besides the truth, after the fashion of the ordinary man. For example, take the question I just now asked you. Observe what a trivial and commonplace remark it was that I uttered, something anyone might know, when I said that the inquiry is the same whenever one takes an art in its entirety. Let us reason the matter out. There is an art of painting taken as a whole?

ION: Yes.

SOCRATES: And there are and have been many painters, good and bad?

ION: Yes indeed.

SOCRATES: Now, take Polygnotus, son of Aglaophon. Have you ever seen a man with the skill to point out what is good and what is not in the works of Polygnotus, but without the power to do so in the works of other painters? A man who, when anybody shows the works of other painters, dozes off, is at a loss, has nothing to suggest, but when he has to express a judgment on one particular painter, say Polygnotus or anyone else you choose, wakes up, and is attentive, and is full of things to say?

ION: No, on my oath, I never saw the like.

SOCRATES: Or, again, take sculpture. Have you ever seen a man with the skill to judge the finer works of Daedalus, son of Metion, or of Epeus, son of Panopeus, or of Theodorus of Samos, or the works of any other single sculptor, but, confronted by the works of other sculptors, is at a loss, and dozes off, without a thing to say?

ION: No, on my oath, I never saw one.

SOCRATES: Yet further, as I think, the same is true of playing on the flute, and on the harp, and singing to the harp, and rhapsody. You never saw a man with the skill to judge of Olympus, of Thamyras, or of Orpheus, or of Phemius, the rhapsodist at Ithaca, but is at a loss, has no remark to make concerning Ion the Ephesian, and his success or failure in reciting.

ION: On that I cannot contradict you, Socrates. But of this thing I am conscious, that I excel all men in speaking about Homer, and on him have much to say, and that everybody else avers I do it well, but on the other poets I do not. Well then, see what that means.

SOCRATES: I do see, Ion, and in fact will proceed to show you what to my mind it betokens. As I just now said, this gift you have of speaking well on Homer is not an art; it is a power divine, impelling you like the power in the stone Euripides called the magnet, which most call 'stone of Heraclea.' This stone does not simply attract the
enterprising spirit, and of one naturally skilled in its dealings with
men, and in sum and substance I call it 'flattery.' Now it seems to me
that there are many other parts of this activity, one of which is cook-
ery. This is considered an art, but in my judgment is no art, only a
routine and a knack. And rhetoric I call another part of this general
activity, and beautification, and sophist — four parts with four dis-
tinct objects. Now if Polus wishes to question me, let him do so, for he
has not yet ascertained what part of flattery I call rhetoric. He does not
crealize that I have not yet answered him, but proceeds to ask if I do
not think it something fine. But I shall not answer whether I consider
rhetoric a fine thing or a bad until I have first answered what it is.
For that is not right, Polus. Then if you wish to question me, ask me
what part of flattery I claim rhetoric to be.

POLUS: I will then; answer, what part?

SOCRATES: I wonder whether you will understand my an-
swer. Rhetoric in my opinion is the semblance of a part of politics.

POLUS: Well then, do you call it good or bad?

SOCRATES: Bad—for evil things I call bad—if I must answer
you as though you already understood what I mean.

GORGIAS: Why, Socrates, even I myself do not grasp your
meaning.

SOCRATES: Naturally enough, Gorgias, for I have not yet clari-
fied my statement. But Polus here, like a foal, is young and flighty.

GORGIAS: Well, let him alone, and tell me what you mean by
saying that rhetoric is the semblance of a part of politics.

SOCRATES: I will try to explain to you my conception of rhet-
oric, and if it is wrong, Polus will refute me. You admit the existence
of bodies and souls?

GORGIAS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And do you not consider that there is a healthy con-
dition for each?

GORGIAS: I do.

SOCRATES: And a condition of apparent, but not real health?
For example, many people appear to be healthy of body, and no one
could perceive they are not so, except a doctor or some physical
trainer.

GORGIAS: That is true.

SOCRATES: There exists, I maintain, both in body and in soul, a
condition which creates an impression of good health in each
case, although it is false.

GORGIAS: That is so.

SOCRATES: Let me see now if I can explain more clearly what
I mean. To the pair, body and soul, there correspond two arts—that
concerned with the soul I call the political art; to the single art that re-
lates to the body I cannot give a name offhand. But this single art
that cares for the body comprises two parts, gymnastics and medicine, and in the political art what corresponds to gymnastics is legislation, while the counterpart of medicine is justice. Now in each case the two arts encroach upon each other, since their fields are the same, medicine upon gymnastics, and justice upon legislation; nevertheless there is a difference between them. There are then these four arts which always minister to what is best, one pair for the body, the other for the soul. But flattery perceiving this—I do not say by knowledge but by conjecture—has divided herself also into four branches, and insinuating herself into the guise of each of these parts, pretends to be that which she impersonates. And having no thought for what is best, she regularly uses pleasure as a bait to catch folly and deceives it into believing that she is of supreme worth. Thus it is that cookery has impersonated medicine and pretends to know the best foods for the body, so that, if a cook and a doctor had to contend in the presence of children or of men as senseless as children, which of the two, doctor or cook, was an expert in wholesome and bad food, the doctor would starve to death. This then I call a form of flattery, and I claim that this kind of thing is bad—I am now addressing you, Polus—because it aims at what is pleasant, ignoring the good, and I insist that it is not an art but a routine, because it can produce no principle in virtue of which it offers what it does, nor explain the nature thereof, and consequently is unable to point to the cause of each thing it offers. And I refuse the name of art to anything irrational. But if you have any objections to lodge, I am willing to submit to further examination.

Cookery then, as I say, is a form of flattery that corresponds to medicine, and in the same way gymnastics is personated by beautification, a mischievous, deceitful, mean, and ignoble activity, which cheats us by shapes and colors, by smoothing and draping, thereby causing people to take on an alien charm to the neglect of the natural beauty produced by exercise.

To be brief, then, I will express myself in the language of geometers—for by now perhaps you may follow me. Sophistic is to legislation what beautification is to gymnastics, and rhetoric to justice what cookery is to medicine. But, as I say, while there is this natural distinction between them, yet because they are closely related, Sophist and rhetorician, working in the same sphere and upon the same subject matter, tend to be confused with each other, and they know not what to make of each other, nor do others know what to make of them. For if the body was under the control, not of the soul, but of itself, and if cookery and medicine were not investigated and distinguished by the soul, but the body instead gave the verdict, weighing them by the bodily pleasures they offered, then the principle of Anaxagoras would everywhere hold good—that is something you
know about, my dear Polus—and all things would be mingled in indiscriminate confusion, and medicine and health and cookery would be indistinguishable.

Well, now you have heard my conception of rhetoric. It is the counterpart in the soul of what cookery is to the body. And perhaps I have acted strangely in speaking at such great length after forbidding you a lengthy discourse. But it is only fair that you should excuse me, for when I spoke briefly you did not understand and you were unable to make anything of the answer I gave you but needed an explanation. If then I cannot follow any answer of yours, you too may speak at length; but if I can, then indulge me by being brief, for that is fair. And now, make what you can of my answer.

**Polus**: What is it you say then? Do you hold that rhetoric is flattery?

**Socrates**: No, I said 'a part of flattery.' Can you not remember at your age, Polus? What will you do when you are older?

**Polus**: Do you think then that good rhetoricians are considered but poor creatures in the cities because they are flatterers?

**Socrates**: Is that a question, or the beginning of a speech?

**Polus**: It is a question I am asking.

**Socrates**: In my opinion they are not considered at all.

**Polus**: How are they not considered? Are they not most powerful in their cities?

**Socrates**: No, if by power you mean something good for its possessor.

**Polus**: I do indeed mean that.

**Socrates**: Then in my opinion rhetoricians have the least power of any in the state.

**Polus**: What? Do they not, like tyrants, put to death any man they will, and deprive of their fortunes and banish whomsoever it seems best?

**Socrates**: By the dog, at every word you utter, Polus, I am puzzled as to whether you are speaking for yourself and expressing your own views, or questioning me.

**Polus**: I am questioning you.

**Socrates**: Well, my friend, then you ask me two questions at once.

**Polus**: What two questions?

**Socrates**: Did you not say just now, Do not the orators put to death whomsoever they will, and deprive of their fortunes and banish from the state whomsoever it seems best?

**Polus**: I did.

**Socrates**: Then I claim that there are two questions here, and I will answer both. I say, Polus, that orators and tyrants have the very least power of any in our cities, as I stated just now, for they do
POLUS: Then you would wish rather to suffer than to do wrong?
SOCRATES: I would not wish either, but if I had either to do or to suffer wrong, I would choose rather to suffer than to do it.

POLUS: Then you would not be ready to become a tyrant?
SOCRATES: No, if by tyrant you mean what I do.

POLUS: I mean what I said just now, to be at liberty to do what I please in the state—to kill, to exile, and to follow my own pleasure in every act.

SOCRATES: Heavens, man! Let me have my say and then attack me with your argument. Supposing I should meet you in the crowded market place with a dagger up my sleeve and say to you, Polus, I have just recently acquired a wondrous power, a tyranny. If I resolve that any of these people you see now should die, he will be dead in an instant. And if I decide that anyone should have his head broken, it will be broken at once, or that his cloak shall be torn, it will be torn. So great is my power in the city.

If then you disbelieve me and I showed you the dagger, you would, I imagine, say on seeing it, Socrates, in this sense anybody might have great power, for in this way one might burn any house he pleased, yes, and the Athenian dockyards too and all the warships and any vessel public or private.

But after all merely to do what one pleases is not to possess great power, do you think so?

POLUS: Not in the circumstances mentioned.

SOCRATES: Can you tell me then what fault you find with such power?

POLUS: I can.

SOCRATES: What is it? Tell me.

POLUS: It is that a man who thus behaves must surely be punished.

SOCRATES: And is not punishment an evil?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Does it not seem to you on the contrary, my strange friend, that when a man does what he pleases, if his action is accompanied by advantage, it is a good thing and this apparently is the meaning of great power, but otherwise, it is an evil thing and implies small power? Let us examine this point too. Do we not admit that sometimes it is better to do the things we have just mentioned, to kill men and banish and confiscate their property, and sometimes not?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: On this point, then, it seems, both you and I are in agreement.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now when do you say it is better to do these things? Tell me what is your criterion?

POLUS: No, you answer that, Socrates.
SOCRATES: Then if you prefer to hear the answer from me, I say it is better so to act, Polus, when it is a just action, worse when it is unjust.

POLUS: It is difficult indeed to refute you, Socrates! Why, even a child could prove you are wrong.

SOCRATES: Then I shall be very grateful to that child, and equally so to you, if you refute me and rid me of my nonsense. Be not weary of doing a kindness to a friend, but refute me.

POLUS: Well, there is no need to consult ancient history to refute you, for events that took place yesterday or the day before are sufficient to refute you and prove that many men who do wrong are happy.

SOCRATES: What events are these?

POLUS: You see that Archelaus, son of Perdiccas, is ruler of Macedonia.

SOCRATES: If I do not see it, I at least hear it.

POLUS: Now do you consider him happy or wretched?

SOCRATES: I do not know, Polus. I have never met the man.

POLUS: What, must you have met him to know? Can you not judge offhand that he is happy?

SOCRATES: No indeed, I cannot.

POLUS: Obviously then you will say that you do not know whether the Great King himself is happy.

SOCRATES: And I shall be telling the truth, for I do not know how he stands in education and justice.

POLUS: What? Does happiness rest entirely upon this?

SOCRATES: Yes, in my opinion, Polus, for the man and woman who are noble and good I call happy, but the evil and base I call wretched.

POLUS: Then according to you Archelaus is wretched.

SOCRATES: If, my friend, he is wicked.

POLUS: Wicked? Of course he is! He had no claim to the power he now enjoys, being the son of a woman who was a slave to Alcetas, the brother of Perdiccas, and by rights he was the slave of Alcetas. And if he had chosen to act justly, he would still have been his slave and, according to you, would have been happy, but now he has become monstrous unhappy, since he has done the greatest of wrongs. In the first place he sent for this master and uncle of his, ostensibly to restore to him the power of which Perdiccas had deprived him, and then entertained the man and his son, Alexander, who was his own cousin and about his own age, and after making them drunk he flung them into a wagon, took them away by night, and made away with them by murder. And these crimes he committed without realizing that he was the most wretched of men, and felt no regrets. But a little later, so far from wishing to become happy by justly bringing up the rightful heir to the throne, his own brother, the legitimate son of

...
Perdiccas, a child of about seven years, and restoring the throne to him, he threw him into a well and drowned him, and then told the child’s mother, Cleopatra, that the boy had fallen in and killed himself while chasing a goose. And so now, after committing greater crimes than any in Macedonia, he is the most wretched, not the happiest, of all Macedonians, and I suppose there are other Athenians besides yourself who would prefer to be any Macedonian rather than Archelaus.

SOCRATES: At the very beginning of our discussion, Polus, I praised you for being in my opinion well trained in rhetoric, though you had neglected dialectic. And now is this the argument whereby even a child might refute me, and have I now, as you imagine, been refuted by it when I claim that the wrongdoer is not happy? How so, my good fellow? Indeed I do not admit a word of what you say.

POLUS: You refuse to, though you really think as I do.

SOCRATES: My dear sir, you are trying to refute me orator-fashion, like those who fancy they are refuting in the law courts. For there one group imagines it is refuting the other when it produces many reputable witnesses to support its statements whereas the opposing party produces but one or none. But this method of proof is worthless toward discovering the truth, for at times a man may be the victim of false witness on the part of many people of repute. And now practically all men, Athenians and strangers alike, will support your statements, if you wish to produce them as witnesses that my view is false. If you choose, you may cite as witnesses Nicias, son of Niceratus, and his brothers, who dedicated the long line of tripods in the precinct of Dionysus; or, if you choose, Aristocrates, son of Scellias, who made that splendid offering at the shrine of Apollo; or, if you choose, the whole household of Pericles or any other family you like to select in Athens. Yet I, who am but one, do not agree with you, for you cannot compel me to; you are merely producing many false witnesses against me in your endeavor to drive me out of my property, the truth. But if I cannot produce in you yourself a single witness in agreement with my views, I consider that I have accomplished nothing worth speaking of in the matter under debate; and the same, I think, is true for you also, if I, one solitary witness, do not testify for you and if you do not leave all these others out of account. Now here is one form of refutation accepted by you and by many others, but there is also another, according to my opinion. Let us compare them, then, and consider whether there is any difference between them. For the questions in dispute are by no means trivial, but are, one might say, matters wherein knowledge is noblest and ignorance most shameful—the sum and substance of them being knowledge or ignorance of who is happy and who is not. For example, to take first the subject of our present discussion, you think it possible for a man
to be happy though he is evil and acts wickedly, since you judge Archelaus wicked and yet happy. Are we to consider this is your opinion?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: But I say it is impossible. That is one point in dispute. Well, the evildoer will be happy, will he not, if he meets with justice and punishment?

POLUS: Decidedly not. Under those conditions he would be most unhappy.

SOCRATES: Then according to you, if the evildoer is not punished, he will be happy.

POLUS: That is what I say.

SOCRATES: But according to my opinion, Polus, the wicked man and the doer of evil is in any case unhappy, but more unhappy if he does not meet with justice and suffer punishment, less unhappy if he pays the penalty and suffers punishment from gods and men.

POLUS: That is a preposterous theory you are attempting to uphold, Socrates.

SOCRATES: I shall try to make you share it with me, my friend, for I account you a friend. For the moment then, these are our points of difference—just consider for yourself. I said a short while ago that it was worse to do than to suffer wrong.

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: But you said it was worse to suffer it.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And I said that evildoers are unhappy and was confuted by you.

POLUS: Yes, unquestionably.

SOCRATES: According to your opinion.

POLUS: And my opinion is right.

SOCRATES: Possibly so. And you maintain evildoers are happy, if they escape punishment.

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: But I claim they are the unhappiest of all, and that those who are punished are less so. Do you want to refute that?

POLUS: That of course is more difficult to refute than your first point, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Not difficult, Polus, but impossible, for the truth is never refuted.

POLUS: What do you mean? If a man is caught in a criminal plot to make himself tyrant, and when caught is put to the rack and mutilated and has his eyes burned out and after himself suffering and seeing his wife and children suffer many other signal outrages of various kinds is finally impaled or burned in a coat of pitch, will he be happier than if he escaped arrest, established himself as a tyrant,
and lived the rest of his life a sovereign in his state, doing what he
pleased, an object of envy and felicitation among citizens and stran-
gers alike? Is this what you say is impossible to refute?
SOCRATES: Now you are trying to make my flesh creep, my
noble friend, instead of refuting me, and just now you were appealing
to witnesses. However, refresh my memory a trifle. Did you say
‘criminal plotting to make himself a tyrant’?
POLUS: I did.
SOCRATES: In that case neither one will be happier than the
other, neither he who by evil means achieves a tyranny nor he who
is punished—for of two miserable creatures one cannot be the hap-
pier—but he who escapes detection and becomes a tyrant is the more
e wretched. What is this, Polus? Do you laugh? Is this another form of
rebutting, to laugh at a man when he speaks, instead of refuting
him?
POLUS: Do you not consider yourself already refuted, Socrates,
when you put forward views that nobody would accept? Why, ask
anyone present!
SOCRATES: I am no politician, Polus, and last year when I
became a member of the Council and my tribe was presiding and it was
my duty to put the question to the vote, I raised a laugh because I
did not know how to. And so do not on this occasion either bid me put
the question to those present, but if you can contrive no better refu-
tation than this, then leave it to me in my turn, as I suggested just now,
and try out what I consider the proper form of refutation. For I know
how to produce one witness to the truth of what I say, the man
with whom I am debating, but the others I ignore. I know how to se-
cure one man’s vote, but with the many I will not even enter into
discussion. Consider then whether you are willing in your turn to
submit to the test by answering my questions. For I think that you and
all other men as well as myself hold it worse to do than to suffer
wrong and worse to escape than to suffer punishment.
POLUS: And I maintain that neither I nor any other man so
believes. Why, would you rather suffer than do wrong?
SOCRATES: Yes, and so would you and everyone else.
POLUS: Far from it! Neither I nor you nor anyone.
SOCRATES: Will you answer then?
POLUS: Certainly, for I am anxious to know what you will say.
SOCRATES: If you wish to know then, answer me, as if I were
beginning my questions to you. Which do you consider the worse,
Polus, to do or to suffer wrong?
POLUS: I? To suffer wrong.
SOCRATES: Well, and is it more shameful to do or to suffer
wrong?
POLUS: To do wrong.
SOCRATES: Is it not worse also, if more shameful?
POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: For the patient is freed from a great evil, so that it is profitable to submit to the pain and recover health.

POLUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And would a man be happiest about his bodily state if he submitted to healing or if he were never sick at all?

POLUS: Obviously if he were never sick at all.

SOCRATES: For happiness, after all, it seems, consists not in a release from evil but in never having contracted it.

POLUS: That is so.

SOCRATES: Again, of two who suffer evil either in body or in soul, which is the more wretched, the man who submits to treatment and gets rid of the evil, or he who is not treated but still retains it?

POLUS: Evidently the man who is not treated.

SOCRATES: And was not punishment admitted to be a release from the greatest of evils, namely wickedness?

POLUS: It was.

SOCRATES: Yes, because a just penalty disciplines us and makes us more just and cures us of evil.

POLUS: I agree.

SOCRATES: Then the happiest of men is he who has no evil in his soul, since this was shown to be the greatest of evils?

POLUS: That is plain.

SOCRATES: And second in order surely is he who is delivered from it.

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: And we found this was the man who is admonished and rebuked and punished.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then his life is most unhappy who is afflicted with evil and does not get rid of it.

POLUS: Evidently.

SOCRATES: And is not this just the man who does the greatest wrong and indulges in the greatest injustice and yet contrives to escape admonition, correction, or punishment—the very condition you describe as achieved by Archelaus and other tyrants, orators, and potentates?

POLUS: It seems so.

SOCRATES: For what these have contrived, my good friend, is pretty much as if a man afflicted with the most grievous ailments should contrive not to pay to the doctors the penalty of his sins against his body by submitting to treatment, because he is afraid, like a child, of the pain of cautery or surgery. Do you not agree?

POLUS: I do.
knowledge of justice, he himself would teach him, and he was shamed into saying he would do so, because the general conventional view demanded it and men would be vexed if one refused. It was through this admission that he was forced to contradict himself, and that is just what you like. And Polus, in my opinion, was quite right in laughing at you at the time, but now he himself in turn has been caught in the same way. And I do not think much of Polus for the very reason that he agreed with you that it is more disgraceful to do than to suffer injustice, for it was as a result of this admission that he was caught in the toils of your argument and silenced, because he was ashamed to say what he thought. For, Socrates, though you claim to pursue the truth, you actually drag us into these tiresome popular fallacies, looking to what is fine and noble, not by nature, but by convention. Now, for the most part, these two, nature and convention, are antagonistic to each other. And so, if a man is ashamed and dares not say what he thinks, he is compelled to contradict himself. And you have discovered this clever trick and do not play fair in your arguments, for if a man speaks on the basis of convention, you slyly question him on the basis of nature, but if he follows nature, you follow convention. For example, in our present discussion of doing and suffering wrong, when Polus spoke of what was conventionally the more shameful, you followed it up by appealing to nature. For by nature everything that is worse is more shameful, suffering wrong for instance, but by convention it is more shameful to do it. For to suffer wrong is not even fit for a man but only for a slave, for whom it is better to be dead than alive, since when wronged and outraged he is unable to help himself or any other for whom he cares. But in my opinion those who framed the laws are the weaker folk, the majority. And accordingly they frame the laws for themselves and their own advantage, and so too with their approval and censure, and to prevent the stronger who are able to overreach them from gaining the advantage over them, they frighten them by saying that to overreach others is shameful and evil, and injustice consists in seeking the advantage over others. For they are satisfied, I suppose, if being inferior they enjoy equality of status. That is the reason why seeking an advantage over the many is by convention said to be wrong and shameful, and they call it injustice. But in my view nature herself makes it plain that it is right for the better to have the advantage over the worse, the more able over the less. And both among all animals and in entire states and races of mankind it is plain that this is the case—that right is recognized to be the sovereignty and advantage of the stronger over the weaker. For what justification had Xerxes in invading Greece or his father in invading Scythia? And there are countless other similar instances one might mention. But I imagine that these men act in accordance with the true nature of right, yes and, by heaven, according to nature's own law, though not perhaps by the law we frame. We mold the best and
CALLICLES: Certainly.

Socrates: And of the better also? For the more powerful are far better, according to you.

CALLICLES: Yes.

Socrates: Then their ordinances are naturally noble, since they are those of the more powerful.

CALLICLES: I agree.

Socrates: Now do the many hold the opinion, as you just now stated, that justice means equal shares and that it is more shameful to do than to suffer wrong? Is this true or not? And mind that you yourself are not caught this time a victim of modesty. Is it the view of the many, or not, that justice means equal shares, not excess, and that it is more shameful to do than to suffer wrong? Do not grudge me my answer, Callicles; then, if you agree with me, I may now confirm the truth by the admission of one fully competent to decide.

CALLICLES: Well, that is the view of the majority.

Socrates: Then it is not by convention only, but also by nature that it is more shameful to do than to suffer wrong and true justice to share equally; so apparently what you said previously was not true and you were mistaken in attacking me when you said that convention and nature are opposed and that I have recognized this and do not play fairly in debate, but invoke convention if a man refers to nature, or nature, when he refers to convention.

CALLICLES: Will this fellow never stop driveling? Tell me, Socrates, are you not ashamed to be captious about words at your age, considering it a godsend if one makes a slip in an expression? Do you imagine that by the more powerful I mean anything else but the better? Did I not tell you long ago that I identify the better and the more powerful? Do you think I mean that, if a rabble of slaves and nondescripts who are of no earthly use except for their bodily strength are gathered together and make some pronouncement, this is law?

Socrates: Well, most sage Callicles, is this what you have to say?

CALLICLES: Most certainly.

Socrates: Well, my strange friend, I myself guessed long ago that you meant something like this by 'the more powerful,' and I repeat my questions only because I am eager to understand clearly what you mean. For surely you do not consider that two are better than one or that your slaves are better than you because they are stronger. But start once again and tell me what you mean by 'the better,' since you do not mean the stronger, and, my admirable friend, lead me on the path of knowledge more gently, that I may not run away from your school.

CALLICLES: You are ironical, Socrates.
socrates: No indeed, Callicles, by that very Zethus of whom you made use just now to heap your irony upon me, but come, tell me, whom do you mean by 'the better'?
callicles: I mean the nobler.
socrates: You see then that you yourself are playing with words but revealing nothing. Will you not tell me whether by 'the better' and 'the more powerful' you mean the wiser or some other class?
callicles: By heaven, I do mean those, and most emphatically.
socrates: Then according to your account one sensible man is often more powerful than ten thousand fools and it is right that he should rule and they be subjects and that the ruler should have more than his subjects; that, I think, is what you mean to say—and I am not trapping you with words—if the one is more powerful than ten thousand.
callicles: That is what I mean, for natural justice I consider to be this, that the better and wiser man should rule over and have more than the inferior.
socrates: Hold there a moment! What is it you mean this time? If many of us are gathered together, as now, in the same place, with plenty of food and drink in common, and if we are of various kinds, some strong, some weak, and one of us, being a doctor, is wiser in these matters and, as is likely, is stronger than some, weaker than others, then surely, being wiser than we are, he will be better and more powerful in this field.
callicles: Certainly.
socrates: Then must he have a larger portion of the food than we do, because he is better, or in virtue of his authority should he do all the distributing, but in the use and expenditure of it ought he to seek no excessive portion for his own body, if he is not to suffer for it, but to receive more than some and less than others? And if he happens to be the weakest of all, then must not the best man get the smallest share of all, Callicles? Is it not so, my good friend?
callicles: You keep talking about food and drink and doctors and nonsense. I am not speaking of these things.
socrates: Do you not say the wiser man is the better? Yes or no?
callicles: I do.
socrates: But should not the better have a larger share?
callicles: Not of food or drink.
socrates: I see. Of clothes perhaps, and the most expert weaver should have the largest cloak and should go around clad in the most numerous and handsome garments?
callicles: Garments indeed!
socrates: Well then, the best and wisest expert in shoes
CALLICLES: What charming innocence! By temperate you mean simpletons.

SOCRATES: How could I? Everybody must realize that that is not my meaning.

CALLICLES: Most certainly it is, Socrates. Why, how could a man be happy when a slave to anybody at all? No, but the naturally noble and just is what I now describe to you with all frankness—namely that anyone who is to live aright should suffer his appetites to grow to the greatest extent and not check them, and through courage and intelligence should be competent to tend them at their greatest and to satisfy every appetite with what it craves. But this, I imagine, is impossible for the many; hence they blame such men through a sense of shame to conceal their own impotence, and, as I remarked before, they claim that intemperance is shameful and they make slaves of those who are naturally better. And because they themselves are unable to procure satisfaction for their pleasures, they are led by their own cowardice to praise temperance and justice. For to those whose lot it has been from the beginning to be the sons of kings or whose natural gifts enable them to acquire some office or tyranny or supreme power, what in truth could be worse and more shameful than temperance and justice? For though at liberty without any hindrance to enjoy their blessings, they would themselves invite the laws, the talk, and the censure of the many to be masters over them. And surely this noble justice and temperance of theirs would make miserable wretches of them, if they could bestow no more upon their friends than on their enemies, and that too when they were rulers in their own states. But the truth, Socrates, which you profess to follow, is this. Luxury and intemperance and license, when they have sufficient backing, are virtue and happiness, and all the rest is tinsel, the unnatural catchwords of mankind, mere nonsense and of no account.

SOCRATES: You make a brave attack, Callicles, with so frank an outburst, for clearly you are now saying what others may think but are reluctant to express. I entreat you therefore on no account to weaken, in order that it may really be made plain how life should be lived. And tell me. You say we should not curb our appetites, if we are to be what we should be, but should allow them the fullest possible growth and procure satisfaction for them from whatever source, and this, you say, is virtue.

CALLICLES: That is what I say.

SOCRATES: Then those who are in need of nothing are not rightly called happy.

CALLICLES: No, in that case stones and corpses would be supremely happy.

SOCRATES: Well, life as you describe it is a strange affair. I
should not be surprised, you know, if Euripides was right when he said, 'Who knows, if life be death, and death be life?' And perhaps we are actually dead, for I once heard one of our wise men say that we are now dead, and that our body is a tomb, and that that part of the soul in which dwell the desires is of a nature to be swayed and to shift to and fro. And so some clever fellow, a Sicilian perhaps or Italian, writing in allegory, by a slight perversion of language named this part of the soul a jar, because it can be swayed and easily persuaded, and the foolish he called the uninitiate, and that part of the soul in foolish people where the desires reside—the uncontrolled and nonretentive part—he likened to a leaky jar, because it can never be filled. And in opposition to you, Callicles, he shows that of those in Hades—the unseen world he means—these uninitiate must be the most unhappy, for they will carry water to pour into a perforated jar in a similarly perforated sieve. And by the sieve, my informant told me, he means the soul, and the soul of the foolish he compared to a sieve, because it is perforated and through lack of belief and forgetfulness unable to hold anything. These ideas may naturally seem somewhat absurd, but they reveal what I want to put before you, to persuade you, if I can, to retract your view and to choose in place of an insatiable and uncontrolled life the life of order that is satisfied with what at any time it possesses. But do I persuade you to change and admit that orderly folk are happier than the undisciplined, or even if I offer many other such allegories, will you not withdraw an inch?

Callicles: That is more like the truth.

Socrates: Come then, let me offer you another image from the same school as the last. Consider whether you would say this of each type of life, the temperate and the undisciplined. Imagine that each of the two men has several jars, in the one case in sound condition and filled, one with wine, another with honey, another with milk, and many others with a variety of liquids, but that the sources of these liquids are scanty and hard to come by, procured only with much hard labor. Imagine then that the one after filling his vessels does not trouble himself to draw in further supplies but as far as the jars are concerned is free from worry; in the case of the other man the sources, as in the first instance are procurable but difficult to come by, but his vessels are perforated and unsound and he is ever compelled to spend day and night in replenishing them, if he is not to suffer the greatest agony. If this is the character of each of the lives, do you still insist that the life of the uncontrolled man is happier than that of the orderly? Do I or do I not persuade you with this image that the disciplined life is better than the intemperate?

Callicles: You do not, Socrates. The man who has filled his vessels can no longer find any pleasure, but this is what I just now

Polyidus, fr. 7.
SOCRATES: Yes, because Polus and I agreed, if you remember, that all our actions should be for the sake of the good. Do you too share our opinion, that the good is the end of all actions and that everything else should be done for its sake, not the good for the sake of everything else? Do you of the third part add your vote to ours?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Then the pleasant as well as everything else should be done for the sake of the good, not the good for the sake of the pleasant.

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Now can any and every man choose which pleasures are good and which bad, or do we need an expert in each case?

CALLICLES: We need an expert.

SOCRATES: Let us recapitulate then what I was saying to Polus and Gorgias. I said, if you remember, that there are certain processes aiming at pleasure which secure pleasure alone but know nothing of the better and the worse, and others that know what is good and evil. And among those concerned with pleasures I named cookery, which is a routine, not an art, and among those concerned with the good the medical art. And, by the god of friendship, Callicles, do not fancy that you should play with me, and give me no haphazard answers contrary to your opinion. And do not either take what I say as if I were merely playing, for you see the subject of our discussion—and on what subject should even a man of slight intelligence be more serious?—namely, what kind of life one should live, the life to which you invite me, that of a 'real man,' speaking in the Assembly and practicing rhetoric and playing the politician according to your present fashion, or the life spent in philosophy, and how the one differs from the other. Perhaps then it is best for us, as I endeavored to do just now, to distinguish between them, and after distinguishing and coming to an agreement together, then, if there are two such lives distinct, to consider in what way they differ from one another and which one should be lived. Now perhaps you do not yet understand what I mean.

CALLICLES: Indeed I do not.

SOCRATES: Well, I will tell you more clearly. Since you and I have agreed that there is a good and there is a pleasant, and that the pleasant is different from the good, and that there is a method of studying and contriving to acquire each of them, one method for pursuing pleasure, another for pursuing the good—but first of all you must either agree with or reject this statement. Do you agree?

CALLICLES: It is as you state.

SOCRATES: Then come, tell me that you agree also with what I said to Gorgias and Polus, if you think that after all I spoke the truth then. I said, I believe, that in my opinion cookery differed from medicine in being, not an art, but a routine, pointing out that the other, that is, medicine, has investigated the nature of the subject it treats.
have demonstrated, just and brave and pious, must be completely good, and the good man must do well and finely whatever he does, and he who does well must be happy and blessed, while the evil man who does ill must be wretched, and he would be the opposite of the temperate man, the undisciplined creature of whom you approve.

This then is the position I take, and I affirm it to be true, and if it is true, then the man who wishes to be happy must, it seems, pursue and practice temperance, and each of us must flee from indiscipline with all the speed in his power and contrive, preferably to have no need of being disciplined, but if he or any of his friends, whether individual or city, has need of it, then he must suffer punishment and be disciplined, if he is to be happy. This I consider to be the mark to which a man should look throughout his life, and all his own endeavors and those of his city he should devote to the single purpose of so acting that justice and temperance shall dwell in him who is to be truly blessed. He should not suffer his appetites to be undisciplined and endeavor to satisfy them by leading the life of a brigand—a mischief without end. For such a man could be dear neither to any other man nor to God, since he is incapable of fellowship, and where there is no fellowship, friendship cannot be. Wise men, Callicles, say that the heavens and the earth, gods and men, are bound together by fellowship and friendship, and order and temperance and justice, and for this reason they call the sum of things the 'ordered' universe, my friend, not the world of disorder or riot. But it seems to me that you pay no attention to these things in spite of your wisdom, but you are unaware that geometric equality is of great importance among gods and men alike, and you think we should practice overreaching others, for you neglect geometry. Well, either we must refute this argument and prove that happiness does not come to the happy through the possession of wickedness, nor does misery come through the possession of justice and temperance, or, if my argument is true, we must consider the consequences. And the consequences are all those previously mentioned, about which you asked me, Callicles, if I was speaking seriously when I said that a man should accuse himself and his son and his friend, if guilty of any wrong deed, and should employ rhetoric for this purpose, and what you thought Polus admitted through a sense of shame is true after all—that it is as much more evil as it is more shameful to do than to suffer wrong, and he who is to become a rhetorician in the right way must after all be a just man with a knowledge of what is just—an admission which Gorgias in turn made, according to Polus, through a sense of shame.

This being so, let us consider whether or not you spoke aright in your reproaches to me, when you said that I am not able to help myself or any of my friends and relations, or to save them from the gravest perils, but like outlawed men am at the mercy of anyone, whether he wishes to box my ears, as you so forcefully expressed it,
CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: But Pericles made them wilder than when he assumed charge of them, and toward himself too, the last person he would have wished to suffer.

CALLICLES: Do you want me to agree with you?

SOCRATES: If you think I am telling the truth.

CALLICLES: Then let it be granted.

SOCRATES: And if wilder, more unjust and worse?

CALLICLES: Granted.

SOCRATES: Then Pericles was no good statesman by this account.

CALLICLES: So you say.

SOCRATES: Yes, and by what you yourself admit. Tell me about Cimon too in turn. Did not those whom he served ostracize him, that they might not hear his voice for ten years? And Themistocles they treated in the same way and in addition punished him by banishment. And Miltiades, the victor of Marathon, they voted to throw into the pit, and he would have suffered this fate but for the president of the Council. And yet if, as you say, these had been good men, they would never have been so treated. It is not true at any rate that, while good charioteers are not thrown from their chariots in their first contests, they are thrown later, when they have trained their horses and have themselves become better drivers. This is not the case in chariot racing or in any other activity, or do you think it is?

CALLICLES: No, not I.

SOCRATES: Then, after all, it seems, our previous statement was true, that we do not know of any man who has proved a good statesman in this city. You admitted that there are none of the present day, but claimed some of days gone by, and chose the men just now mentioned, but they have proved to be on a level with those of our time, and so, if they were orators, they did not employ the true rhetoric—else they would not have been driven out—nor the rhetoric of flattery either.

CALLICLES: But, Socrates, men of our day are far indeed from having achieved what was accomplished by any you like to name among those others.

SOCRATES: My good friend, I too find no fault with them, at least as servants of the city; in fact I consider they were more successful servants than those of today and better able to provide the city with what she desired. But as to giving those desires a different direction instead of allowing them free scope, by persuading and compelling citizens to adopt courses that would improve them—why, therein they were practically in no way superior to the statesmen of today, though this is the only true office of a good citizen. I too agree with you that they were more clever than their successors in providing ships and walls and dockyards and many other such things.
CALLICLES: I say then, to serve and minister.

SOCRATES: Then you invite me, my noble friend, to play the flatterer?

CALLICLES: Yes, if you prefer the most offensive term, for if you do not . . .

SOCRATES: Please do not say what you have said so often—that anyone who wishes will slay me, only for me to repeat in turn that then a villain will slay a good man, nor that anyone will rob me of anything I possess, only for me to repeat that, once he has robbed me, he will not know what to do with his spoil, but even as he robbed me unjustly, so too he will make an unjust use of it, and if unjust, shameful, and if shameful, wicked.

CALLICLES: How confident you seem, Socrates, that you can never experience any of these troubles whatever, as if you dwelt apart and could never be haled into court by, it may be, some utterly mean and vile creature.

SOCRATES: Then I must indeed be a senseless person, Callicles, if I do not think that in this city anything whatever may happen to anybody. But this at least I know well, that if I am brought into court to face any such danger as you mention, it will be an evil man who prosecutes me—for no good man would drag a guiltless person into court—and it would not be surprising if I were put to death. Would you like me to tell you why I expect this?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: I think that I am one of very few Athenians, not to say the only one, engaged in the true political art, and that of the men of today I alone practice statesmanship. Since therefore when I speak on any occasion it is not with a view to winning favor, but I aim at what is best, not what is most pleasant, and since I am unwilling to engage in those ‘dainty devices’ that you recommend, I shall have nothing to say for myself when in court. And the same figure occurs to me that I used to Polus. My trial will be like that of a doctor prosecuted by a cook before a jury of children. Just consider what kind of defense such a man could offer in such a predicament, if the plaintiff should accuse him in these terms: Children of the jury, this fellow has done all of you abundant harm, and the youngest among you he is ruining by surgery and cautery, and he bewilders you by starving and choking you, giving you bitter draughts and compelling you to hunger and thirst, whereas I used to feast you with plenty of sweetmeats of every kind.

What do you think a doctor could find to say in such a desperate situation? If he spoke the truth and said, All this I did, children, in the interests of health, what a shout do you think such a jury would utter? Would it not be a loud one?

CALLICLES: Perhaps; one must suppose so.
SOCRATES: Do you not think he would be utterly baffled as to what to say?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Well, I too know that my experience would be similar, if I were brought into court. For I shall not be able to tell them of pleasures that I have purveyed—pleasures which they hold to be benefits and services, but I can envy neither those who purvey them nor those for whom they are provided. And if anyone claims either that I corrupt the young by bewildering them or that I abuse the older in bitter terms either in private or public, I shall neither be able to tell the truth and claim that I am right in saying all that I do and that it is your interests I am serving in this, gentlemen of the jury, nor shall I be able to say anything else, and so perhaps anything whatever may happen to me.

CALLICLES: Do you think then, Socrates, that all is well with a man who is in this plight and is unable to help himself in his own country?

SOCRATES: Yes, if he should possess that one means of help which you have so often acknowledged; if he has helped himself by doing no wrong in word or deed either to gods or to men, for this we have often admitted to be the best of all aids to oneself. Now if anyone should convict me of being unable to render this aid to myself or another, I should feel ashamed, whether I was convicted before many or few or man to man, and I should be vexed if I had to die through lack of such power as this. But if I should meet my death owing to a deficiency of flattering rhetoric, I am confident you would find me taking my death calmly. For no one who is not utterly irrational and cowardly is afraid of the mere act of dying; it is evil-doing that he fears. For to arrive in the other world with a soul surcharged with many wicked deeds is the worst of all evils. And if you like, I am ready to tell you a tale which will prove that this is so.

CALLICLES: Well, since you have finished all else, you may finish this too.

SOCRATES: Give ear then, as they say, to a very fine story, which you, I suppose, will consider fiction, but I consider fact, for what I am going to tell you I shall recount as the actual truth. As Homer says, Zeus and Poseidon and Pluto divided their kingdom among themselves after inheriting it from their father. Now in the days of Cronus there was this law about mankind, which from then till now has prevailed among the gods, that the man who has led a godly and righteous life departs after death to the Isles of the Blessed and there lives in all happiness exempt from ill, but the godless and unrighteous man departs to the prison of vengeance and punishment which they call Tartarus. And in the days of Cronus and even when Zeus was but lately come to power, living men rendered
physical characteristics acquired in life all or the greater part are visible for some time after death. And so I believe that the same thing is true of the soul, Callicles; once it has been stripped of the body, everything in the soul is manifest—its natural characteristics and the experiences which a man’s soul has encountered through occupations of various kinds. When therefore they arrive before their judge—those from Asia before Rhadamanthus—he halts them and scans the soul of each, quite unaware whose it is, but he will often lay hold of the Great King or any other king or potentate and see that there is no sign of health in his soul but that it is torn to ribbons by the scourge and full of scars due to perjuries and crime—the marks branded on the soul by every evil deed—and that everything is crooked through falsehood and imposture, and nothing straight because it has been reared a stranger to truth. And he sees that owing to the license and luxury and presumption and incontinence of its actions the soul is surcharged with disproportion and ugliness, and seeing this he sends it away in ignominy straight to the prison house, where it is doomed on its arrival to endure the sufferings proper to it. And it is proper for everyone who suffers a punishment rightly inflicted by another that he should either be improved and benefited thereby or become a warning to the rest, in order that they may be afraid when they see him suffering what he does and may become better men. Now, those who are benefited through suffering punishment by gods and men are beings whose evil deeds are curable; nevertheless it is from pain and agony that they derive their benefit both here and in the other world, for it is impossible to be rid of evil otherwise. But those who have been guilty of the most heinous crimes and whose misdeeds are past cure—of these warnings are made, and they are no longer capable themselves of receiving any benefit, because they are incurable—but others are benefited who behold them suffering throughout eternity the greatest and most excruciating and terrifying tortures because of their misdeeds, literally suspended as examples there in the prison house in Hades, a spectacle and a warning to any evildoers who from time to time arrive. And one of these, I maintain, is Archelaus, if Polus tells us the truth, and any other tyrant too of like character, and I think that most of these warning examples are chosen from tyrants and kings and potentates and politicians, for these, owing to the license they enjoy, are guilty of the greatest and most impious crimes.

Now Homer bears me out in this, for he has represented as those who suffer eternal punishment in Hades kings and princes, Tantalus and Sisyphus and Tityus, but Thersites or any other private person who did wrong has by no one been represented as afflicted with cruel punishment because incurable, for I suppose he had not the power, and therefore was happier than those who had. But, Callicles, it is among the most powerful that you find the superlatively wicked. Still there is nothing to prevent good men from finding a place even among
the powerful, and those who do so are deserving of special admiration,
for it is difficult, Callicles, and most praiseworthy to pass through life
in righteousness when you have every license to do wrong. But men
of this kind are few, though both in Athens and elsewhere there have
been and, I fancy, will yet be honorable men and true, who possess the
virtue of managing justly whatever is entrusted to them, and one of
these won great renown even among the rest of the Greeks, Aristides,
son of Lysimachus, but most of those in power, my good friend, prove
evil.

As I said then, whenever Rhadamanthus receives one of these,
he knows nothing else about him, his name or origin, only that he is
evil, and when he perceives this, he dispatches him straight to Tar	
tarus after first setting a seal upon him to show whether he appears to	
him curable or incurable, and on arrival there he undergoes the ap	
propriate punishment. But sometimes he sees another soul, that	
d has lived in piety and truth, that of a private citizen or any other—
but in especial, I maintain, Callicles, the soul of a philosopher who
d has applied himself to his own business and not played the busybody
d in his life—and he is filled with admiration and sends him forthwith
d to the Isles of the Blessed. And Aeacus behaves in exactly the same
d way—each of the two gives sentence staff in hand—and Minos sits as
d judge of appeal, and he alone bears a scepter of gold, even as Odysseus
d in Homer says he saw him, 'holding a scepter of gold, rendering laws
d to the dead.'

Now I have been convinced by these stories, Callicles, and I am
e considering how I may present to my judge the healthiest possible
e soul, and so I renounce the honors sought by most men, and pursuing
e the truth I shall really endeavor both to live and, when death comes,
e to die, as good a man as I possibly can be. And I exhort all other men
e thereto to the best of my power, and you above all I invite in return to
e share this life and to enlist in this contest which I maintain excels
de all other contests, and I reproach you in your turn because you will
e not be able to help yourself when the trial and judgment takes place
de of which I spoke just now. But when you come before your judge, the
e son of Aegina, and he seizes hold of you, you will gape and reel to
e and fro there, no less than I do here, and perhaps someone will hu
eiliate you by boxing your ears and will do you every kind of outrage.

Now perhaps all this seems to you like an old wife's tale and you
de despise it, and there would be nothing strange in despising it if our
e searches could discover anywhere a better and truer account, but as it is you see that you three, who are the wisest Greeks of the day, you
e and Polus and Gorgias, cannot demonstrate that we should live
e any other life than this, which is plainly of benefit also in the other
e world. But amid all these arguments, while others were refuted, this

6 Odyssey 11.569.
alone stands steadfast, that we should be more on our guard against doing than suffering wrong, and that before all things a man should study not to seem but to be good, whether in private or in public life, and that if anyone proves evil in any way, he should be chastised, and next to being good the second-best thing is to become good and to make amends by punishment, and that we should avoid every form of flattery, whether to ourselves or to others, whether to few or to many, and that rhetoric and every other activity should ever so be employed, to attain justice. If you will listen to me then, you will follow me where on your arrival you will win happiness both in life and after death, as our account reveals. And you may let anyone despise you as a fool and do you outrage, if he wishes, yes, and you may cheerfully let him strike you with that humiliating blow, for you will suffer no harm thereby if you really are a good man and an honorable, and pursue virtue. And after such training in common together, then at last, if we think fit, we may enter public life, or we may take counsel together on whatever course suggests itself, when we are better able to take counsel than now. For it seems to me shameful that, being what apparently at this moment we are, we should consider ourselves to be fine fellows, when we can never hold to the same views about the same questions—and those too the most vital of all—so deplorably uneducated are we! Then let us follow the guidance of the argument now made manifest, which reveals to us that this is the best way of life—to live and die in the pursuit of righteousness and all other virtues. Let us follow this, I say, inviting others to join us, not that which you believe in and commend to me, for it is worthless, dear Callicles.
I should say, in his capacity as a doctor.
And what would you hope to become?
A doctor.
And suppose your idea was to go to Polyclitus of Argos or Phidias of Athens and pay them fees for your own benefit, and someone asked you in what capacity you thought of paying this money to them, what would you answer?
I should say, in their capacity as sculptors.
To make you what?
A sculptor, obviously.
Right, said I. Now here are you and I going to Protagoras prepared to pay him money as a fee for you—our own if it is enough to satisfy him, or if not, our friends' resources thrown in as well. If then, seeing us so full of enthusiasm, someone should ask, Tell me, Socrates and Hippocrates, what do you suppose Protagoras is, that you intend to pay him money? what should we answer him? What particular name do we hear attached to Protagoras in the sort of way that Phidias is called a sculptor and Homer a poet?
Well, Sophist, I suppose, Socrates, is the name generally given to him.
Then it is as a Sophist that we will go to him and pay him?
Yes.
And if you had to face the further question, What do you yourself hope to become by your association with Protagoras?
He blushed at this—there was already a streak of daylight to betray him—and replied, If this is like the other cases, I must say 'to become a Sophist.'
But wouldn't a man like you be ashamed, said I, to face your fellow countrymen as a Sophist?
If I am to speak my real mind, I certainly should.
Perhaps then this is not the kind of instruction you expect to get from Protagoras, but rather the kind you got from the schoolmasters who taught you letters and music and gymnastics. You didn't learn these for professional purposes, to become a practitioner, but in the way of liberal education, as a layman and a gentleman should.
That exactly describes, said he, the sort of instruction I expect from Protagoras.
Well then, I went on, do you understand what you are now going to do, or not?
In what respect?
I mean that you are going to entrust the care of your soul to a man who is, in your own words, a Sophist, though I should be surprised if you know just what a Sophist is. And yet if you don't know that, you don't know to whom you are entrusting your soul, nor whether he represents something good or bad.
I think I know, said he.
Tell me then, what do you think a Sophist is? I suppose, as the name implies, one who has knowledge of wise things.

One could say the same, said I, of painters and builders, that they are those who have knowledge of wise things. But if we were asked what sort of wisdom painters understand, we should reply, wisdom concerned with the making of likenesses, and so on with the others. If then we were asked what sort of wise things the Sophist has knowledge of, what should we answer? Of what is he the master?

The only answer we could give is that he is master of the art of making clever speakers.

Well, our answer might be true, but would hardly be sufficient. It invites the further question, On what matter does the Sophist make one a clever speaker? For example, the teacher of lyre playing I suppose makes people clever at speaking on his own subject, namely lyre playing, doesn’t he?

Yes.

Well, on what subject does the Sophist make clever speakers? Obviously on the subject of which he imparts knowledge.

Very probably. And what is this subject on which the Sophist is both an expert himself and can make his pupil expert?

I give up, he said. I can’t tell you.

Well then, I continued, do you realize the sort of danger to which you are going to expose your soul? If it were a case of putting your body into the hands of someone and risking the treatment’s turning out beneficial or the reverse, you would ponder deeply whether to entrust it to him or not, and would spend many days over the question, calling on the counsel of your friends and relations. But when it comes to something which you value more highly than your body, namely your soul—something on whose beneficial or harmful treatment your whole welfare depends—you have not consulted either your father or your brother or any of us who are your friends on the question whether or not to entrust your soul to this stranger who has arrived among us. On the contrary, having heard the news in the evening, so you tell me, here you come at dawn, not to discuss or consult me on this question of whether or not to entrust yourself to Protagoras, but ready to spend both your own money and that of your friends as if you had already made up your mind that you must at all costs associate with this man—whom you say you do not know and have never spoken to, but call a Sophist, and then turn out not to know what a Sophist is though you intend to put yourself into his hands.

When he heard this he said, It looks like it, Socrates, from what you say.

Can we say then, Hippocrates, that a Sophist is really a merchant
or peddler of the goods by which a soul is nourished? To me he appears to be something like that.

But what is it that nourishes a soul?

What it learns, presumably, I said. And we must see that the Sophist in commending his wares does not deceive us, like the wholesaler and the retailer who deal in food for the body. These people do not know themselves which of the wares they offer is good or bad for the body, but in selling them praise all alike, and those who buy from them don't know either, unless one of them happens to be a trainer or a doctor. So too those who take the various subjects of knowledge from city to city, and offer them for sale retail to whoever wants them, commend everything that they have for sale, but it may be, my dear Hippocrates, that some of these men also are ignorant of the beneficial or harmful effects on the soul of what they have for sale, and so too are those who buy from them, unless one of them happens to be a physician of the soul. If then you chance to be an expert in discerning which of them is good or bad, it is safe for you to buy knowledge from Protagoras or anyone else, but if not, take care you don't find yourself gambling dangerously with all of you that is dearest to you. Indeed the risk you run in purchasing knowledge is much greater than that in buying provisions. When you buy food and drink, you can carry it away from the shop or warehouse in a receptacle, and before you receive it into your body by eating or drinking you can store it away at home and take the advice of an expert as to what you should eat and drink and what not, and how much you should consume and when; so there is not much risk in the actual purchase. But knowledge cannot be taken away in a parcel. When you have paid for it you must receive it straight into the soul. You go away having learned it and are benefited or harmed accordingly. So I suggest we give this matter some thought, not only by ourselves, but also with those who are older than we, for we are still rather young to examine such a large problem. However, now let us carry out our plan to go and hear the man, and when we have heard him we can bring others into our consultations also, for Protagoras is not here by himself. There is Hipplas of Elis, and I think Prodicus of Ceos too, and many other wise men.

Having agreed on this we started out. When we found ourselves in the doorway, we stood there and continued a discussion which had arisen between us on the way. So that we might not leave it unfinished, but have it out before we went in, we were standing in the doorway talking until we should reach agreement. I believe the porter, a eunuch, overheard us, and it seems likely that the crowd of Sophists had put him in a bad temper with visitors. At any rate when we knocked at the door he opened it, saw us and said, Ha, Sophists! He's busy. And thereupon he slammed the door as hard as he could with
instance, the father of these two boys, gave them the very best education in everything that depends on teaching, but in his own special kind of wisdom he neither trains them himself nor hands them over to any other instructor; they simply browse around on their own like sacred cattle, on the chance of picking up virtue automatically. To take a different example, Clinias, the younger brother of Alcibiades here, is a ward of that same Pericles, who for fear that Alcibiades would corrupt him, took him away and tried to give him a better upbringing by placing him in the household of Ariphron. Before six months were out, Ariphron gave him back; he could make nothing of him. I could mention plenty of others too, excellent men themselves, who never made anyone else better, either their own relatives or others.

With these facts in mind, Protagoras, I do not believe that virtue can be taught. But when I hear you speaking as I do, my skepticism is shaken and I suppose there is truth in what you say, for I regard you as a man of wide experience, deep learning, and original thought. If then you can demonstrate more plainly to us that virtue is something that can be taught, please don’t hoard your wisdom but explain.

I shall not be a miser, Socrates, he replied. Now shall I, as an old man speaking to his juniors, put my explanation in the form of a story, or give it as a reasoned argument?

Many of the audience answered that he should relate it in whichever form he pleased.

Then I think, he said, it will be pleasanter to tell you a story.

Once upon a time, there existed gods but no mortal creatures. When the appointed time came for these also to be born, the gods formed them within the earth out of a mixture of earth and fire and the substances which are compounded from earth and fire. And when they were ready to bring them to the light, they charged Prometheus and Epimetheus with the task of equipping them and allotting suitable powers to each kind. Now Epimetheus begged Prometheus to allow him to do the distribution himself—'and when I have done it,' he said, 'you can review it.' So he persuaded him and set to work. In his allotment he gave to some creatures strength without speed, and equipped the weaker kinds with speed. Some he armed with weapons, while to the unarmed he gave some other faculty and so contrived means for their preservation. To those that he endowed with smallness, he granted winged flight or a dwelling underground; to those which he increased in stature, their size itself was a protection. Thus he made his whole distribution on a principle of compensation, being careful by these devices that no species should be destroyed.

When he had sufficiently provided means of escape from mutual slaughter, he contrived their comfort against the seasons sent from Zeus, clothing them with thick hair or hard skins sufficient to ward
off the winter's cold, and effective also against heat, and he planned that when they went to bed, the same coverings should serve as proper and natural bedclothes for each species. He shod them also, some with hoofs, others with hard and bloodless skin.

Next he appointed different sorts of food for them—to some the grass of the earth, to others the fruit of trees, to others roots. Some he allowed to gain their nourishment by devouring other animals, and these he made less prolific, while he bestowed fertility on their victims, and so preserved the species.

Now Epimetheus was not a particularly clever person, and before he realized it he had used up all the available powers on the brute beasts, and being left with the human race on his hands unprovided for, did not know what to do with them. While he was puzzling about this, Prometheus came to inspect the work, and found the other animals well off for everything, but man naked, unshod, unbedded, and unarmed, and already the appointed day had come, when man too was to emerge from within the earth into the daylight. Prometheus therefore, being at a loss to provide any means of salvation for man, stole from Hephaestus and Athena the gift of skill in the arts, together with fire—for without fire it was impossible for anyone to possess or use this skill—and bestowed it on man. In this way man acquired sufficient resources to keep himself alive, but had no political wisdom. This was in the keeping of Zeus, and Prometheus no longer had the right of entry to the citadel where Zeus dwelt; moreover the sentinels of Zeus were terrible. But into the dwelling shared by Athena and Hephaestus, in which they practiced their art, he penetrated by stealth, and carrying off Hephaestus' art of working with fire, and the art of Athena as well, he gave them to man. Through this gift man had the means of life, but Prometheus, so the story says, thanks to Epimetheus, had later on to stand his trial for theft.

Since, then, man had a share in the portion of the gods, in the first place because of his divine kinship he alone among living creatures believed in gods, and set to work to erect altars and images of them. Secondly, by the art which they possessed, men soon discovered articulate speech and names, and invented houses and clothes and shoes and bedding and got food from the earth. Thus provided for, they lived at first in scattered groups; there were no cities. Consequently they were devoured by wild beasts, since they were in every respect the weaker, and their technical skill, though a sufficient aid to their nurture, did not extend to making war on the beasts, for they had not the art of politics, of which the art of war is a part. They sought therefore to save themselves by coming together and founding fortified cities, but when they gathered in communities they injured one another for want of political skill, and so scattered again and continued to be devoured. Zeus therefore, fearing the total destruction of our race, sent Hermes to impart to men the
qualities of respect for others and a sense of justice, so as to bring order into our cities and create a bond of friendship and union.

Hermes asked Zeus in what manner he was to bestow these gifts on men. 'Shall I distribute them as the arts were distributed—that is, on the principle that one trained doctor suffices for many laymen, and so with the other experts? Shall I distribute justice and respect for their fellows in this way, or to all alike?'

To all,' said Zeus. 'Let all have their share. There could never be cities if only a few shared in these virtues, as in the arts. Moreover, you must lay it down as my law that if anyone is incapable of acquiring his share of these two virtues he shall be put to death as a plague to the city.'

Thus it is, Socrates, and from this cause, that in a debate involving skill in building, or in any other craft, the Athenians, like other men, believe that few are capable of giving advice, and if someone outside those few volunteers to advise them, then as you say, they do not tolerate it—rightly so, in my submission. But when the subject of their counsel involves political wisdom, which must always follow the path of justice and moderation, they listen to every man's opinion, for they think that everyone must share in this kind of virtue; otherwise the state could not exist. That, Socrates, is the reason for this.

Here is another proof that I am not deceiving you in saying that all men do in fact believe that everyone shares a sense of justice and civic virtue. In specialized skills, as you say, if a man claims to be good at the flute or at some other art when he is not, people either laugh at him or are annoyed, and his family restrain him as if he were crazy. But when it comes to justice and civic virtue as a whole, even if someone is known to be wicked, yet if he publicly tells the truth about himself, his truthfulness, which in the other case was counted a virtue, is here considered madness. Everyone, it is said, ought to say he is good, whether he is or not, and whoever does not make such a claim is out of his mind, for a man cannot be without some share in justice, or he would not be human.

So much then for the point that men rightly take all alike into their counsels concerning virtue of this sort, because they believe that all have a share in it. I shall next try to demonstrate to you that they do not regard it as innate or automatic, but as acquired by instruction and taking thought. No one is angered by the faults which are believed to be due to nature or chance, nor do people rebuke or teach or punish those who exhibit them, in the hope of curing them; they simply pity them. Who would be so foolish as to treat in that way the ugly or dwarfish or weak? Everyone knows that it is nature or chance which gives this kind of characteristics to a man, both the good and the bad. But it is otherwise with the good qualities which are thought to be acquired through care and practice and instruction. It is the absence of these, surely, and the presence of the corresponding
vices, that call forth indignation and punishment and admonition. Among these faults are to be put injustice and irreligion and in general everything that is contrary to civic virtue. In this field indignation and admonition are universal, evidently because of a belief that such virtue can be acquired by taking thought or by instruction. Just consider the function of punishment, Socrates, in relation to the wrongdoer. That will be enough to show you that men believe it possible to impart goodness. In punishing wrongdoers, no one concentrates on the fact that a man has done wrong in the past, or punishes him on that account, unless taking blind vengeance like a beast. No, punishment is not inflicted by a rational man for the sake of the crime that has been committed—after all one cannot undo what is past—but for the sake of the future, to prevent either the same man or, by the spectacle of his punishment, someone else, from doing wrong again. But to hold such a view amounts to holding that virtue can be instilled by education; at all events the punishment is inflicted as a deterrent. This then is the view held by all who inflict it whether privately or publicly. And your fellow countrymen, the Athenians, certainly do inflict punishment and correction on supposed wrongdoers, as do others also. This argument therefore shows that they too think it possible to impart and teach goodness.

I think that I have now sufficiently demonstrated to you, first that your countrymen act reasonably in accepting the advice of smith and shoemaker on political matters, and secondly, that they do believe goodness to be something imparted by teaching. There remains the question which troubles you about good men—why it is that whereas they teach their sons the subjects that depend on instruction, and make them expert in these things, yet in their own brand of goodness they do not make them any better than others. On this, Socrates, I will offer you a plain argument rather than a parable as I did before. Think of it like this. Is there or is there not some one thing in which all citizens must share, if a state is to exist at all? In the answer to this question, if anywhere, lies the solution of your difficulty. If there is, and this one essential is not the art of building or forging or pottery but justice and moderation and holiness of life, or to concentrate it into a single whole, manly virtue—if, I say, it is this in which all must share and which must enter into every man's actions whatever other occupation he chooses to learn and practice; if the one who lacks it, man, woman, or child, must be instructed and corrected until by punishment he is reformed, and whoever does not respond to punishment and instruction must be expelled from the state or put to death as incurable—if all this is true, and in these circumstances our good men teach their sons other accomplishments but not this one thing, then think what extraordinary people good men must be! We have already shown that they believe it can be taught, both publicly and privately. But although virtue can be taught and cultivated, yet it
in accordance with them. Whoever strays outside the lines, it pun­ishes, and the name given to this punishment both among yourselves e and in many other places is correction, intimating that the penalty corrects or guides.

Seeing then that all this care is taken over virtue, both individ­ually and by the state, are you surprised that virtue should be teach­able, and puzzled to know whether it is? There is nothing to be surprised at. The wonder would be if it were not teachable.

Why then, you ask, do many sons of good men turn out worth­less? I will tell you this too. It is nothing surprising, if what I said earlier was true, that this faculty, virtue, is something in which no one may be a layman if a state is to exist at all. If it is as I say—and most assuredly it is—consider the matter with the substitution of any art you like. Suppose a state could not exist unless we were all flute players to the best of our ability, and everyone taught everyone else that art both privately and publicly, and scolded the bad flute player, and no one held back on this subject any more than anyone now begrudges information on what is right and lawful or makes a secret of it as of certain other techniques. After all, it is to our advan­tage that our neighbor should be just and virtuous, and therefore everyone gladly talks about it to everyone else and instructs him in justice and the law. If then, as I say, it were so with flute playing, and we all showed equal eagerness and willingness to teach one another, do you think, Socrates, that the sons of good players would become good players in their turn any more than the sons of bad ones? Not so, I think, but whoever had a son with the greatest natural talent for the flute, his son would rise to fame, a n d a son without this talent would c remain in obscurity. The son of a good performer would often be a poor one, and vice versa, but at any rate all would be good enough in comparison with someone who knew nothing of flute playing at all.

Now apply this analogy to our present condition. The man who in a civilized and humane society appears to you the most wicked must be thought just—a practitioner, as one might say, of justice—if one has to judge him in comparison with men who have neither edu­cation nor courts of justice nor laws nor any constraint compelling them to be continually heedful of virtue—savages in fact like those whom the playwright Pherecrates brought onto the stage at last year’s Lenaea. If you found yourself among such people—people like the man-haters of his chorus—you would be only too glad to meet a Eurybatus and a Phryndonas, and would bitterly regret the very depravity of our own society. But as it is you are spoiled, Socrates, e in that all are teachers of virtue to the best of their ability, and so you think that no one is. In the same way if you asked who teaches the Greek language you would not find anyone, and again if you looked for a teacher of the sons of our artisans in the craft which they have in fact learned from their father to the best of their ability, and from his
No.

In short, said I, to everything that admits of a contrary there is one contrary and no more.

He conceded the point.

d Now, said I, let us recapitulate our points of agreement. We agreed that each thing has one contrary and no more, that what is done in a contrary manner is done by a contrary agency, that a foolish action is contrary to a temperate one, and that a temperate action is performed with temperance and a foolish one with folly.

e He admitted all this.

If then what is done in a contrary manner is done by a contrary agency, and one action is performed with temperance and the other with folly—in a contrary manner and so by contrary agencies—then folly is the contrary of temperance.

It seems so.

Now you remember our earlier agreement that folly was the contrary of wisdom?

Yes.

And that one thing has one contrary?

Certainly.

Then which statement are we to give up? The dictum 'one thing one contrary' or the statement that wisdom is a distinct thing from temperance, both being parts of virtue, and that in addition to each being distinct they are dissimilar both in themselves and in their functions, like the parts of a face? Which shall we renounce? The two statements are not very harmonious. They don't chime well together or fit in with each other. How could they, if one thing can have only one opposite, and yet though folly is only one thing, temperance as well as wisdom appears to be contrary to it? Isn't that the way of it, Protagoras?

He agreed, though most reluctantly.

Then must not temperance and wisdom be the same, just as earlier justice and holiness turned out to be much the same? Come now, Protagoras, we must not falter, but complete our inquiry. Do you think that a man who commits an injustice acts temperately in committing it?

For my part I should be ashamed to agree to that, he replied. Of course many people do.

Well, shall I direct my argument against them or against you?

If you wish, he said, argue first against the proposition of the many.

It is all the same to me, said I, provided you make the replies, whether it is your own opinion or not. It is the argument itself that I wish to probe, though it may turn out that both I who question and you who answer are equally under scrutiny.

d At first Protagoras began to make difficulties, alleging that it
we have a discussion otherwise? Personally I thought that companionable talk was one thing, and public speaking another.

But don't you see, Socrates? he said. Protagoras is surely right in thinking that he is entitled to talk in the way that suits him, just as much as you are.

Here Alcibiades broke in. No, no, Callias, he said. Socrates admits frankly that long speeches are beyond him and that Protagoras has the better of him there, but in discussion and the intelligent give-and-take of arguments I doubt if he would give any man best. If Protagoras in his turn admits that Socrates beats him in discussion, Socrates will be satisfied. But if he maintains his claim, let him continue the discussion with question and answer, not meeting every question with a long oration, eluding the arguments and refusing to meet them properly, spinning it out until most of his hearers have forgotten what the question was about—not that Socrates will be the one to forget it. I'll guarantee that, in spite of his little joke about being forgetful. I hold then that what Socrates proposes is the more reasonable, and I suppose it's right for each of us to say what he thinks.

After Alcibiades, so far as I remember, it was Critias who spoke, addressing his remarks to Prodicus and Hippias. Callias, he said, seems to me to be very much on the side of Protagoras, and Alcibiades is always out to win when he takes up a cause. But it is not for us to be partisans either of Socrates or of Protagoras. Let us explore them both alike not to break up the discussion in mid-career.

Hearing this, Prodicus began, You are quite right, Critias. Those who are present at discussions of this kind must divide their attention between the speakers impartially, but not equally. The two things are not the same. They must hear both alike, but not give equal weight to each. More should be given to the wiser, and less to the other. I add my plea, Protagoras and Socrates, that you should be reconciled. Let your conversation be a discussion, not a dispute. A discussion is carried on among friends with good will, but a dispute is between rivals and enemies. In this way our meeting will be best conducted. You, the speakers, will be esteemed by us—esteemed, I say, not praised, for esteem is a genuine feeling in the hearts of the audience, whereas praise is often on the lips of men belying their true conviction—and we who listen will experience enjoyment rather than pleasure. Enjoyment can result from learning and partaking in the intellectual activity of the mind alone, but pleasure arises rather from eating or other forms of physical indulgence.

So said Prodicus, and a large number of those present expressed agreement. After him the wise Hippias spoke up. Gentlemen, he said, I count you all my kinsmen and family and fellow citizens—by nature, not by convention. By nature like is kin to like, but custom, the tyrant of mankind, does much violence to nature. For us then who
will concern the subject of our present discussion, namely virtue, but transferred to the realm of poetry. That will be the only difference. Simonides in one of his poems says to Scopas, son of Creon of Thessaly,

Hard is it on the one hand to become  
A good man truly, hands and feet and mind  
Foursquare, wrought without blame.

Do you know the piece, or should I recite it all to you?  
There is no need, I said. I know it and have given it quite a lot of study.

Good. Now do you think it a beautiful and well-written poem?  
Yes, both beautiful and well written.

And do you think a poem beautifully written if the poet contradicts himself?  
No.

Then look at it more closely.  
But really I have given it enough thought.

Then you must know that as the poem proceeds he says:

Nor do I count as sure the oft-quoted word  
Of Pittacus, though wise indeed he was  
Who spoke it. To be noble, said the sage,  
Is hard.

You understand that this is the same poet as wrote the previous lines?  
Yes.

Then you think the two passages are consistent?  
For my part I do, said I, though not without a fear that he might be right. Don’t you?

How can a man be thought consistent when he says both these things? First he lays it down himself that it is hard for a man to become truly good; then when he is a little further on in the poem he forgets. He finds fault with Pittacus, who said the same thing as he did himself, that it is hard to be noble, and refuses to accept it from him; but in censuring the man who said the same as he does, he obviously censures himself. Either his first or his second statement is wrong.

This sally evoked praise and applause from many of the audience, and at first I was like a man who has been hit by a good boxer; at his words and the applause things went dark and I felt giddy. Then I turned to Prodicus—and to tell you the truth, this was a move to gain time to consider what the poet meant—and appealed to him by name. Prodicus, I said, Simonides is of course your fellow citizen; you ought to come to his aid. I think I will call on you as the river Scamander in Homer called on the Simois when hard pressed by Achilles, with the words:
Dear brother, let us both together stem the hero's might.

So I appeal to you lest our Simonides be sacked by Protagoras like another Troy, since truly to justify Simonides calls for that art of yours whereby you discern the difference between 'wish' and 'desire' and make all those other elegant distinctions which we heard just now. So see whether you agree with me. I don't believe Simonides contradicts himself. Now let us have your opinion first. Do you think 'to become' and 'to be' are the same, or different?

Different, most certainly, said Prodicus.

Well, at the beginning Simonides gave his own view, that it is difficult to become a good man, didn't he?

True, said Prodicus.

But as for Pittacus, he censures him not, as Protagoras thinks, for saying the same thing, but something different. According to Pittacus, the difficulty is not to become noble, as Simonides said it was, but to be. As Prodicus says, Protagoras, to be and to become are not the same; and if to be is not the same as to become, Simonides is not contradicting himself. I shouldn't be surprised if Prodicus and many others would agree with Hesiod that it is difficult to become good—he says, you remember,

The gods have put sweat on the path to virtue,

but when

The summit's reached,
Hard though it was, thenceforth the task is light
To keep it.*

Prodicus commended my explanation, but Protagoras said, Your justification, Socrates, involves a greater error than the one it sets out to defend.

It seems then, said I, that I have done harm, and am a contemptible physician, whose cure inflames the disease.

Well, it is so.

Explain, said I.

The poet must be very stupid, if he says that it is such a light matter to hold on to virtue, when everyone agrees that there is nothing more difficult.

To this I rejoined, It's a remarkably lucky thing that our friend Prodicus happens to be present at this discussion. I have a notion that his branch of wisdom is an old and god-given one, beginning perhaps with Simonides or going even further back. Your learning covers many things but not, it appears, this. You are not acquainted with it as I have become through being a pupil of Prodicus. So now I don't think you understand that Simonides may not have taken this word

cities, who to emulate them go about with bruised ears, bind their hands with thongs, take to physical training, and wear short cloaks, under the impression that these are the practices which have made the Spartans a great power in Greece; whereas the Spartans, when they want to resort freely to their wise men and are tired of meeting them in secret, expel all resident aliens, whether they be sympathizers with the Spartan way of life or not, and converse with the Sophists unbeknown to any foreigners. Conversely they don't allow any of their youths to go abroad, for fear they should forget what they have learned at home. No more do the Cretans. And in these states there are not only men but also women who are proud of their intellectual culture.

Now this is how you may know that I am telling the truth and that the Spartans are the best educated in philosophy and speaking. If you talk to the most ordinary Spartan, you will find that for most of the time he shows himself a quite unimpressive speaker. But then, at some chance point in the conversation, like a brilliant marksman he shoots in a telling phrase, brief and taut, showing up whoever is talking to him to be as helpless as a child.

Now there are some, both at the present day and in the past, who have tumbled to this fact, namely that to be Spartan implies a taste for intellectual rather than physical exercise, for they realize that to frame such utterances is a mark of the highest culture. Of these were Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mytilene, Bias of Priene, our own Solon, Cleobulus of Lindus, and Myson of Chen, and the seventh of their company, we are told, was a Spartan, Chilon. All these were emulators, admirers, and disciples of Spartan culture, and their wisdom may be recognized as belonging to the same category, consisting of pithy and memorable dicta uttered by each. Moreover they met together and dedicated the first fruits of their wisdom to Apollo in his temple at Delphi, inscribing those words which are on everyone's lips, 'Know thyself' and 'Nothing too much.'

I mention these facts to make the point that, among the ancients, this Laconic brevity was the characteristic expression of philosophy. In particular this saying of Pittacus, 'Hard is it to be noble,' got into circulation privately and earned the approval of the wise. It occurred therefore to Simonides, with his philosophical ambitions, that if he could floor this favorite maxim with a triumphant knockout, he would become the favorite of his own day. In my judgment he wrote the whole poem against the saying of Pittacus and on its account, in a deliberate effort to damage its fame.

Now let us all examine it together, to see whether I am right. At the very beginning of the poem, it seems crazy, if he wished to say that it is hard to become a good man, that he should then insert 'on the one hand.' The insertion seems to make no sense, except on the supposition that Simonides is speaking polemically against the saying of
clude that courage and wisdom are the same thing, you might as well go on and conclude that physical strength is knowledge. First of all you would proceed to ask me whether the strong are powerful, and I should agree. Next, whether those who know how to wrestle are more powerful than those who do not, and more powerful after they have learned than before; again I should agree, and it would then be open to you to say, adding the same proofs, that on my own admission wisdom is physical strength. But here again I nowhere admit that the powerful are strong, only that the strong are powerful. Power and strength are not the same. Power can result from knowledge, and also from madness or passion, whereas strength is a matter of natural constitution and bodily nurture. Similarly in our present discussion, I deny that confidence and courage are the same, and it follows that the courageous are confident but not all the confident are courageous. Confidence, like power, may be born of skill, or equally of madness or passion, but courage is a matter of nature and the proper nurture of the soul.

Well, said I, you speak of some men living well, and others badly? He agreed. Do you think then that a man would be living well who passed his life in pain and vexation? No. But if he lived it out to the end with enjoyment, you would count him as having lived well? Yes. Then to live pleasurably is good, to live painfully bad? Yes, if one’s pleasure is in what is honorable. What’s this, Protagoras? Surely you don’t follow the common opinion that some pleasures are bad and some pains good? I mean to say, in so far as they are pleasant, are they not also good, leaving aside any consequence that they may entail? And in the same way pains, in so far as they are painful, are bad? I’m not sure Socrates, he said, whether I ought to give an answer as unqualified as your question suggests, and say that everything pleasant is good, and everything painful evil. But with a view not only to my present answer but to the whole of the rest of my life, I believe it is safest to reply that there are some pleasures which are not good, and some pains which are not evil, others on the other hand which are, and a third class which are neither evil nor good.

Meaning by pleasures, said I, what partakes of pleasure or gives it? Certainly. My question then is, whether they are not, qua pleasant, good. I am asking in fact whether pleasure itself is not a good thing.

Let us, he replied, as you are so fond of saying yourself, investigate the question; then if the proposition we are examining seems...
MENO: Can you tell me, Socrates—is virtue something that can be taught? Or does it come by practice? Or is it neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else?

SOCRATES: Well, Meno, in the old days the Thessalians had a great reputation among the Greeks for their wealth and their horse-

manship. Now it seems they are philosophers as well—especially the men of Larissa, where your friend Aristippus comes from. It is Gorgias who has done it. He went to that city and captured the hearts of the foremost of the Aleuadae for his wisdom—among them your own admirer Aristippus—not to speak of other leading Thessalians. In particular he got you into the habit of answering any question you might be asked, with the confidence and dignity appropriate to those who know the answers, just as he himself invites questions of every kind from anyone in the Greek world who wishes to ask, and never fails to answer them. But here at Athens, my dear Meno, it is just the reverse. There is a dearth of wisdom, and it looks as if it had migrated from our part of the country to yours. At any rate if you put your question to any of our people, they will all alike laugh and say, You must think I am singularly fortunate, to know whether virtue can be taught or how it is acquired. The fact is that far from knowing whether it can be taught, I have no idea what virtue itself is.

That is my own case. I share the poverty of my fellow country-

men in this respect, and confess to my shame that I have no knowl-

dge about virtue at all. And how can I know a property of something when I don’t even know what it is? Do you suppose that somebody entirely ignorant who Meno is could say whether he is handsome and rich and wellborn or the reverse? Is that possible, do you think?

MENO: No. But is this true about yourself, Socrates, that you don’t even know what virtue is? Is this the report that we are to take home about you?

SOCRATES: Not only that, you may say also that, to the best of my belief, I have never yet met anyone who did know.

MENO: What! Didn’t you meet Gorgias when he was here?

SOCRATES: Yes.

MENO: And you still didn’t think he knew?

SOCRATES: I’m a forgetful sort of person, and I can’t say just now what I thought at the time. Probably he did know, and I expect you know what he used to say about it. So remind me what it was, or tell me yourself if you will. No doubt you agree with him.

MENO: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: Then let’s leave him out of it, since after all he isn’t here. What do you yourself say virtue is? I do ask you in all earnest-

ness not to refuse me, but to speak out. I shall be only too happy to be

MENO: Socrates, even before I met you they told me that in plain truth you are a perplexed man yourself and reduce others to perplexity. At this moment I feel you are exercising magic and witchcraft upon me and positively laying me under your spell until I am just a mass of helplessness. If I may be flippant, I think that not only in outward appearance but in other respects as well you are exactly like the flat sting ray that one meets in the sea. Whenever anyone comes into contact with it, it numbs him, and that is the sort of thing that you seem to be doing to me now. My mind and my lips are literally numb, and I have nothing to reply to you. Yet I have spoken about virtue hundreds of times, held forth often on the subject in front of large audiences, and very well too, or so I thought. Now I can't even say what it is. In my opinion you are well advised not to leave Athens and live abroad. If you behaved like this as a foreigner in another country, you would most likely be arrested as a wizard.

SOCRATES: You're a real rascal, Meno. You nearly took me in.

MENO: Just what do you mean?

SOCRATES: I see why you used a simile about me.

MENO: Why do you think?

SOCRATES: To be compared to something in return. All good-looking people, I know perfectly well, enjoy a game of comparisons. They get the best of it, for naturally handsome folk provoke handsome similes. But I'm not going to oblige you. As for myself, if the sting ray paralyzes others only through being paralyzed itself, then the comparison is just, but not otherwise. It isn't that, knowing the answers myself, I perplex other people. The truth is rather that I infect them also with the perplexity I feel myself. So with virtue now. I don't know what it is. You may have known before you came into contact with me, but now you look as if you don't. Nevertheless I am ready to carry out, together with you, a joint investigation and inquiry into what it is.

MENO: But how will you look for something when you don't in the least know what it is? How on earth are you going to set up something you don't know as the object of your search? To put it another way, even if you come right up against it, how will you know that what you have found is the thing you didn't know?

SOCRATES: I know what you mean. Do you realize that what you are bringing up is the trick argument that a man cannot try to discover either what he knows or what he does not know? He would not seek what he knows, for since he knows it there is no need of the inquiry, nor what he does not know, for in that case he does not even know what he is to look for.

MENO: Well, do you think it a good argument?

SOCRATES: No.

MENO: Can you explain how it fails?

SOCRATES: I can. I have heard from men and women who understand the truths of religion...
MENO: What did they say?
Socrates: Something true, I thought, and fine.
MENO: What was it, and who were they?

Socrates: Those who tell it are priests and priestesses of the sort who make it their business to be able to account for the functions which they perform. Pindar speaks of it too, and many another of the poets who are divinely inspired. What they say is this—see whether you think they are speaking the truth. They say that the soul of man is immortal. At one time it comes to an end—that which is called death—and at another is born again, but is never finally exterminated. On these grounds a man must live all his days as righteously as possible. For those from whom

Persephone receives requital for ancient doom,
In the ninth year she restores again
Their souls to the sun above.
From whom rise noble kings
And the swift in strength and greatest in wisdom,
And for the rest of time
They are called heroes and sanctified by men.²

Thus the soul, since it is immortal and has been born many times, and has seen all things both here and in the other world, has learned everything that is. So we need not be surprised if it can recall the knowledge of virtue or anything else which, as we see, it once possessed. All nature is akin, and the soul has learned everything, so that when a man has recalled a single piece of knowledge—learned it, in ordinary language—there is no reason why he should not find out all the rest, if he keeps a stout heart and does not grow weary of the search, for seeking and learning are in fact nothing but recollection.

We ought not then to be led astray by the contentious argument you quoted. It would make us lazy, and is music in the ears of weaklings. The other doctrine produces energetic seekers after knowledge, and being convinced of its truth, I am ready, with your help, to inquire into the nature of virtue.

MENO: I see, Socrates. But what do you mean when you say that we don't learn anything, but that what we call learning is recollection? Can you teach me that it is so?

Socrates: I have just said that you're a rascal, and now you ask me if I can teach you, when I say there is no such thing as teaching, only recollection. Evidently you want to catch me contradicting myself straightaway.

MENO: No, honestly, Socrates, I wasn't thinking of that. It was just habit. If you can in any way make clear to me that what you say is true, please do.

Socrates: It isn't an easy thing, but still I should like to do

² Pindar, fr. 133.
BOY: Eight.
SOCRATES: But we haven't yet got the square of eight feet even from a three-foot side?
BOY: No.
SOCRATES: Then what length will give it? Try to tell us exactly. If you don't want to count it up, just show us on the diagram.
BOY: It's no use, Socrates, I just don't know.
SOCRATES: Observe, Meno, the stage he has reached on the path of recollection. At the beginning he did not know the side of the square of eight feet. Nor indeed does he know it now, but then he thought he knew it and answered boldly, as was appropriate—he felt no perplexity. Now however he does feel perplexed. Not only does he not know the answer; he doesn't even think he knows.
MENO: Quite true.
SOCRATES: Isn't he in a better position now in relation to what he didn't know?
MENO: I admit that too.
SOCRATES: So in perplexing him and numbing him like the sting ray, have we done him any harm?
MENO: I think not.
SOCRATES: In fact we have helped him to some extent toward finding out the right answer, for now not only is he ignorant of it but he will be quite glad to look for it. Up to now, he thought he could speak well and fluently, on many occasions and before large audiences, on the subject of a square double the size of a given square, maintaining that it must have a side of double the length.
MENO: No doubt.
SOCRATES: Do you suppose then that he would have attempted to look for, or learn, what he thought he knew, though he did not, before he was thrown into perplexity, became aware of his ignorance, and felt a desire to know?
MENO: No.
SOCRATES: Then the numbing process was good for him?
MENO: I agree.
SOCRATES: Now notice what, starting from this state of perplexity, he will discover by seeking the truth in company with me, though I simply ask him questions without teaching him. Be ready to catch me if I give him any instruction or explanation instead of simply interrogating him on his own opinions.

(Socrates here rubs out the previous figures and starts again.)

Tell me, boy, is not this our square of four feet? [ABCD.] You understand?
SOCRATES: And what is the relation of four to two?

BOY: Double.

SOCRATES: How big is this figure then?

BOY: Eight feet.

SOCRATES: On what base?

BOY: This one.

SOCRATES: The line which goes from corner to corner of the square of four feet?

BOY: Yes.

SOCRATES: The technical name for it is 'diagonal'; so if we use that name, it is your personal opinion that the square on the diagonal of the original square is double its area.

BOY: That is so, Socrates.

SOCRATES: What do you think, Meno? Has he answered with any opinions that were not his own?

MENO: No, they were all his.

SOCRATES: Yet he did not know, as we agreed a few minutes ago.

MENO: True.

SOCRATES: But these opinions were somewhere in him, were they not?

MENO: Yes.

SOCRATES: So a man who does not know has in himself true opinions on a subject without having knowledge.

MENO: It would appear so.

SOCRATES: At present these opinions, being newly aroused, have a dreamlike quality. But if the same questions are put to him on many occasions and in different ways, you can see that in the end he will have a knowledge on the subject as accurate as anybody's.

MENO: Probably.

SOCRATES: This knowledge will not come from teaching but from questioning. He will recover it for himself.

MENO: Yes.

SOCRATES: And the spontaneous recovery of knowledge that is in him is recollection, isn't it?

MENO: Yes.

SOCRATES: Either then he has at some time acquired the knowledge which he now has, or he has always possessed it. If he always possessed it, he must always have known; if on the other hand he acquired it at some previous time, it cannot have been in this life, unless somebody has taught him geometry. He will behave in the same way with all geometric knowledge, and every other subject. Has anyone taught him all these? You ought to know, especially as he has been brought up in your household.

MENO: Yes, I know that no one ever taught him.

SOCRATES: And has he these opinions, or hasn't he?
MENO: It seems we can't deny it.
SOCRATES: Then if he did not acquire them in this life, isn't it immediately clear that he possessed and had learned them during some other period?
MENO: It seems so.
SOCRATES: When he was not in human shape?
MENO: Yes.
SOCRATES: If then there are going to exist in him, both while he is and while he is not a man, true opinions which can be aroused by questioning and turned into knowledge, may we say that his soul has been forever in a state of knowledge? Clearly he always either is or is not a man.
MENO: Clearly.
SOCRATES: And if the truth about reality is always in our soul, the soul must be immortal, and one must take courage and try to discover—that is, to recollect—what one doesn't happen to know, or, more correctly, remember, at the moment.
MENO: Somehow or other I believe you are right.
SOCRATES: I think I am. I shouldn't like to take my oath on the whole story, but one thing I am ready to fight for as long as I can, in word and act—that is, that we shall be better, braver, and more active men if we believe it right to look for what we don't know than if we believe there is no point in looking because what we don't know we can never discover.
MENO: There too I am sure you are right.
SOCRATES: Then since we are agreed that it is right to inquire into something that one does not know, are you ready to face with me the question, 'What is virtue?'
MENO: Quite ready. All the same, I would rather consider the question as I put it at the beginning, and hear your views on it—that is, are we to pursue virtue as something that can be taught, or do men have it as a gift of nature or how?
SOCRATES: If I were your master as well as my own, Meno, we should not have inquired whether or not virtue can be taught until we had first asked the main question—what it is. But not only do you make no attempt to govern your own actions—you prize your freedom, I suppose—but you attempt to govern mine. And you succeed too, so I shall let you have your way. There's nothing else for it, and it seems we must inquire into a single property of something about whose essential nature we are still in the dark. Just grant me one small relaxation of your sway, and allow me, in considering whether or not it can be taught, to make use of a hypothesis—the sort of thing, I mean, that geometers often use in their inquiries. When they are asked, for example, about a given area, whether it is possible for this area to be inscribed as a triangle in a given circle, they will probably reply, 'I don't know yet whether it fulfills the conditions, but I think I have a
MENO: Yes.
SOCRATES: Yet we also speak of these things as sometimes doing harm. Would you object to that statement?
MENO: No, it is so.
SOCRATES: Now look here. What is the controlling factor which determines whether each of these is advantageous or harmful? Isn't it right use which makes them advantageous, and lack of it, harmful?
MENO: Certainly.
SOCRATES: We must also take spiritual qualities into consideration. You recognize such things as temperance, justice, courage, quickness of mind, memory, nobility of character, and others?
MENO: Yes, of course I do.
SOCRATES: Then take any such qualities which in your view are not knowledge but something different. Don't you think they may be harmful as well as advantageous? Courage, for instance, if it is something thoughtless, just a sort of confidence. Isn't it true that to be confident without reason does a man harm, whereas a reasoned confidence profits him?
MENO: Yes.
SOCRATES: Temperance and quickness of mind are no different. Learning and discipline are profitable in conjunction with wisdom, but without it harmful.
MENO: That is emphatically true.
SOCRATES: In short, everything that the human spirit undertakes or suffers will lead to happiness when it is guided by wisdom, but to the opposite, when guided by folly.
MENO: A reasonable conclusion.
SOCRATES: If then virtue is an attribute of the spirit, and one which cannot fail to be beneficial, it must be wisdom, for all spiritual qualities in and by themselves are neither advantageous nor harmful, but become advantageous or harmful by the presence with them of wisdom or folly. If we accept this argument, then virtue, to be something advantageous, must be a sort of wisdom.
MENO: I agree.
SOCRATES: To go back to the other class of things, wealth and the like, of which we said just now that they are sometimes good and sometimes harmful, isn't it the same with them? Just as wisdom when it governs our other psychological impulses turns them to advantage, and folly turns them to harm, so the mind by its right use and control of these material assets makes them profitable, and by wrong use renders them harmful.
MENO: Certainly.
SOCRATES: And the right user is the mind of the wise man, the wrong user the mind of the foolish.
MENO: That is so.
socrates: So we may say in general that the goodness of non-spiritual assets depends on our spiritual character, and the goodness of that on wisdom. This argument shows that the advantageous element must be wisdom, and virtue, we agree, is advantageous; so that amounts to saying that virtue, either in whole or in part, is wisdom.

meno: The argument seems to me fair enough.
socrates: If so, good men cannot be good by nature.
meno: I suppose not.
socrates: There is another point. If they were, there would probably be experts among us who could recognize the naturally good at an early stage. They would point them out to us and we should take them and shut them away safely in the Acropolis, sealing them up more carefully than bullion to protect them from corruption and ensure that when they came to maturity they would be of use to the state.

meno: It would be likely enough.
socrates: Since then goodness does not come by nature, is it got by learning?
meno: I don't see how we can escape the conclusion. Indeed it is obvious on our assumption that, if virtue is knowledge, it is teachable.
socrates: I suppose so. But I wonder if we were right to bind ourselves to that.
meno: Well, it seemed all right just now.
socrates: Yes, but to be sound it has got to seem all right not only 'just now' but at this moment and in the future.
meno: Of course. But what has occurred to you to make you turn against it and suspect that virtue may not be knowledge?
socrates: I'll tell you. I don't withdraw from the position that if it is knowledge, it must be teachable, but as for its being knowledge, see whether you think my doubts on this point are well founded. If anything—not virtue only—is a possible subject of instruction, must there not be teachers and students of it?
meno: Surely.
socrates: And what of the converse, that if there are neither teachers nor students of a subject, we may safely infer that it cannot be taught?
meno: That is true. But don't you think there are teachers of virtue?
socrates: All I can say is that I have often looked to see if there are any, and in spite of all my efforts I cannot find them, though I have had plenty of fellow searchers, the kind of men especially whom I believe to have most experience in such matters. But look, Meno, here's a piece of luck. Anytus has just sat down beside us. We couldn't do better than make him a partner in our inquiry. In the first place he...
ANYTUS: Whom do you mean by that, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Surely you know yourself that they are the men called Sophists.

ANYTUS: Good heavens, what a thing to say! I hope no relative of mine or any of my friends, Athenian or foreign, would be so mad as to go and let himself be ruined by those people. That's what they are, the manifest ruin and corruption of anyone who comes into contact with them.

SOCRATES: What, Anytus? Can they be so different from other claimants to useful knowledge that they not only don't do good, like the rest, to the material that one puts in their charge, but on the contrary spoil it—and have the effrontery to take money for doing so? I for one find it difficult to believe you. I know that one of them alone, Protagoras, earned more money from being a Sophist than an outstandingly fine craftsman like Phidias and ten other sculptors put together. A man who mends old shoes or restores coats couldn't get away with it for a month if he gave them back in worse condition than he received them; he would soon find himself starving. Surely it is incredible that Protagoras took in the whole of Greece, corrupting his pupils and sending them away worse than when they came to him, for more than forty years. I believe he was nearly seventy when he died, and had been practicing for forty years, and all that time—indeed to this very day—his reputation has been consistently high, and there are plenty of others besides Protagoras, some before his time and others still alive. Are we to suppose from your remark that they consciously deceive and ruin young men, or are they unaware of it themselves? Can these remarkably clever men—as some regard them—be mad enough for that?

ANYTUS: Far from it, Socrates. It isn't they who are mad, but rather the young men who hand over their money, and those responsible for them, who let them get into the Sophists' hands, are even worse. Worst of all are the cities who allow them in, or don't expel them, whether it be a foreigner or one of themselves who tries that sort of game.

SOCRATES: Has one of the Sophists done you a personal injury, or why are you so hard on them?

ANYTUS: Heavens, no! I've never in my life had anything to do with a single one of them, nor would I hear of any of my family doing so.

SOCRATES: So you've had no experience of them at all?

ANYTUS: And don't want any either.

SOCRATES: You surprise me. How can you know what is good or bad in something when you have no experience of it?

ANYTUS: Quite easily. At any rate I know their kind, whether I've had experience or not.

SOCRATES: It must be second sight, I suppose, for how else you
MENO: How so?
SOCRATES: Let me explain. If someone knows the way to Larissa, or anywhere else you like, then when he goes there and takes others with him he will be a good and capable guide, you would agree?
MENO: Of course.
SOCRATES: But if a man judges correctly which is the road, though he has never been there and doesn’t know it, will he not also guide others aright?
MENO: Yes, he will.
SOCRATES: And as long as he has a correct opinion on the points about which the other has knowledge, he will be just as good a guide, believing the truth but not knowing it.
MENO: Just as good.
SOCRATES: Therefore true opinion is as good a guide as knowledge for the purpose of acting rightly. That is what we left out just now in our discussion of the nature of virtue, when we said that knowledge is the only guide to right action. There was also, it seems, true opinion.
MENO: It seems so.
SOCRATES: So right opinion is something no less useful than knowledge.
MENO: Except that the man with knowledge will always be successful, and the man with right opinion only sometimes.
SOCRATES: What? Will he not always be successful so long as he has the right opinion?
MENO: That must be so, I suppose. In that case, I wonder why knowledge should be so much more prized than right opinion, and indeed how there is any difference between them.
SOCRATES: Shall I tell you the reason for your surprise, or do you know it?
MENO: No, tell me.
SOCRATES: It is because you have not observed the statues of Daedalus. Perhaps you don’t have them in your country.
MENO: What makes you say that?
SOCRATES: They too, if no one ties them down, run away and escape. If tied, they stay where they are put.
MENO: What of it?
SOCRATES: If you have one of his works untethered, it is not worth much; it gives you the slip like a runaway slave. But a tethered specimen is very valuable, for they are magnificent creations. And that, I may say, has a bearing on the matter of true opinions. True opinions are a fine thing and do all sorts of good so long as they stay in their place, but they will not stay long. They run away from a man’s mind; so they are not worth much until you tether them by working out the reason. That process, my dear Meno, is recollection, as we agreed earlier. Once they are tied down, they become knowledge,
called the frontiersmen between philosophy and politics. They think they themselves are the wisest of men, and that they not only are, but also are thought such by very many, so that the only rivals in the way of their universal fame are the students of philosophy, none else. They believe therefore that if they can reduce the reputation of these, and make them of no account, they will at once win the prize of undisputed victory in public opinion as men of wisdom; they believe they are truly the most wise, but that in informal conversation, whenever they lag behind, they are being cut short by the Euthydemus group. It is quite reasonable if they think themselves wise; they know they are moderately well up in philosophy, and moderately well up in politics, quite reasonably, for they have as much as was wanted in both, and they keep clear of both danger and conflict, while they enjoy the fruits of wisdom.

Crítô: What do you think, then, Socrates? Is there something in what they say? There is no doubt that their account of themselves looks well.

Sócrates: Yes, that’s exactly it, Crito, looks well rather than truly is well. For it is not easy to persuade them what is the truth about these borderlands. Both men and things, if they stand between two and have a share of both, when these two are bad and good, are better than the one and worse than the other; when they stand between two good things which do not aim at the same object, they are worse than both the two components for that for which each is useful; when these two things are bad, but not directed to the same thing, and they are composed of both and stand between them, these alone are better than either of those things of which they have a part. Then if both philosophy and political action are good, but each aims at a different thing, and if these persons are between them and have a part of both, there is nothing in what they say, for they are worse than both; if the things are one good and one bad, they are worse than the one and better than the other; if both are bad, then these people would be speaking some truth, but otherwise not at all. Now I do not think they would admit that the two are both bad, nor that one is good and one bad; but in reality these persons who partake of both are worse than both for each thing which politics and philosophy are important for, and although they are really third, they try to be thought first. We must then not be hard on them, because of their ambition; we must not be angry, but we must believe them to be such as they are. For we ought to be content with every man who says anything which comes near to wisdom, when he bravely follows it up and works it out.

Crítô: Well, you know, Socrates, as I always tell you, I am in perplexity about my sons and what I am to do with them. The younger is quite small still, but Critobulus is already growing up and needs someone to help him on. The fact is, whenever I meet you, I think of all the trouble I have taken, for the sake of the children, about many other things, as about marrying a woman of the best family to be their
nothing to do with men while they are in the body, but only when the soul is liberated from the desires and evils of the body. Now there is a great deal of philosophy and reflection in that, for in their liberated state he can bind them with the desire of virtue, but while they are flustered and maddened by the body, not even father Cronus himself would suffice to keep them with him in his own far-famed chains.

Hermogenes: There is a deal of truth in what you say.

Socrates: Yes, Hermogenes, and the legislator called him b Hades, not from the unseen (ἀείδεσ) — far otherwise — but from his knowledge (εἰδέων) of all noble things.

Hermogenes: Very good. And what do we say of Demeter, and Hera, and Apollo, and Athena, and Hephaestus, and Ares, and the other deities?

Socrates: Demeter is ἡ δίδωσις μητίρ, who gives food like a mother. Hera is the lovely one (ἐρατη), for Zeus, according to tradition, loved and married her; possibly also the name may have been given when the legislator was thinking of the heavens, and may be only a disguise of the air (ἀήρ), putting the end in the place of the beginning. You will recognize the truth of this if you repeat the letters of Hera several times over. People dread the name of Pherephatta as they dread the name of Apollo — and with as little reason. The fear, if I am not mistaken, only arises from their ignorance of the nature of names, but they go changing the name into Phersephone, and they are terrified at this, whereas the new name means only that the goddess is wise (σοφή). For seeing that all things in the world are in motion (φερομένων), that principle which embraces and touches and is able to follow them is wisdom. And therefore the goddess may be truly called Pherepapha (Φεραπάφα), or some name like it, because she touches that which is in motion (τοῦ φερομένου ἀφαπτομένη), herein showing her wisdom. And Hades, who is wise, consorts with her, because she is wise. They alter her name into Pherephatta nowadays, because the present generation care for euphony more than truth. There is the other name, Apollo, which, as I was saying, is generally supposed to have some terrible signification. Have you remarked this fact?

Hermogenes: To be sure, I have, and what you say is true.

Socrates: But the name, in my opinion, is really most expressive of the power of the god.

Hermogenes: How so?

Socrates: I will endeavor to explain, for I do not believe that any single name could have been better adapted to express the attributes of the god, embracing and in a manner signifying all four of them — music, and prophecy, and medicine, and archery.

Hermogenes: That must be a strange name, and I should like to hear the explanation.

Socrates: Say rather a harmonious name, as beseems the
SOCRATES: "Ἡφαίστος is Φαίστος, and has added the η by attraction; that is obvious to anybody.

HERMOGENES: That is very probable, until some more probable notion gets into your head.

SOCRATES: To prevent that, you had better ask what is the derivation of Ares.

HERMOGENES: What is Ares?

SOCRATES: Ares may be called, if you will, from his manhood (ἐφρέαν) and manliness, or if you please, from his hard and unchangeable nature, which is the meaning of ἐφρέατος; the latter is a derivation in every way appropriate to the god of war.

HERMOGENES: Very true.

SOCRATES: And now, by the gods, let us have no more of the gods, for I am afraid of them. Ask about anything but them, and thou shalt see how the steeds of Euthyphro can prance.

HERMOGENES: Only one more god! I should like to know about Hermes, of whom I am said not to be a true son. Let us make him out, and then I shall know whether there is any meaning in what Cratylus says.

SOCRATES: I should imagine that the name Hermes has to do with speech, and signifies that he is the interpreter (ἐπιθέττεω), or messenger, or thief, or liar, or bargainer; all that sort of thing has a great deal to do with language. As I was telling you, the word ἐπέαν is expressive of the use of speech, and there is an often-recurring Homeric word ἐμίσσεως, which means he contrived. Out of these two words, ἐπέαν and μύσσεως, the legislator formed the name of the god who invented language and speech, and we may imagine him dictating to us the use of this name. O my friends, says he to us, seeing that he is the contriver of tales or speeches, you may rightly call him Ἐπιθέττεω. And this has been improved by us, as we think, into Hermes. Iris also appears to have been called from the verb to tell (ἐπεάν), because she was a messenger.

HERMOGENES: Then I am very sure that Cratylus was quite right in saying that I was no true son of Hermes (Ἐπιθέττεως), for I am not a good hand at speeches.

SOCRATES: There is also reason, my friend, in Pan's being the double-formed son of Hermes.

HERMOGENES: How do you make that out?

SOCRATES: You are aware that speech signifies all things (πᾶν), and is always turning them round and round, and has two forms, true and false?

HERMOGENES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Is not the truth that is in him the smooth or sacred form which dwells above among the gods, whereas falsehood dwells among men below, and is rough like the goat of tragedy, for tales and falsehoods have generally to do with the tragic or goatish life, and tragedy is the place of them?
This is one of the greatest of the dialogues. It should be read with the Symposium. The two together give Plato's idea of love. The Phaedrus is a conversation, not a discourse or a succession of questions and answers directed to a single subject. Socrates and Phaedrus take a walk into the country and talk about whatever occurs to them, but they are Athenians and one of them is Socrates and their notion—and Plato's—of how to pass the time pleasantly while walking is something quite different from our own.

Love is the first matter they take up. Phaedrus has with him a piece of writing about it which he greatly admires and reads to Socrates who objects to it as making love chiefly a physical desire. To him it is an impulse full of beauty and goodness, a kind of divine madness which lifts the soul up and can enable it to enter the path which leads to the truth. The first movement to philosophy, the impulse to seek what is higher—in Plato's phrase, "the beyond"—comes from falling in love with visible, physical beauty.

It is really impossible for us to grasp what beauty meant to the Greeks. It was a mighty power exercising a profound influence upon their daily lives. The greatest leader Thebes produced was said to have told his countrymen that they would never conquer Athens until they had brought the Parthenon to Thebes. Any Greek would understand that. Of course the Thebans would be better men, more courageous, wiser, too, with that beauty always before them. In the Republic, Plato's philosopher-rulers must be graceful as well as wise. Socrates gives Phaedrus a description of what a lover feels which leaves our love poetry far behind. To fall truly in love starts a man on the path upward to where love is satisfied in the perfect beauty of the truth.

The stress in the Phaedrus is on visible beauty, but the reader of Plato must always remember that Socrates, the most beloved and the most lovely of all, was completely without it. Again and again his snub nose is mentioned, his protruding eyes, and so on. He had "no form nor comeliness that we should desire him." His wonderful beauty was within.

The last part of the dialogue is about the inferiority of books and writing in general to pure thought and to discussion concerned only with seeking for knowledge, not with putting it into a shape accept-
in the stream, which is especially delightful at this hour of a summer's day.

SOCRATES: Lead on then, and look out for a place to sit down.

PHAEDRUS: You see that tall plane tree over there?

SOCRATES: To be sure.

PHAEDRUS: There's some shade, and a little breeze, and grass to sit down on, or lie down if we like.

SOCRATES: Then make for it.

PHAEDRUS: Tell me, Socrates, isn't it somewhere about here that they say Boreas seized Orithyia from the river?

SOCRATES: Yes, that is the story.

PHAEDRUS: Was this the actual spot? Certainly the water looks charmingly pure and clear; it's just the place for girls to be playing beside the stream.

SOCRATES: No, it was about a quarter of a mile lower down, where you cross to the sanctuary of Agra; there is, I believe, an altar dedicated to Boreas close by.

PHAEDRUS: I have never really noticed it, but pray tell me, Socrates, do you believe that story to be true?

SOCRATES: I should be quite in the fashion if I disbelieved it, as the men of science do. I might proceed to give a scientific account of how the maiden, while at play with Pharmacia, was blown by a gust of Boreas down from the rocks hard by, and having thus met her death was said to have been seized by Boreas, though it may have happened on the Areopagus, according to another version of the occurrence. For my part, Phaedrus, I regard such theories as no doubt attractive, but as the invention of clever, industrious people who are not exactly to be envied, for the simple reason that they must then go on and tell us the real truth about the appearance of centaurs and the Chimera, not to mention a whole host of such creatures, Gorgons and Pegasuses and countless other remarkable monsters of legend flocking in on them. If our skeptic, with his somewhat crude science, means to reduce every one of them to the standard of probability, he'll need a deal of time for it. I myself have certainly no time for the business, and I'll tell you why, my friend. I can't as yet 'know myself,' as the inscription at Delphi enjoins, and so long as that ignorance remains it seems to me ridiculous to inquire into extraneous matters. Consequently I don't bother about such things, but accept the current beliefs about them, and direct my inquiries, as I have just said, rather to myself, to discover whether I really am a more complex creature and more puffed up with pride than Typhon, or a simpler, gentler being whom heaven has blessed with a quiet, un-Typhonic nature. By the way, isn't this the tree we were making for?

PHAEDRUS: Yes, that's the one.

SOCRATES: Upon my word, a delightful resting place, with this tall, spreading plane, and a lovely shade from the high branches of
replace what we have here by a fuller speech of superior merit, up
with your statue in wrought gold beside the offering of the Cypselids
at Olympia.

SOCRATES: Have you taken me seriously, Phaedrus, for teas-
ing you with an attack on your darling Lysias? Can you possibly sup-
pose that I shall make a real attempt to rival his cleverness with
something more ornate?

PHAEDRUS: As to that, my friend, I've got you where I can re-
turn your fire. Assuredly you must do what you can in the way of a
speech, or else we shall be driven, like vulgar comedians, to capping
each other's remarks. Beware. Do not deliberately compel me to ut-
ter the words, 'Don't I know my Socrates? If not, I've forgotten my own
identity,' or 'He wanted to speak, but made difficulties about it.' No,
made up your mind that we're not going to leave this spot until you
have delivered yourself of what you told me you had within your
breast. We are by ourselves in a lonely place, and I am stronger and
d youngher than you, for all which reasons 'mistake not thou my bid-
ing' and please don't make me use force to open your lips.

SOCRATES: But, my dear good Phaedrus, it will be courting
ridicule for an amateur like me to improvise on the same theme as an
accomplished writer.

PHAEDRUS: Look here, I'll have no more of this affectation, for
I'm pretty sure I have something to say which will compel you to
speak.

SOCRATES: Then please don't say it.

PHAEDRUS: Oh, but I shall, here and now, and what I say will
be on oath. I swear to you by—but by whom, by what god? Or shall it
be by this plane tree? I swear that unless you deliver your speech here
in its very presence, I will assuredly never again declaim nor report
any other speech by any author whatsoever.

SOCRATES: Aha, you rogue! How clever of you to discover the
means of compelling a lover of discourse to do your bidding!

PHAEDRUS: Then why all this twisting?

SOCRATES: I give it up, in view of what you've sworn. For how
could I possibly do without such entertainment?

PHAEDRUS: Then proceed.

SOCRATES: Well, do you know what I'm going to do?

PHAEDRUS: Do about what?

SOCRATES: I shall cover my head before I begin; then I can
rush through my speech at top speed without looking at you and
breaking down for shame.

PHAEDRUS: You can do anything else you like, provided you
make your speech.

SOCRATES: Come then, ye clear-voiced Muses, whether it be
from the nature of your song, or from the musical people of Liguria
that ye came to be so styled, 'assist the tale I tell' under compulsion
yet even so a statement of it will be illuminating. When irrational desire, pursuing the enjoyment of beauty, has gained the mastery over judgment that prompts to right conduct, and has acquired from other desires, akin to it, fresh strength to strain toward bodily beauty, that very strength provides it with its name—it is the strong passion called love.

Well, Phaedrus my friend, do you think, as I do, that I am divinely inspired?

PHAEDRUS: Undoubtedly, Socrates, you have been vouchsafed a quite unusual eloquence.

SOCRATES: Then listen to me in silence. For truly there seems to be a divine presence in this spot, so that you must not be surprised if, as my speech proceeds, I become as one possessed; already my style is not far from dithyrambic.

PHAEDRUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: But for that you are responsible. Still, let me continue; possibly the menace may be averted. However, that must be as God wills; our business is to resume our address to the boy.

Very well then, my good friend, the true nature of that on which we have to deliberate has been stated and defined, and so, with that definition in mind, we may go on to say what advantage or detriment may be expected to result to one who accords his favor to a lover and a nonlover, respectively.

Now a man who is dominated by desire and enslaved to pleasure is of course bound to aim at getting the greatest possible pleasure out of his beloved, and what pleases a sick man is anything that does not thwart him, whereas anything that is as strong as, or stronger than, himself gives him offense. Hence he will not, if he can avoid it, put up with a favorite that matches or outdoes him in strength, but will always seek to make him weaker and feeble, and weakness is found in the ignorant, the cowardly, the poor speaker, the slow thinker, as against the wise, the brave, the eloquent, the quick-minded. All these defects of mind and more in the beloved are bound to be a source of pleasure to the lover; if they do not exist already as innate qualities, he will cultivate them, for not to do so means depriving himself of immediate pleasure. And of course he is bound to be jealous, constantly debarring the boy not only, to his great injury, from the advantages of consorting with others, which would make a real man of him, but, greatest injury of all, from consorting with that which would most increase his wisdom—by which I mean divine philosophy. No access to that can possibly be permitted by the lover, for he dreads becoming thereby an object of contempt. And in general he must aim at making the boy totally ignorant and totally dependent on his lover, by way of securing the maximum of pleasure for himself, and the maximum of damage to the other.

Hence in respect of the boy's mind it is anything but a profitable investment to have as guardian or partner a man in love.
and in fact, is the superiority of heaven-sent madness over man-made sanity.

And in the second place, when grievous maladies and affictions have beset certain families by reason of some ancient sin, madness has appeared among them, and breaking out into prophecy has secured relief by finding the means thereto, namely by recourse to prayer and worship, and in consequence thereof rites and means of purification were established, and the sufferer was brought out of danger, alike for the present and for the future. Thus did madness secure, for him that was maddened aright and possessed, deliverance from his troubles.

245 There is a third form of possession or madness, of which the Muses are the source. This seizes a tender, virgin soul and stimulates it to rapt passionate expression, especially in lyric poetry, glorifying the countless mighty deeds of ancient times for the instruction of posterity. But if any man come to the gates of poetry without the madness of the Muses, persuaded that skill alone will make him a good poet, then shall he and his works of sanity with him be brought to nought by the poetry of madness, and behold, their place is nowhere to be found.

Such then is the tale, though I have not told it fully, of the achievements wrought by madness that comes from the gods. So let us have no fears simply on that score; let us not be disturbed by an argument that seeks to scare us into preferring the friendship of the sane to that of the passionate. For there is something more that it must prove if it is to carry the day, namely that love is not a thing sent from heaven for the advantage both of lover and beloved. What we have to prove is the opposite, namely that this sort of madness is a gift of the gods, fraught with the highest bliss. And our proof assuredly will prevail with the wise, though not with the learned.

Now our first step toward attaining the truth of the matter is to discern the nature of soul, divine and human, its experiences, and its activities. Here then our proof begins.

All soul is immortal, for that which is ever in motion is immortal. But that which while imparting motion is itself moved by something else can cease to be in motion, and therefore can cease to live; it is only that which moves itself that never intermits its motion, inasmuch as it cannot abandon its own nature; moreover this self-mover is the source and first principle of motion for all other things that are moved. Now a first principle cannot come into being, for while anything that comes to be must come to be from a first principle, the latter itself cannot come to be from anything whatsoever; if it did, it would cease any longer to be a first principle. Furthermore, since it does not come into being, it must be imperishable, for assuredly if a first principle were to be destroyed, nothing could come to be out of it, nor could anything bring the principle itself back into existence, see-
ing that a first principle is needed for anything to come into being. The self-mover, then, is the first principle of motion, and it is as impossible that it should be destroyed as that it should come into being; were it otherwise, the whole universe, the whole of that which comes to be, would collapse into immobility, and never find another source of motion to bring it back into being.

And now that we have seen that that which is moved by itself is immortal, we shall feel no scruple in affirming that precisely that is the essence and definition of soul, to wit, self-motion. Any body that has an external source of motion is soulless, but a body deriving its motion from a source within itself is animate or besouled, which implies that the nature of soul is what has been said.

And if this last assertion is correct, namely that ‘that which moves itself’ is precisely identifiable with soul, it must follow that soul is not born and does not die.

As to soul’s immortality then we have said enough, but as to its nature there is this that must be said. What manner of thing it is would be a long tale to tell, and most assuredly a god alone could tell it, but what it resembles, that a man might tell in briefer compass. Let this therefore be our manner of discourse. Let it be likened to the union of powers in a team of winged steeds and their winged charioteer. Now all the gods’ steeds and all their charioteers are good, and of good stock, but with other beings it is not wholly so. With us men, in the first place, it is a pair of steeds that the charioteer controls; moreover one of them is noble and good, and of good stock, while the other has the opposite character, and his stock is opposite. Hence the task of our charioteer is difficult and troublesome.

And now we must essay to tell how it is that living beings are called mortal and immortal. All soul has the care of all that is inanimate, and traverses the whole universe, though in ever-changing forms. Thus when it is perfect and winged it journeys on high and controls the whole world, but one that has shed its wings sinks down until it can fasten on something solid, and settling there it takes to itself an earthy body which seems by reason of the soul’s power to move itself. This composite structure of soul and body is called a living being, and is further termed ‘mortal’; ‘immortal’ is a term applied on no basis of reasoned argument at all, but our fancy pictures the god whom we have never seen, nor fully conceived, as an immortal living being, possessed of a soul and a body united for all time. Howbeit, let these matters, and our account thereof, be as God pleases; what we must understand is the reason why the soul’s wings fall from it, and are lost. It is on this wise.

The natural property of a wing is to raise that which is heavy and carry it aloft to the region where the gods dwell, and more than any other bodily part it shares in the divine nature, which is fair, wise, and good, and possessed of all other such excellences. Now by these
sociates. And so each selects a fair one for his love after his disposition, and even as if the beloved himself were a god he fashions for himself as it were an image, and adorns it to be the object of his veneration and worship.

Thus the followers of Zeus seek a beloved who is Zeuslike in soul; wherefore they look for one who is by nature disposed to the love of wisdom and the leading of men, and when they have found him and come to love him they do all in their power to foster that disposition. And if they have not aforetime trodden this path, they now set out upon it, learning the way from any source that may offer or finding it for themselves, and as they follow up the trace within themselves of the nature of their own god their task is made easier, inasmuch as they are constrained to fix their gaze upon him, and reaching out after him in memory they are possessed by him, and from him they take their ways and manners of life, in so far as a man can partake of a god. But all this, mark you, they attribute to the beloved, and the draughts which they draw from Zeus they pour out, like bacchants, into the soul of the beloved, thus creating in him the closest possible likeness to the god they worship.

Those who were in the train of Hera look for a royal nature, and when they have found him they do unto him all things in like fashion. And so it is with the followers of Apollo and each other god. Every lover is fain that his beloved should be of a nature like to his own god, and when he has won him, he leads him on to walk in the ways of their god, and after his likeness, patterning himself thereupon and giving counsel and discipline to the boy. There is no jealousy nor petty spitefulness in his dealings, but his every act is aimed at bringing the beloved to be every whit like unto himself and unto the god of their worship.

So therefore glorious and blissful is the endeavor of true lovers in that mystery rite, if they accomplish that which they endeavor after the fashion of which I speak, when mutual affection arises through the madness inspired by love. But the beloved must needs be captured, and the manner of that capture I will now tell.

In the beginning of our story we divided each soul into three parts, two being like steeds and the third like a charioteer. Well and good. Now of the steeds, so we declare, one is good and the other is not, but we have not described the excellence of the one nor the badness of the other, and that is what must now be done. He that is on the more honorable side is upright and clean-limbed, carrying his neck high, with something of a hooked nose; in color he is white, with black eyes; a lover of glory, but with temperance and modesty; one that consorts with genuine renown, and needs no whip, being driven by the word of command alone. The other is crooked of frame, a massive jumble of a creature, with thick short neck, snub nose, black skin, and gray eyes; hot-blooded, consorting with wantonness
thoroughly to overhaul all our arguments, and see whether there is
some easier and shorter way of arriving at the art; we don't want to
waste effort in going off on a long rough road, when we might take a
short smooth one. But if you can help us at all through what you have
heard from Lysias or anyone else, do try to recall it.

Phaedrus: As far as trying goes, I might, but I can suggest
nothing on the spur of the moment.

Socrates: Then would you like me to tell you something I have
heard from those concerned with these matters?

Phaedrus: Why, yes.

Socrates: Anyhow, Phaedrus, we are told that even the devil's
advocate ought to be heard.

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Phaedrus: Why, yes.

Socrates: Anyhow, Phaedrus, we are told that even the devil's
advocate ought to be heard.

Phaedrus: Then you can put his case.

Socrates: Well, they tell us that there is no need to make such
a solemn business of it, or fetch such a long compass on an uphill
road. As we remarked at the beginning of this discussion, there is, they
maintain, absolutely no need for the budding orator to concern him-
self with the truth about what is just or good conduct, nor indeed
about who are just and good men whether by nature or education. In
the law courts nobody cares a rap for the truth about these matters,
but only about what is plausible. And that is the same as what is prob-
able, and is what must occupy the attention of the would-be master
of the art of speech. Even actual facts ought sometimes not be stated,
if they don't tally with probability; they should be replaced by what is
probable, whether in prosecution or defense; whatever you say, you
simply must pursue this probability they talk of, and can say good-by
to the truth forever. Stick to that all through your speech, and you are
equipped with the art complete.

Phaedrus: Your account, Socrates, precisely reproduces what
is said by those who claim to be experts in the art of speech. I remem-
ber that we did touch briefly on this sort of contention a while ago,
and the professionals regard it as a highly important point.

Socrates: Very well then, take Tisias himself; you have
thumbed him carefully, so let Tisias tell us this. Does he maintain that
the probable is anything other than that which commends itself to the
multitude?

Phaedrus: How could it be anything else?

Socrates: Then in consequence, it would seem, of that pro-
found scientific discovery he laid down that if a weak but brave man is
arrested for assaulting a strong but cowardly one, whom he has
robbed of his cloak or some other garment, neither of them ought to
state the true facts; the coward should say that the brave man didn't
assault him singlehanded, and the brave man should contend that
there were only the two of them, and then have recourse to the famous
plea, 'How could a little fellow like me have attacked a big fellow
like him?' Upon which the big fellow will not avow his own poltroon-
PHAEDRUS: I deserve your rebuke, and I agree that the man of
Thebes is right in what he said about writing.
SOCRATES: Then anyone who leaves behind him a written man­
ual, and likewise anyone who takes it over from him, on the supposi­
tion that such writing will provide something reliable and permanent,
must be exceedingly simple-minded; he must really be ignorant of Am­
mon's utterance, if he imagines that written words can do anything
more than remind one who knows that which the writing is con­
cerned with.
PHAEDRUS: Very true.
SOCRATES: You know, Phaedrus, that's the strange thing about
writing, which makes it truly analogous to painting. The painter's
products stand before us as though they were alive, but if you ques­
tion them, they maintain a most majestic silence. It is the same with­
written words; they seem to talk to you as though they were intelli­
gent, but if you ask them anything about what they say, from a desire
to be instructed, they go on telling you just the same thing forever.
And once a thing is put in writing, the composition, whatever it may be,
drifts all over the place, getting into the hands not only of those
who understand it, but equally of those who have no business with it;
it doesn't know how to address the right people, and not address the
wrong. And when it is ill-treated and unfairly abused it always needs
its parent to come to its help, being unable to defend or help itself.
PHAEDRUS: Once again you are perfectly right.
SOCRATES: But now tell me, is there another sort of discourse, 276
that is brother to the written speech, but of unquestioned legitimacy?
Can we see how it originates, and how much better and more effec­
tive it is than the other?
PHAEDRUS: What sort of discourse have you now in mind, and
what is its origin?
SOCRATES: The sort that goes together with knowledge, and is
written in the soul of the learner, that can defend itself, and knows
to whom it should speak and to whom it should say nothing.
PHAEDRUS: You mean no dead discourse, but the living speech,
the original of which the written discourse may fairly be called a kind
of image.
SOCRATES: Precisely. And now tell me this. If a sensible farmer
had some seeds to look after and wanted them to bear fruit, would he
with serious intent plant them during the summer in a garden of
Adonis, and enjoy watching it producing fine fruit within eight days?
If he did so at all, wouldn't it be in a holiday spirit, just by way of pas­
time? For serious purposes wouldn't he behave like a scientific farmer,
sow his seeds in suitable soil, and be well content if they came to ma­
turity within eight months?
PHAEDRUS: I think we may distinguish as you say, Socrates, be­
tween what the farmer would do seriously and what he would do in a
different spirit.
SOCRATES: And are we to maintain that he who has knowledge of what is just, honorable, and good has less sense than the farmer in dealing with his seeds?

PHAEDRUS: Of course not.

SOCRATES: Then it won't be with serious intent that he 'writes them in water' or that black fluid we call ink, using his pen to sow words that can't either speak in their own defense or present the truth adequately.

PHAEDRUS: It certainly isn't likely.

SOCRATES: No, it is not. He will sow his seed in literary gardens, I take it, and write when he does write by way of pastime, collecting a store of refreshment both for his own memory, against the day 'when age oblivious comes,' and for all such as tread in his footsteps, and he will take pleasure in watching the tender plants grow up. And when other men resort to other pastimes, regaling themselves with drinking parties and suchlike, he will doubtless prefer to indulge in the recreation I refer to.

PHAEDRUS: And what an excellent one it is, Socrates! How far superior to the other sort is the recreation that a man finds in words, when he discourses about justice and the other topics you speak of.

SOCRATES: Yes indeed, dear Phaedrus. But far more excellent, I think, is the serious treatment of them, which employs the art of dialectic. The dialectician selects a soul of the right type, and in it he plants and sows his words founded on knowledge, words which can defend both themselves and him who planted them, words which instead of remaining barren contain a seed whence new words grow up in new characters, whereby the seed is vouchsafed immortality, and its possessor the fullest measure of blessedness that man can attain unto.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, that is a far more excellent way.

SOCRATES: Then now that that has been settled, Phaedrus, we can proceed to the other point.

PHAEDRUS: What is that?

SOCRATES: The point that we wanted to look into before we arrived at our present conclusion. Our intention was to examine the reproach leveled against Lysias on the score of speech writing, and therewith the general question of speech writing and what does and does not make it an art. Now I think we have pretty well cleared up the question of art.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, we did think so, but please remind me how we did it.

SOCRATES: The conditions to be fulfilled are these. First, you must know the truth about the subject that you speak or write about; that is to say, you must be able to isolate it in definition, and having so defined it you must next understand how to divide it into kinds, until you reach the limit of division; secondly, you must have a correspond-
reached a satisfactory conclusion. Do you now go and tell Lysias that we two went down to the stream where is the holy place of the nymphs, and there listened to words which charged us to deliver a message, first to Lysias and all other composers of discourses, secondly to Homer and all others who have written poetry whether to be read or sung, and thirdly to Solon and all such as are authors of political compositions under the name of laws— to wit, that if any of them has done his work with a knowledge of the truth, can defend his statements when challenged, and can demonstrate the inferiority of his writings out of his own mouth, he ought not to be designated by a name drawn from those writings, but by one that indicates his serious pursuit.

PHAEDRUS: Then what names would you assign him?

SOCRATES: To call him wise, Phaedrus, would, I think be going too far; the epithet is proper only to a god. A name that would fit him better, and have more seemliness, would be 'lover of wisdom,' or something similar.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, that would be quite in keeping.

SOCRATES: On the other hand, one who has nothing to show of more value than the literary works on whose phrases he spends hours, twisting them this way and that, pasting them together and pulling them apart, will rightly, I suggest, be called a poet or speech writer or law writer.

PHAEDRUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then that is what you must tell your friend.

PHAEDRUS: But what about yourself? What are you going to do? You too have a friend who should not be passed over.

SOCRATES: Who is that?

PHAEDRUS: The fair Isocrates. What will be your message to him, Socrates, and what shall we call him?

SOCRATES: Isocrates is still young, Phaedrus, but I don't mind telling you the future I prophesy for him.

PHAEDRUS: Oh, what is that?

SOCRATES: It seems to me that his natural powers give him a superiority over anything that Lysias has achieved in literature, and also that in point of character he is of a nobler composition; hence it would not surprise me if with advancing years he made all his literary predecessors look like very small-fry—that is, supposing him to persist in the actual type of writing in which he engages at present—still more so, if he should become dissatisfied with such work, and a sublimener impulse lead him to do greater things. For that mind of his, Phaedrus, contains an innate tincture of philosophy.

Well then, there's the report I convey from the gods of this place to Isocrates my beloved, and there's yours for your beloved Lysias.

PHAEDRUS: So be it. But let us be going, now that it has become less oppressively hot.
And Love she framed the first of all the gods.  

Thus we find that the antiquity of Love is universally admitted, and in very truth he is the ancient source of all our highest good. For I, at any rate, could hardly name a greater blessing to the man that is to be than a generous lover, or, to the lover, than the beloved youth. For neither family, nor privilege, nor wealth, nor anything but Love can light that beacon which a man must steer by when he sets out to live the better life. How shall I describe it—as that contempt for the vile, and emulation of the good, without which neither cities nor citizens are capable of any great or noble work. And I will say this of the lover, that, should he be discovered in some inglorious act, or in abject submission to ill-usage, he could better bear that anyone—father, friends, or who you will—should witness it than his beloved. And the same holds good of the beloved—that his confusion would be more than ever painful if he were seen by his lovers in an unworthy light.

If only, then, a city or an army could be composed of none but lover and beloved, how could they deserve better of their country than by shunning all that is base, in mutual emulation? And men like these fighting shoulder to shoulder, few as they were, might conquer—I had almost said—the whole world in arms. For the lover would rather anyone than his beloved should see him leave the ranks or throw away his arms in flight—nay, he would sooner die a thousand deaths. Nor is there any lover so faint of heart that he could desert his beloved or fail to help him in the hour of peril, for the very presence of Love kindles the same flame of valor in the faintest heart that burns in those whose courage is innate. And so, when Homer writes that some god 'breathed might' into one of the heroes, we may take it that this is what the power of Love effects in the heart of the lover.

And again, nothing but Love will make a man offer his life for another's—and not only man but woman, of which last we Greeks can ask no better witness than Alcestis, for she alone was ready to lay down her life for her husband—for all he had a father and a mother, whose love fell so far short of hers in charity that they seemed to be alien to their own son, and bound to him by nothing but a name. But hers was accounted so great a sacrifice, not only by mankind but by the gods, that in recognition of her magnanimity it was granted—and among the many doers of many noble deeds there is only the merest handful to whom such grace has been given—that her soul should rise again from the Stygian depths.

Thus heaven itself has a peculiar regard for ardor and resolution in the cause of Love. And yet the gods sent Orpheus away from Hades empty-handed, and showed him the mere shadow of the woman he

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3 Parmenides, fr. 132.  
4 Iliad 10.482, 15.262,
b generally considered to be the most effective test. Secondly, it is immoral when the surrender is due to financial or political considerations, or to unmanly fear of ill-treatment; it is immoral, in short, if the youth fails to show the contempt he should for any advantage he may gain in pocket or position. For in motives such as these we can find nothing fixed or permanent, except, perhaps, the certainty that they have never been the cause of any noble friendship.

c There remains, therefore, only one course open to the beloved if he is to yield to his lover without offending our ideas of decency. It is held that, just as the lover's willing and complete subjection to his beloved is neither abject nor culpable, so there is one other form of voluntary submission that shall be blameless—a submission which is made for the sake of virtue. And so, gentlemen, if anyone is prepared to devote himself to the service of another in the belief that through him he will find increase of wisdom or of any other virtue, we hold that such willing servitude is neither base nor abject.

d We must therefore combine these two laws—the one that deals with the love of boys and the one that deals with the pursuit of wisdom and the other virtues—before we can agree that the youth is justified in yielding to his lover. For it is only when lover and beloved come together, each governed by his own especial law—the former lawfully enslaving himself to the youth he loves, in return for his compliance, the latter lawfully devoting his services to the friend who is helping him to become wise and good—the one sharing his wealth of wisdom and virtue, and the other drawing, in his poverty, upon his friend for a liberal education—it is then, I say, and only then, when the observance of the two laws coincides, that it is right for the lover to have his way.

There is no shame in being disappointed of such hopes as these, but any other kind of hope, whether it comes true or not, is shameful in itself. Take the case of a youth who gratifies his lover in the belief that he is wealthy and in the hope of making money. Such hopes will be nonetheless discreditable if he finds in the event that he has been the prey of a penniless seducer, for he will have shown himself for what he is, the kind of person, namely, who will do anything for money—which is nothing to be proud of. But suppose that he had yielded because he believed in his lover's virtue, and hoped to be improved by such an association; then, even if he discovered in the end that he had been duped by an unholy blackguard, there would still have been something noble in his mistake, for he, too, would have shown himself for what he was—the kind of person who will do anything for anybody for the sake of progress in the ways of virtue. And what, gentlemen, could be more admirable than that? I conclude, therefore, that it is right to let the lover have his way in the interests of virtue.

Such, then, is the Love of the heavenly Aphrodite, heavenly in
what the body loves, or desires, as regards repletion and evacuation, and the man who can distinguish between what is harmful and what is beneficial in these desires may claim to be a physician in the fullest sense of the word. And if he can replace one desire with another, and produce the requisite desire when it is absent, or, if necessary, remove it when it is present, then we shall regard him as an expert practitioner.

Yes, gentlemen, he must be able to reconcile the jarring elements of the body, and force them, as it were, to fall in love with one another. Now, we know that the most hostile elements are the opposites—hot and cold, sweet and sour, wet and dry, and so on—and if, as I do myself, we are to believe these poets of ours, it was his skill in imposing love and concord upon these opposites that enabled our illustrious progenitor Asclepius to found the science of medicine.

And so, gentlemen, I maintain that medicine is under the sole direction of the god of love, as are also the gymnastic and the agricultural arts. And it must be obvious to the most casual observer that the same holds good of music—which is, perhaps, what Heraclitus meant us to understand by that rather cryptic pronouncement, 'The one in conflict with itself is held together, like the harmony of the bow and of the lyre.' Of course it is absurd to speak of harmony as being in conflict, or as arising out of elements which are still conflicting, but perhaps he meant that the art of music was to create harmony by resolving the discord between the treble and the bass. There can certainly be no harmony of treble and bass while they are still in conflict, for harmony is concord, and concord is a kind of sympathy, and sympathy between things which are in conflict is impossible so long as that conflict lasts. There is, on the other hand, a kind of discord which it is not impossible to resolve, and here we may effect a harmony—as, for instance, we produce rhythm by resolving the difference between fast and slow. And just as we saw that the concord of the body was brought about by the art of medicine, so this other harmony is due to the art of music, as the creator of mutual love and sympathy. And so we may describe music, too, as a science of love, or of desire—in this case in relation to harmony and rhythm.

It is easy enough to distinguish the principle of Love in this rhythmic and harmonic union, nor is there so far any question of Love's dichotomy. But when we come to the application of rhythm and harmony to human activities—as for instance the composition of a song, or the instruction of others in the correct performance of airs and measures which have already been composed—then, gentlemen, we meet with difficulties which call for expert handling. And this brings us back to our previous conclusion, that we are justified in

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5 Heraclitus, fr. 45.
naked earth, in doorways, or in the very streets beneath the stars of heaven, and always partaking of his mother's poverty. But, secondly, he brings his father's resourcefulness to his designs upon the beautiful and the good, for he is gallant, impetuous, and energetic, a mighty hunter, and a master of device and artifice—at once desirous and full of wisdom, a lifelong seeker after truth, an adept in sorcery, enchantment, and seduction.

He is neither mortal nor immortal, for in the space of a day he will be now, when all goes well with him, alive and blooming, and now dying, to be born again by virtue of his father's nature, while what he gains will always ebb away as fast. So Love is never altogether in or out of need, and stands, moreover, midway between ignorance and wisdom. You must understand that none of the gods are seekers after truth. They do not long for wisdom, because they are wise—and why should the wise be seeking the wisdom that is already theirs? Nor, for that matter, do the ignorant seek the truth or crave to be made wise. And indeed, what makes their case so hopeless is that, having neither beauty, nor goodness, nor intelligence, they are satisfied with what they are, and do not long for the virtues they have never missed.

Then tell me, Diotima, I said, who are these seekers after truth, if they are neither the wise nor the ignorant?

She replied, could have told you that, after what I've just been saying. They are those that come between the two, and one of them is Love. For wisdom is concerned with the loveliest of things, and Love is the love of what is lovely. And so it follows that Love is a lover of wisdom, and, being such, he is placed between wisdom and ignorance—for which his parentage also is responsible, in that his father is full of wisdom and resource, while his mother is devoid of either.

Such, my dear Socrates, is the spirit of Love, and yet I'm not altogether surprised at your idea of him, which was, judging by what you said, that Love was the beloved rather than the lover. So naturally you thought of Love as utterly beautiful, for the beloved is, in fact, beautiful, perfect, delicate, and prosperous—very different from the lover, as I have described him.

Very well, dear lady, I replied, no doubt you're right. But in that case, what good can Love be to humanity?

That's just what I'm coming to, Socrates, she said. So much, then, for the nature and the origin of Love. You were right in thinking that he was the love of what is beautiful. But suppose someone were to say, Yes, my dear Socrates. Quite so, my dear Diotima. But what do you mean by the love of what is beautiful? Or, to put the question more precisely, what is it that the lover of the beautiful is longing for?

He is longing to make the beautiful his own, I said. Very well, she replied, but your answer leads to another question. What will he gain by making the beautiful his own?
This, as I had to admit, was more than I could answer on the spur of the moment.

Well then, she went on, suppose that, instead of the beautiful, you were being asked about the good. I put it to you, Socrates. What is it that the lover of the good is longing for?

To make the good his own.

Then what will he gain by making it his own?

I can make a better shot at answering that, I said. He'll gain happiness.

Right, said she, for the happy are happy inasmuch as they possess the good, and since there's no need for us to ask why men should want to be happy, I think your answer is conclusive.

Absolutely, I agreed.

This longing, then, she went on, this love—is it common to all mankind? What do you think, do we all long to make the good our own?

Yes, I said, as far as that goes we're all alike.

Well then, Socrates, if we say that everybody always loves the same thing, does that mean that everybody is in love? Or do we mean that some of us are in love, while some of us are not?

I was a little worried about that myself, I confessed.

Oh, it's nothing to worry about, she assured me. You see, what we've been doing is to give the name of Love to what is only one single aspect of it; we make just the same mistake, you know, with a lot of other names.

For instance . . . ?

For instance, poetry. You'll agree that there is more than one kind of poetry in the true sense of the word—that is to say, calling something into existence that was not there before, so that every kind of artistic creation is poetry, and every artist is a poet.

True.

But all the same, she said, we don’t call them all poets, do we? We give various names to the various arts, and only call the one particular art that deals with music and meter by the name that should be given to them all. And that's the only art that we call poetry, while those who practice it are known as poets.

Quite.

And that’s how it is with Love. For ‘Love, that renowned and all-beguiling power,’ includes every kind of longing for happiness and for the good. Yet those of us who are subject to this longing in the various fields of business, athletics, philosophy, and so on, are never said to be in love, and are never known as lovers, while the man who devotes himself to what is only one of Love’s many activities is given the name that should apply to all the rest as well.

Yes, I said, I suppose you must be right.

I know it has been suggested, she continued, that lovers are people who are looking for their other halves, but as I see it, Socrates,
Of course I’m right, she said. And why all this longing for propagation? Because this is the one deathless and eternal element in our mortality. And since we have agreed that the lover longs for the good to be his own forever, it follows that we are bound to long for immortality as well as for the good—which is to say that Love is a longing for immortality.

So much I gathered, gentlemen, at one time and another from Diotima’s dissertations upon Love.

And then one day she asked me, Well, Socrates, and what do you suppose is the cause of all this longing and all this love? Haven’t you noticed what an extraordinary effect the breeding instinct has upon both animals and birds, and how obsessed they are with the desire, first to mate, and then to rear their litters and their broods, and how the weakest of them are ready to stand up to the strongest in defense of their young, and even die for them, and how they are content to bear the pinch of hunger and every kind of hardship, so long as they can rear their offspring?

With men, she went on, you might put it down to the power of reason, but how can you account for Love’s having such remarkable effects upon the brutes? What do you say to that, Socrates?

Again I had to confess my ignorance.

Well, she said, I don’t know how you can hope to master the philosophy of Love, if that’s too much for you to understand.

But, my dear Diotima, I protested, as I said before, that’s just why I’m asking you to teach me—because I realize how ignorant I am. And I’d be more than grateful if you’d enlighten me as to the cause not only of this, but of all the various effects of Love.

Well, she said, it’s simple enough, so long as you bear in mind what we agreed was the object of Love. For here, too, the principle holds good that the mortal does all it can to put on immortality. And how can it do that except by breeding, and thus ensuring that there will always be a younger generation to take the place of the old?

Now, although we speak of an individual as being the same so long as he continues to exist in the same form, and therefore assume that a man is the same person in his dotage as in his infancy, yet, for all we call him the same, every bit of him is different, and every day he is becoming a new man, while the old man is ceasing to exist, as you can see from his hair, his flesh, his bones, his blood, and all the rest of his body. And not only his body, for the same thing happens to his soul. And neither his manners, nor his disposition, nor his thoughts, nor his desires, nor his pleasures, nor his sufferings, nor his fears are the same throughout his life, for some of them grow, while others disappear.

And the application of this principle to human knowledge is even more remarkable, for not only do some of the things we know increase, while some of them are lost, so that even in our knowledge
and if, when he comes to manhood, his first ambition is to be begetting, he too, you may be sure, will go about in search of the loveliness—and never of the ugliness—on which he may beget. And hence his procreant nature is attracted by a comely body rather than an ill-favored one, and if, besides, he happens on a soul which is at once beautiful, distinguished, and agreeable, he is charmed to find so welcome an alliance. It will be easy for him to talk of virtue to such a listener, and to discuss what human goodness is and how the virtuous should live—in short, to undertake the other’s education.

And, as I believe, by constant association with so much beauty, and by thinking of his friend when he is present and when he is away, he will be delivered of the burden he has labored under all these years. And what is more, he and his friend will help each other rear the issue of their friendship—and so the bond between them will be more binding, and their communion even more complete, than that which comes of bringing children up, because they have created something lovelier and less mortal than human seed.

And I ask you, who would not prefer such fatherhood to merely human propagation, if he stopped to think of Homer, and Hesiod, and all the greatest of our poets? Who would not envy them their immortal progeny, their claim upon the admiration of posterity?

Or think of Lycurgus, she went on, and what offspring he left behind him in his laws, which proved to be the saviors of Sparta and, perhaps, the whole of Hellas. Or think of the fame of Solon, the father of Athenian law, and think of all the other names that are remembered in Grecian cities and in lands beyond the sea for the noble deeds they did before the eyes of all the world, and for all the diverse virtues that they fathered. And think of all the shrines that have been dedicated to them in memory of their immortal issue, and tell me if you can of anyone whose mortal children have brought him so much fame.

Well now, my dear Socrates, I have no doubt that even you might be initiated into these, the more elementary mysteries of Love. But I don’t know whether you could apprehend the final revelation, for so far, you know, we are only at the bottom of the true scale of perfection.

Never mind, she went on, I will do all I can to help you understand, and you must strain every nerve to follow what I’m saying.

Well then, she began, the candidate for this initiation cannot, if his efforts are to be rewarded, begin too early to devote himself to the beauties of the body. First of all, if his preceptor instructs him as he should, he will fall in love with the beauty of one individual body, so that his passion may give life to noble discourse. Next he must consider how nearly related the beauty of any one body is to the beauty of any other, when he will see that if he is to devote himself to loveliness of form it will be absurd to deny that the beauty of each
universal beauty must find him ever mounting the heavenly ladder, stepping from rung to rung—that is, from one to two, and from two to every lovely body, from bodily beauty to the beauty of institutions, from institutions to learning, and from learning in general to the special lore that pertains to nothing but the beautiful itself—until at last he comes to know what beauty is.

And if, my dear Socrates, Diotima went on, man's life is ever worth the living, it is when he has attained this vision of the very soul of beauty. And once you have seen it, you will never be seduced again by the charm of gold, of dress, of comely boys, or lads just ripening to manhood; you will care nothing for the beauties that used to take your breath away and kindle such a longing in you, and many others like you, Socrates, to be always at the side of the beloved and feasting your eyes upon him, so that you would be content, if it were possible, to deny yourself the grosser necessities of meat and drink, so long as you were with him.

But if it were given to man to gaze on beauty's very self—unsullied, unalloyed, and freed from the mortal taint that haunts the frailer loveliness of flesh and blood—if, I say, it were given to man to see the heavenly beauty face to face, would you call his, she asked me, an unenviable life, whose eyes had been opened to the vision, and who had gazed upon it in true contemplation until it had become his own forever?

And remember, she said, that it is only when he discerns beauty itself through what makes it visible that a man will be quickened with the true, and not the seeming, virtue— for it is virtue's self that quickens him, not virtue's semblance. And when he has brought forth and reared this perfect virtue, he shall be called the friend of god, and if ever it is given to man to put on immortality, it shall be given to him.

This, Phaedrus—this, gentlemen—was the doctrine of Diotima. I was convinced, and in that conviction I try to bring others to the same creed, and to convince them that, if we are to make this gift our own, Love will help our mortal nature more than all the world. And this is why I say that every man of us should worship the god of love, and this is why I cultivate and worship all the elements of Love myself, and bid others do the same. And all my life I shall pay the power and the might of Love such homage as I can. So you may call this my eulogy of Love, Phaedrus, if you choose; if not, well, call it what you like.

Socrates took his seat amid applause from everyone but Aristophanes, who was just going to take up the reference Socrates had made to his own theories, when suddenly there came a knocking at the outer door, followed by the notes of a flute and the sound of festive brawling in the street.
melodies that he hadn't learned from Marsyas. And whoever plays them, from an absolute virtuoso to a twopenny-halfpenny flute girl, the tunes will still have a magic power, and by virtue of their own divinity they will show which of us are fit subjects for divine initiation.

Now the only difference, Socrates, between you and Marsyas is that you can get just the same effect without any instrument at all—with nothing but a few simple words, not even poetry. Besides, when we listen to anyone else talking, however eloquent he is, we don't really care a damn what he says. But when we listen to you, or to someone else repeating what you've said, even if he puts it ever so badly, and never mind whether the person who's listening is man, woman, or child, we're absolutely staggered and bewitched. And speaking for myself, gentlemen, if I wasn't afraid you'd tell me I was completely bottled, I'd swear on oath what an extraordinary effect his words have had on me—and still do, if it comes to that. For the moment I hear him speak I am smitten with a kind of sacred rage, worse than any Corybant, and my heart jumps into my mouth and the tears start into my eyes—oh, and not only me, but lots of other men.

Yes, I've heard Pericles and all the other great orators, and very eloquent I thought they were, but they never affected me like that; they never turned my whole soul upside down and left me feeling as if I were the lowest of the low. But this latter-day Marsyas, here, has often left me in such a state of mind that I've felt I simply couldn't go on living the way I did—now, Socrates, you can't say that isn't true—and I'm convinced that if I were to listen to him at this very moment I'd feel just the same again. I simply couldn't help it. He makes me admit that while I'm spending my time on politics I am neglecting all the things that are crying for attention in myself. So I just refuse to listen to him—as if he were one of those Sirens, you know—and get out of earshot as quick as I can, for fear he keep me sitting listening till I'm positively senile.

And there's one thing I've never felt with anybody else—not the kind of thing you'd expect to find in me, either—and that is a sense of shame. Socrates is the only man in the world that can make me feel ashamed. Because there's no getting away from it, I know I ought to do the things he tells me to, and yet the moment I'm out of his sight I don't care what I do to keep in with the mob. So I dash off like a runaway slave, and keep out of his way as long as I can, and then next time I meet him I remember all that I had to admit the time before, and naturally I feel ashamed. There are times when I'd honestly be glad to hear that he was dead, and yet I know that if he did die I'd be more upset than ever—so I ask you, what is a man to do?

Well, that's what this satyr does for me, and plenty like me, with his pipings. And now let me show you how apt my comparison was
in other ways, and what extraordinary powers he has got. Take my word for it, there’s not one of you that really knows him. But now I’ve started on him, I’ll show him up. Notice, for instance, how Socrates is attracted by good-looking people, and how he hangs around them, positively gaping with admiration. Then again, he loves to appear utterly uninformed and ignorant—isn’t that like Silenus? Of course it is. Don’t you see that it’s just his outer casing, like those little figures I was telling you about? But believe me, friends and fellow drunks, you’ve only got to open him up and you’ll find him so full of temperance and sobriety that you’ll hardly believe your eyes. Because, you know, he doesn’t really care a row of pins about good looks—on the contrary, you can’t think how much he looks down on them—or money, or any of the honors that most people care about. He doesn’t care a curse for anything of that kind, or for any of us either—yes, I’m telling you—and he spends his whole life playing his little game of irony, and laughing up his sleeve at all the world.

I don’t know whether anybody else has ever opened him up when he’s been being serious, and seen the little images inside, but I saw them once, and they looked so godlike, so golden, so beautiful, and so utterly amazing that there was nothing for it but to do exactly what he told me. I used to flatter myself that he was smitten with my youthful charms, and I thought this was an extraordinary piece of luck because I’d only got to be a bit accommodating and I’d hear everything he had to say—I tell you, I’d a pretty high opinion of my own attractions. Well, I thought it over, and then, instead of taking a servant with me as I always used to, I got rid of the man, and went to meet Socrates by myself. Remember, I’m bound to tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth; so you’d all better listen very carefully, and Socrates must pull me up if I begin telling lies.

Well, gentlemen, as I was saying, I used to go and meet him, and then, when we were by ourselves, I quite expected to hear some of those sweet nothings that lovers whisper to their darlings when they get them alone—and I liked the idea of that. But not a bit of it! He’d go on talking just the same as usual till it was time for him to go, and then he said good-by and went.

So then I suggested we should go along to the gymnasium and take a bit of exercise together, thinking that something was bound to happen there. And, would you believe it, we did our exercises together and wrestled with each other time and again, with not a soul in sight, and still I got no further. Well, I realized that there was nothing to be gained in that direction, but having put my hand to the plow I wasn’t going to look back till I was absolutely certain how I stood; so I decided to make a frontal attack. I asked him to dinner, just as if I were the lover trying to seduce his beloved, instead of the other way round. It wasn’t easy, either, to get him to accept, but in the end I managed to.
Well, the first time he came he thought he ought to go as soon as
we'd finished dinner, and I was too shy to stop him. But next time, I
contrived to keep him talking after dinner, and went on far into the
night, and then, when he said he must be going, I told him it was much
too late and pressed him to stay the night with me. So he turned in
on the couch beside me—where he'd sat at dinner—and the two of us
had the room to ourselves.

So far I've said nothing I need blush to repeat in any company, e
but you'd never have heard what I'm going to tell you now if there
wasn't something in the proverb, 'Drunkards and children tell the
truth'—drunkards anyway. Besides, having once embarked on my
eulogy of Socrates it wouldn't be fair not to tell you about the arrogant
way he treated me. People say, you know, that when a man's been bit-
ten by a snake he won't tell anybody what it feels like except a fellow
sufferer, because no one else would sympathize with him if the pain
drove him into making a fool of himself. Well, that's just how I feel,
only I've been bitten by something much more poisonous than a
snake; in fact, mine is the most painful kind of bite there is. I've been
bitten in the heart, or the mind, or whatever you like to call it, by Soc­
ocrates' philosophy, which clings like an adder to any young and gifted
mind it can get hold of, and does exactly what it likes with it. And
looking round me, gentlemen, I see Phaedrus, and Agathon, and
Eryximachus, and Pausanias, and Aristodemus, and Aristophanes, b
and all the rest of them—to say nothing of Socrates himself—and
every one of you has had his taste of this philosophical frenzy, this
sacred rage; so I don't mind telling you about it because I know you'll
make allowances for me—both for the way I behaved with Socrates
and for what I'm saying now. But the servants must put their fingers in
their ears, and so must anybody else who's liable to be at all profane
or beastly.

Well then, gentlemen, when the lights were out and the servants
had all gone, I made up my mind to stop beating about the bush and
tell him what I thought point-blank.

So I nudged him and said, Are you asleep, Socrates?
No, I'm not, he said.
Then do you know what I think? I asked.
Well, what?
I think, I said, you're the only lover I've ever had who's been
really worthy of me. Only you're too shy to talk about it. Well, this is
how I look at it. I think it'd be just as absurd to refuse you this as any-
thing else you wanted that belonged to me or any of my friends. If
there's one thing I'm keen on it's to make the best of myself, and I
think you're more likely to help me there than anybody else, and I'm
sure I'd find it harder to justify myself to men of sense for refusing to
accommodate a friend of that sort than to defend myself to the vulgar
if I had been kind to him.
He heard me out, and then said with that ironical simplicity of his, My dear Alcibiades, I've no doubt there's a lot in what you say, if you're right in thinking that I have some kind of power that would make a better man of you, because in that case you must find me so extraordinarily beautiful that your own attractions must be quite eclipsed. And if you're trying to barter your own beauty for the beauty you have found in me, you're driving a very hard bargain, let me tell you. You're trying to exchange the semblance of beauty for the thing itself—like Diomede and Glaucus swapping bronze for gold. But you know, my dear fellow, you really must be careful. Suppose you're making a mistake, and I'm not worth anything at all. The mind's eye begins to see clearly when the outer eyes grow dim—and I fancy yours are still pretty keen.

To which I replied, Well, I've told you exactly how I feel about it, and now it's for you to settle what's best for us both.

That sounds reasonable enough, he said. We must think it over one of these days, and do whatever seems best for the two of us—about this and everything else.

Well, by this time I felt that I had shot my bolt, and I'd a pretty shrewd idea that I'd registered a hit.

So I got up, and, without giving him a chance to say a word, I wrapped my own cloak round him—for this was in the winter—and, creeping under his shabby old mantle, I took him in my arms and lay there all night with this godlike and extraordinary man—you can't deny that, either, Socrates. And after that he had the insolence, the infernal arrogance, to laugh at my youthful beauty and jeer at the one thing I was really proud of, gentlemen of the jury—I say 'jury' because that's what you're here for, to try the man Socrates on the charge of arrogance—and believe it, gentlemen, or believe it not, when I got up next morning I had no more slept with Socrates, within the meaning of the act, than if he'd been my father or an elder brother.

You can guess what I felt like after that. I was torn between my natural humiliation and my admiration for his manliness and self-control, for this was strength of mind such as I had never hoped to meet. And so I couldn't take offense and cut myself off from his society, but neither was there any way I could think of to attract him. I knew very well that I'd no more chance of getting at him with money than I had of getting at Ajax with a spear, and the one thing I'd made sure would catch him had already failed. So I was at my wits' end, and went about in a state of such utter subjection to the man as was never seen before.

It was after all this, you must understand, that we were both sent on active service to Potidæa, where we messed together. Well, to begin with, he stood the hardships of the campaign far better than I did, or anyone else, for that matter. And if—and it's always liable to happen when there's fighting going on—we were cut off from our sup-
them. I shouted to them not to be downhearted and promised to stand by them. And this time I'd a better chance of watching Socrates than I'd had at Potidaea—you see, being mounted, I wasn't quite so frightened. And I noticed for one thing how much cooler he was than Laches, and for another how—to borrow from a line of yours, Aristophanes—he was walking with the same 'lofty strut and sideways glance' 10 that he goes about with here in Athens. His 'sideways glance' was just as unconcerned whether he was looking at his own friends or at the enemy, and you could see from half a mile away that if you tackled him you'd get as good as you gave—with the result that he and Laches both got clean away. For you're generally pretty safe if that's the way you look when you're in action; it's the man whose one idea it is to get away that the other fellow goes for.

Well, there's a lot more to be said about Socrates, all very peculiar and all very much to his credit. No doubt there's just as much to be said about any of his little ways, but personally I think the most amazing thing about him is the fact that he is absolutely unique; there's no one like him, and I don't believe there ever was. You could point to some likeness to Achilles in Brasidas and the rest of them; you might compare Nestor and Antenor, and so on, with Pericles. There are plenty of such parallels in history, but you'll never find anyone like Socrates, or any ideas like his ideas, in our own times or in the past—unless, of course, you take a leaf out of my book and compare him, not with human beings, but with sileni and satyrs—and the same with his ideas.

Which reminds me of a point I missed at the beginning; I should have explained how his arguments, too, were exactly like those sileni that open down the middle. Anyone listening to Socrates for the first time would find his arguments simply laughable; he wraps them up in just the kind of expressions you'd expect of such an insufferable satyr. He talks about pack asses and blacksmiths and shoemakers and tanners, and he always seems to be saying the same old thing in just the same old way, so that anyone who wasn't used to his style and wasn't very quick on the uptake would naturally take it for the most utter nonsense. But if you open up his arguments, and really get into the skin of them, you'll find that they're the only arguments in the world that have any sense at all, and that nobody else's are so godlike, so rich in images of virtue, or so peculiarly, so entirely pertinent to those inquiries that help the seeker on his way to the goal of true nobility.

And there, gentlemen, you have my eulogy of Socrates, with a few complaints thrown in about the unspeakable way he's treated me. I'm not the only one, either; there's Charmides, and Euthydemus, and ever so many more. He's made fools of them all, just as if he were the

10 Aristophanes, *Clouds* 362.
And how am I to persuade you? he said. If you are not convinced by what I just now was saying, what more can I do for you? Shall I take the argument and ram it into your head?

Heaven forbid! I said. Don't do that. But in the first place when you have said a thing stand by it, or if you shift your ground change openly and don't try to deceive us. But, as it is, you see, Thrasymachus—let us return to the previous examples—you see that while you began by taking the physician in the true sense of the word, you did not think fit afterward to be consistent and maintain with precision the notion of the true shepherd, but you apparently think that he herds his sheep in his quality of shepherd, not with regard to what is best for the sheep, but as if he were a banqueter about to be feasted with regard to the good cheer, or again with a view to the sale of them, as if he were a money-maker and not a shepherd. But the art of the shepherd surely is concerned with nothing else than how to provide what is best for that over which it is set, since its own affairs, its own best estate, are surely sufficiently provided for so long as it in nowise fails of being the shepherd's art. And in like manner I supposed that we just now were constrained to acknowledge that every form of rule in so far as it is rule considers what is best for nothing else than that which is governed and cared for by it, alike in political and private rule. Why, do you think that the rulers and holders of office in our cities—the true rulers—willingly hold office and rule?

I don't think, he said, I know right well they do.

But what of other forms of rule, Thrasymachus? Do you not perceive that no one chooses of his own will to hold the office of rule? Men demand pay, which implies that not to them will benefit accrue from their holding office but to those whom they rule. Tell me this. We ordinarily say, do we not, that each of the arts is different from others because its power or function is different? And, my dear fellow, in order that we may reach some result, don't answer counter to your real belief.

Well, yes, he said, that is what renders it different.

And does not each art also yield us benefit that is peculiar to itself and not general, as for example medicine health, the pilot's art safety at sea, and the other arts similarly?

Assuredly.

And does not the wage earner's art yield wages? For that is its function. Would you identify medicine and the pilot's art? Or if you please to discriminate 'precisely' as you proposed, none the more if a pilot regains his health because a sea voyage is good for him, no whit the more, I say, for this reason do you call his art medicine, do you?

Of course not, he said.

Neither, I take it, do you call wage earning medicine if a man earning wages is in health.

Surely not.
Tell me then how you would express yourself on this point about them. You call one of them, I presume, a virtue and the other a vice?

Of course.

Justice the virtue and injustice the vice?

It is likely, you innocent, when I say that injustice pays and justice doesn’t pay.

But what then, pray?

The opposite, he replied.

What! Justice vice?

No, but a most noble simplicity or goodness of heart.

Then do you call injustice badness of heart?

No, but goodness of judgment.

Do you also, Thrasymachus, regard the unjust as intelligent and good?

Yes, if they are capable of complete injustice, he said, and are able to subject to themselves cities and tribes of men. But you probably suppose that I mean those who take purses. There is profit to be sure even in that sort of thing, he said, if it goes undetected. But such things are not worth taking into the account, but only what I just described.

I am not unaware of your meaning in that, I said, but this is what surprised me, that you should range injustice under the head of virtue and wisdom, and justice in the opposite class.

Well, I do so class them, he said.

That, said I, is a stiffer proposition, my friend, and if you are going as far as that it is hard to know what to answer. For if your position were that injustice is profitable yet you conceded it to be vicious and disgraceful as some other disputants do, there would be a chance for an argument on conventional principles. But, as it is, you obviously are going to affirm that it is honorable and strong and you will attach to it all the other qualities that we were assigning to the just, since you don’t shrink from putting it in the category of virtue and wisdom.

You are a most veritable prophet, he replied.

Well, said I, I mustn’t flinch from following out the logic of the inquiry, so long as I conceive you to be saying what you think. For now, Thrasymachus, I absolutely believe that you are not ‘mocking’ us but telling us your real opinions about the truth.

What difference does it make to you, he said, whether I believe it or not? Why don’t you test the argument?

No difference, said I, but here is something I want you to tell me in addition to what you have said. Do you think the just man would want to overreach or exceed another just man?

By no means, he said. Otherwise he would not be the delightful simpleton that he is.

And would he exceed or overreach or go beyond the just action?
Yet the multitude, he said, do not think so, but that it belongs to the toilsome class of things that must be practiced for the sake of rewards and repute due to opinion but that in itself is to be shunned as an affliction.

I am aware, said I, that that is the general opinion and Thrasymachus has for some time been disparaging it as such and praising injustice. But I, it seems, am somewhat slow to learn.

Come now, he said, hear what I too have to say and see if you agree with me. For Thrasymachus seems to me to have given up to you too soon, as if he were a serpent that you had charmed, but I am not yet satisfied with the proof that has been offered about justice and injustice. For what I desire is to hear what each of them is and what potency and effect each has in and of itself dwelling in the soul, but to dismiss their rewards and consequences. This, then, is what I propose to do, with your concurrence. I will renew the argument of Thrasymachus and will first state what men say is the nature and origin of justice, secondly, that all who practice it do so reluctantly, regarding it as something necessary and not as a good, and thirdly, that they have plausible grounds for thus acting, since forsooth the life of the unjust man is far better than that of the just man—as they say, though I, Socrates, don’t believe it. Yet I am disconcerted when my ears are dinned by the arguments of Thrasymachus and innumerable others. But the case for justice, to prove that it is better than injustice, I have never yet heard stated by any as I desire to hear it. What I desire is to hear an encomium on justice in and by itself. And I think I am most likely to get that from you. For which reason I will lay myself out in praise of the life of injustice, and in so speaking will give you an example of the manner in which I desire to hear from you in turn the dispraise of injustice and the praise of justice. Consider whether my proposal pleases you.

Nothing could please me more, said I, for on what subject would a man of sense rather delight to hold and hear discourse again and again?

That is excellent, he said, and now listen to what I said would be the first topic—the nature and origin of justice.

By nature, they say, to commit injustice is a good and to suffer it is an evil, but that the excess of evil in being wronged is greater than the excess of good in doing wrong, so that when men do wrong and are wronged by one another and taste of both, those who lack the power to avoid the one and take the other determine that it is for their profit to make a compact with one another neither to commit nor to suffer injustice, and that this is the beginning of legislation and of covenants between men, and that they name the commandment of the law the lawful and the just, and that this is the genesis and essential nature of justice—a compromise between the best, which is to do wrong with impunity, and the worst, which is to be wronged and be impotent.
Nay, my dear sir, our calculating friend will say, here again the rites for the dead have much efficacy, and the absolving divinities, as the greatest cities declare, and the sons of gods, who became the poets and prophets of the gods, and who reveal that this is the truth.

On what further ground, then, could we prefer justice to supreme injustice? If we combine this with a counterfeit decorum, we shall prosper to our heart's desire, with gods and men, in life and death, as the words of the multitude and of men of the highest authority declare. In consequence, then, of all that has been said, what possibility is there, Socrates, that any man who has the power of any resources of mind, money, body, or family should consent to honor justice and not rather laugh when he hears her praised? In sooth, if anyone is able to show the falsity of these arguments, and has come to know with sufficient assurance that justice is best, he feels much indulgence for the unjust, and is not angry with them, but is aware that except a man by inborn divinity of his nature disdains injustice, or, having won to knowledge, refrains from it, no one else is willingly just, but that it is from lack of manly spirit or from old age or some other weakness that men dispraise injustice, lacking the power to practice it. The fact is patent. For no sooner does such a one come into the power than he works injustice to the extent of his ability.

And the sole cause of all this is the fact that was the starting point of this entire plea of my friend here and of myself to you, Socrates, pointing out how strange it is that of all you self-styled advocates of justice, from the heroes of old whose discourses survive to the men of the present day, not one has ever censured injustice or commended justice otherwise than in respect of the repute, the honors, and the gifts that accrue from each. But what each one of them is in itself, by its own inherent force, when it is within the soul of the possessor and escapes the eyes of both gods and men, no one has ever adequately set forth in poetry or prose—the proof that the one is the greatest of all evils that the soul contains within itself, while justice is the greatest good. For if you had all spoken in this way from the beginning and from our youth up had sought to convince us, we should not now be guarding against one another's injustice, but each would be his own best guardian, for fear lest by working injustice he should dwell in communion with the greatest of evils.

This, Socrates, and perhaps even more than this, Thrasy machus and haply another might say in pleas for and against justice and injustice, inverting their true potencies, as I believe, grossly. But I—for I have no reason to hide anything from you—am laying myself out to the utmost on the theory, because I wish to hear its refutation from you. Do not merely show us by argument that justice is superior to injustice, but make clear to us what each in and of itself does to its possessor, whereby the one is evil and the other good. But do away with the repute of both, as Glaucon urged. For, unless you take away from
By all means.

If, then, the farmer or any other craftsman taking his products to the market place does not arrive at the same time with those who desire to exchange with him, is he to sit idle in the market place and lose time from his own work?

By no means, he said, but there are men who see this need and appoint themselves for this service—in well-conducted cities they are generally those who are weakest in body and those who are useless for any other task. They must wait there in the agora and exchange money for goods with those who wish to sell, and goods for money with as many as desire to buy.

This need, then, said I, creates the class of shopkeepers in our city. Or is not 'shopkeepers' the name we give to those who, planted in the agora, serve us in buying and selling, while we call those who roam from city to city merchants?

Certainly.

And there are, furthermore, I believe, other servitors who in the things of the mind are not altogether worthy of our fellowship, but whose strength of body is sufficient for toil; so they, selling the use of this strength and calling the price wages, are designated, I believe, 'wage earners,' are they not?

Certainly.

Wage earners, then, it seems, are the complement that helps to fill up the state.

I think so.

Has our city, then, Adimantus, reached its full growth, and is it complete?

Perhaps.

Where, then, can justice and injustice be found in it? And along with which of the constituents that we have considered do they come into the state?

I cannot conceive, Socrates, he said, unless it be in some need that those very constituents have of one another.

Perhaps that is a good suggestion, said I. We must examine it and not hold back.

First of all, then, let us consider what will be the manner of life of men thus provided. Will they not make bread and wine and garments and shoes? And they will build themselves houses and carry on their work in summer for the most part unclad and unshod and in winter clothed and shod sufficiently. And for their nourishment they will provide meal from their barley and flour from their wheat, and kneading and cooking these they will serve noble cakes and loaves on some arrangement of reeds or clean leaves. And, reclined on rustic beds strewed with bryony and myrtle, they will feast with their children, drinking of their wine thereto, garlanded and singing hymns to the gods in pleasant fellowship, not begetting offspring beyond their means lest they fall into poverty or war.
Here Glaucon broke in, No relishes apparently, he said, for the men you describe as feasting.

True, said I, I forgot that they will also have relishes—salt, of course, and olives and cheese, and onions and greens, the sort of things they boil in the country, they will boil up together. But for dessert we will serve them figs and chick-peas and beans, and they will toast myrtle berries and acorns before the fire, washing them down with moderate potations. And so, living in peace and health, they will probably die in old age and hand on a like life to their off-spring.

And he said, If you were founding a city of pigs, Socrates, what other fodder than this would you provide?

Why, what would you have, Glaucon? said I.

What is customary, he replied. They must recline on couches, I presume, if they are not to be uncomfortable, and dine from tables and have dishes and sweetmeats such as are now in use.

Good, said I. I understand. It is not merely the origin of a city, it seems, that we are considering but the origin of a luxurious city. Perhaps that isn’t such a bad suggestion, either. For by observation of such a city it may be we could discern the origin of justice and injustice in states. The true state I believe to be the one we have described—the healthy state, as it were. But if it is your pleasure that we contemplate also a fevered state, there is nothing to hinder. For there are some, it appears, who will not be contented with this sort of fare or with this way of life, but couches will have to be added thereto and tables and other furniture, yes, and relishes and myrrh and incense and girls and cakes—all sorts of all of them. And the requirements we first mentioned, houses and garments and shoes, will no longer be confined to necessities, but we must set painting to work and embroidery, and procure gold and ivory and similar adornments, must we not?

Yes, he said.

Then shall we not have to enlarge the city again? For that healthy state is no longer sufficient, but we must proceed to swell out its bulk and fill it up with a multitude of things that exceed the requirements of necessity in states, as, for example, the entire class of huntsmen, and the imitators, many of them occupied with figures and colors and many with music—the poets and their assistants, rhapsodists, actors, chorus dancers, contractors—and the manufacturers of all kinds of articles, especially those that have to do with women’s adornment. And so we shall also want more servitors. Don’t you think that we shall need tutors, nurses wet and dry, beauty-shop ladies, barbers, and yet again cooks and chefs? And we shall have need, further, of swineherds; there were none of these creatures in our former city, for we had no need of them, but in this city there will be this further need. And we shall also require other cattle in great numbers if they are to be eaten, shall we not?
Yes.

Doctors, too, are something whose services we shall be much more likely to require if we live thus than as before?

Much.

And the territory, I presume, that was then sufficient to feed the then population, from being adequate will become too small. Is that so or not?

It is.

Then we shall have to cut out a cantle of our neighbor’s land if we are to have enough for pasture and plowing, and they in turn of ours if they too abandon themselves to the unlimited acquisition of wealth, disregarding the limit set by our necessary wants.

Inevitably, Socrates.

We shall go to war as the next step, Glaucon—or what will happen?

What you say, he said.

And we are not yet to speak, said I, of any evil or good effect of war, but only to affirm that we have further discovered the origin of war, namely, from those things from which the greatest disasters, public and private, come to states when they come.

Certainly.

Then, my friend, we must still further enlarge our city by no small increment, but by a whole army, that will march forth and fight it out with assailants in defense of all our wealth and the luxuries we have just described.

How so? he said. Are the citizens themselves not sufficient for that?

Not if you, said I, and we all were right in the admission we made when we were molding our city. We surely agreed, if you remember, that it is impossible for one man to do the work of many arts well.

True, he said.

Well, then, said I, don’t you think that the business of fighting is an art and a profession?

It is indeed, he said.

Should our concern be greater, then, for the cobbler’s art than for the art of war?

By no means.

Can we suppose, then, that while we were at pains to prevent the cobbler from attempting to be at the same time a farmer, a weaver, or a builder instead of just a cobbler, to the end that we might have the cobbler’s business well done, and similarly assigned to each and every one man one occupation, for which he was fit and naturally adapted and at which he was to work all his days, at leisure from other pursuits and not letting slip the right moments for doing the work well, and that yet we are in doubt whether the right accomplishment of the business of war is not of supreme moment? Is it so easy
that a man who is cultivating the soil will be at the same time a soldier and one who is practicing cobbling or any other trade, though no man in the world could make himself a competent expert at draughts or the dice who did not practice that and nothing else from childhood but treated it as an occasional business? And are we to believe that a man who takes in hand a shield or any other instrument of war springs up on that very day a competent combatant in heavy armor or in any other form of warfare—though no other tool will make a man be an artist or an athlete by his taking it in hand, nor will it be of any service to those who have neither acquired the science of it nor sufficiently practiced themselves in its use?

Great indeed, he said, would be the value of tools in that case!

Then, said I, in the same degree that the task of our guardians is the greatest of all, it would require more leisure than any other business and the greatest science and training.

I think so, said he.

Does it not also require a nature adapted to that very pursuit?

Of course.

It becomes our task, then, it seems, if we are able, to select which and what kind of natures are suited for the guardianship of a state.

Yes, ours.

Upon my word, said I, it is no light task that we have taken upon ourselves. But we must not faint so far as our strength allows.

No, we mustn’t.

Do you think, said I, that there is any difference between the nature of a well-bred hound for this watchdog’s work and that of a wellborn lad?

What point have you in mind?

I mean that each of them must be keen of perception, quick in pursuit of what it has apprehended, and strong too if it has to fight it out with its captive.

Why, yes, said he, there is need of all these qualities.

And it must, further, be brave if it is to fight well.

Of course.

And will a creature be ready to be brave that is not high-spirited, whether horse or dog or anything else? Have you never observed what an irresistible and invincible thing is spirit, the presence of which makes every soul in the face of everything fearless and unconquerable?

I have.

The physical qualities of the guardian, then, are obvious.

Yes.

And also those of his soul, namely that he must be of high spirit.

Yes, this too.

How then, Glaucon, said I, will they escape being savage to one another and to the other citizens if this is to be their nature?

Not easily, by Zeus, said he.
aspect by nothing save his apprehension of the one and his failure to recognize the other. How, I ask you, can the love of learning be denied to a creature whose criterion of the friendly and the alien is intelligence and ignorance?

If certainly cannot, he said.

But you will admit, said I, that the love of learning and the love of wisdom are the same?

The same, he said.

Then may we not confidently lay it down, in the case of man too, that if he is to be in some sort gentle to friends and familiars he must be by nature a lover of wisdom and of learning?

Let us so assume, he replied.

The love of wisdom, then, and high spirit and quickness and strength will be combined for us in the nature of him who is to be a good and true guardian of the state.

By all means, he said.

Such, then, I said, would be the basis of his character. But the rearing of these men and their education, how shall we manage that? And will the consideration of this topic advance us in any way toward discerning what is the object of our entire inquiry—the origin of justice and injustice in a state—our aim must be to omit nothing of a sufficient discussion, and yet not to draw it out to tiresome length?

And Glaucon's brother replied, Certainly, I expect that this inquiry will bring us nearer to that end.

Certainly, then, my dear Adimantus, said I, we must not abandon it even if it prove to be rather long.

No, we must not.

Come, then, just as if we were telling stories or fables and had ample leisure, let us educate these men in our discourse.

So we must.

What, then, is our education? Or is it hard to find a better than that which long time has discovered—which is, I suppose, gymnastics for the body, and for the soul, music?

It is.

And shall we not begin education in music earlier than in gymnastics?

Of course.

And under music you include tales, do you not?

I do.

And tales are of two species, the one true and the other false?

Yes.

And education must make use of both, but first of the false?

I don't understand your meaning.

Don't you understand, I said, that we begin by telling children fables, and the fable is, taken as a whole, false, but there is truth in it also? And we make use of fable with children before gymnastics.
Yes.

And, again, it is surely true of all composite implements, edifices, and habiliments, by parity of reasoning, that those which are well made and in good condition are least liable to be changed by time and other influences.

That is so.

It is universally true, then, that that which is in the best state by nature or art or both admits least alteration by something else.

So it seems.

But God, surely, and everything that belongs to God, is in every way in the best possible state.

Of course.

From this point of view, then, it would be least of all likely that there would be many forms in God.

Least indeed.

But would he transform and alter himself?

Obviously, he said, if he is altered.

Then does he change himself for the better and to something fairer, or for the worse and to something uglier than himself?

It must necessarily, said he, be for the worse if he is changed. For we surely will not say that God is deficient in either beauty or excellence.

Most rightly spoken, said I. And if that were his condition, do you think, Adimantus, that any one god or man would of his own will worsen himself in any way?

Impossible, he replied.

It is impossible then, said I, even for a god to wish to alter himself, but, as it appears, each of them, being the fairest and best possible, abides forever simply in his own form.

An absolutely necessary conclusion to my thinking.

No poet then, I said, my good friend, must be allowed to tell us that 'The gods, in the likeness of strangers, many disguises assume as they visit the cities of mortals.' \(^9\) Nor must anyone tell falsehoods about Proteus and Thetis, nor in any tragedy or in other poems bring in Hera disguised as a priestess collecting alms 'for the life-giving sons of Inachus, the Argive stream.' \(^10\) And many similar falsehoods they must not tell. Nor again must mothers under the influence of such poets terrify their children with harmful tales, how there are certain gods whose apparitions haunt the night in the likeness of many strangers from all manner of lands, lest while they speak evil of the gods they at the same time make cowards of the children.

They must not, he said.

But, said I, may we suppose that while the gods themselves are

\(^9\) *Odyssey* 17.485 sq.

\(^10\) Aeschylus, *Xanthians*, fr. 159.
incapable of change they cause us to fancy that they appear in many shapes deceiving and practicing magic upon us?

Perhaps, said he.

Consider, said I. Would a god wish to deceive, or lie, by presenting in either word or action what is only appearance?

I don’t know, said he.

Don’t you know, said I, that the veritable lie, if the expression is permissible, is a thing that all gods and men abhor?

What do you mean? he said.

This, said I, that falsehood in the most vital part of themselves, and about their most vital concerns, is something that no one willingly accepts, but it is there above all that everyone fears it.

I don’t understand yet either.

That is because you suspect me of some grand meaning, I said, but what I mean is, that deception in the soul about realities, to have been deceived and to be blindly ignorant and to have and hold the falsehood there, is what all men would least of all accept, and it is in that case that they loathe it most of all.

Quite so, he said.

But surely it would be most wholly right, as I was just now saying, to describe this as in very truth falsehood—ignorance namely in the soul of the man deceived. For the falsehood in words is a copy of the affection in the soul, an afterrising image of it and not an altogether unmixed falsehood. Is not that so?

By all means.

Essential falsehood, then, is hated not only by gods but by men.

I agree.

But what of the falsehood in words—when and for whom is it serviceable so as not to merit abhorrence? Will it not be against enemies? And when any of those whom we call friends owing to madness or folly attempts to do some wrong, does it not then become useful to avert the evil—as a medicine? And also in the fables of which we were just now speaking, owing to our ignorance of the truth about antiquity, we liken the false to the true as far as we may and so make it edifying.

We most certainly do, he said.

Tell me, then, on which of these grounds falsehood would be serviceable to God. Would he because of his ignorance of antiquity make false likenesses of it?

An absurd supposition, that, he said.

Then there is no lying poet in God.

I think not.

Well then, would it be through fear of his enemies that he would lie?

Far from it.
b We will beg Homer and the other poets not to be angry if we cancel those and all similar passages, not that they are not poetic and pleasing to most hearers, but because the more poetic they are the less are they suited to the ears of boys and men who are destined to be free and to be more afraid of slavery than of death.

By all means. Then we must further taboo in these matters the entire vocabulary of terror and fear, Cocytus named of lamentation loud, abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate, the people of the infernal pit and of the charnel house, and all other terms of this type, whose very names send a shudder through all the hearers every year. And they may be excellent for other purposes, but we are in fear for our guardians lest the habit of such thrills make them more sensitive and soft than we would have them.

And we are right in so fearing.

We must remove those things then?

Yes.

And the opposite type to them is what we must require in speech and in verse?

Obviously.

d And shall we also do away with the wailings and lamentations of men of repute?

That necessarily follows, he said, from the other.

Consider, said I, whether we shall be right in thus getting rid of them or not. What we affirm is that a good man will not think that for a good man, whose friend he also is, death is a terrible thing.

Yes, we say that.

Then it would not be for his friend's sake as if he had suffered something dreadful that he would make lament.

Certainly not.

But we also say this, that such a one is most of all men sufficient unto himself for a good life and is distinguished from other men in having least need of anybody else.

True, he replied.

Least of all then to him is it a terrible thing to lose son or brother or his wealth or anything of the sort.

Least of all.

Then he makes the least lament and bears it most moderately when any such misfortune overtakes him.

Certainly.

Then we should be right in doing away with the lamentations of men of note and in attributing them to women, and not to the most worthy of them either, and to inferior men, in order that those whom we say we are breeding for the guardianship of the land may disdain to act like these.

We should be right, said he.
Again then we shall request Homer and the other poets not to portray Achilles, the son of a goddess, as, ‘lying now on his side, and then again on his back, and again on his face,’ and then rising up and ‘drifting distraught on the shore of the waste unharvested ocean,’ nor as clutching with both hands the sooty dust and strewing it over his head, nor as weeping and lamenting in the measure and manner attributed to him by the poet, nor yet Priam, near kinsman of the gods, making supplication and rolling in the dung, ‘calling aloud unto each, by name to each man appealing.’ And yet more than this shall we beg of them at least not to describe the gods as lamenting and crying, ‘Ah, woe is me, woeful mother who bore to my sorrow the bravest,’ and if they will so picture the gods, at least not to have the effrontery to present so unlikely a likeness of the supreme god as to make him say,

Out on it, dear to my heart is the man whose pursuit around Troy town
I must behold with my eyes while my spirit is grieving within me,

and,

Ah, woe is me! Of all men to me is Sarpedon the dearest,
Fated to fall by the hands of Patroclus, Menoetius’ offspring.

For if, dear Adimantus, our young men should seriously incline to listen to such tales and not laugh at them as unworthy utterances, still less likely would any man be to think such conduct unworthy of himself and to rebuke himself if it occurred to him to do or say anything of that kind, but without shame or restraint full many a dirge for trifles would he chant and many a lament.

You say most truly, he replied.

But that must not be, as our reasoning but now showed us, in which we must put our trust until someone convinces us with a better reason.

No, it must not be.

Again, they must not be prone to laughter. For ordinarily when one abandons himself to violent laughter his condition provokes a violent reaction.

I think so, he said.

Then if anyone represents men of worth as overpowered by laughter we must not accept it, much less if gods.

Much indeed, he replied.

Then we must not accept from Homer such sayings as these either about the gods.

18 Iliad 24.10 sq. 20 Iliad 22.414 sq. 22 Iliad 22.168.
19 Iliad 24.12 sq. 21 Iliad 18.54. 23 Iliad 16.433 sq.
Heavy with wine, with the eyes of a dog and the heart of a fleet deer, and the lines that follow? Are these well—and other impertinences in prose or verse of private citizens to their rulers? They are not well. They certainly are not suitable for youth to hear for the inculcation of self-control. But if from another point of view they yield some pleasure we must not be surprised, or what is your view of it? This, he said.

Again, to represent the wisest man as saying that this seems to him the fairest thing in the world,

When the bounteous tables are standing Laden with bread and with meat and the cupbearer ladles the sweet wine Out of the mixer and bears it and empties it into the beakers, do you think the hearing of that sort of thing will conduce to a young man's temperance or self-control? Or this?

Hunger is the most piteous death that a mortal may suffer. Or to hear how Zeus lightly forgot all the designs which he devised, awake while the other gods and men slept, because of the excitement of his passions, and was so overcome by the sight of Hera that he is not even willing to go to their chamber, but wants to lie with her there on the ground and says that he is possessed by a fiercer desire than when they first consorted with one another, 'deceiving their dear parents'? Nor will it profit them to hear of Hephaestus' fettering of Ares and Aphrodite for a like motive.

No, by Zeus, he said, I don't think it will. But any words or deeds of endurance in the face of all odds attributed to famous men are suitable for our youth to see represented and to hear, such as,

He smote his breast and chided thus his heart, Endure, my heart, for worse hast thou endured.

By all means, he said.
It is certain that we cannot allow our men to be accepters of bribes or greedy for gain.
By no means.
Then they must not chant, 'Gifts move the gods and gifts persuade dread kings.' Nor should we approve Achilles' attendant Phoenix as speaking fairly when he counseled him if he received gifts for it to defend the Achaeans, but without gifts not to lay aside his

28 Iliad 1.225. 30 Odyssey 12.342.
29 Odyssey 9.8 sq. 31 Iliad 14.294 sq.
32 Odyssey 20.17 sq.
vex him if he wished to get home safe. And the old man on hearing this was frightened and departed in silence, and having gone apart from the camp he prayed at length to Apollo, invoking the appellations of the god, and reminding him of and asking requital for any of his gifts that had found favor whether in the building of temples or the sacrifice of victims. In return for these things he prayed that the Achaeans should suffer for his tears by the god's shafts.

It is in this way, my dear fellow, I said, that without imitation b simple narration results.

I understand, he said.

Understand then, said I, that the opposite of this arises when one removes the words of the poet between and leaves the alternation of speeches.

This too I understand, he said. It is what happens in tragedy.

You have conceived me most rightly, I said, and now I think I can make plain to you what I was unable to before, that there is one kind of poetry and telltaleing which works wholly through imitation, as you remarked, tragedy and comedy, and another which employs the recital of the poet himself, best exemplified, I presume, in the dithyramb, and there is again that which employs both, in epic poetry and in many other places, if you apprehend me.

I understand now, he said, what you then meant.

Recall then also the preceding statement that we were done with the 'what' of speech and still had to consider the 'how.'

I remember.

What I meant then was just this, that we must reach a decision d whether we are to suffer our poets to narrate as imitators or in part as imitators and in part not, and what sort of things in each case, or not allow them to imitate at all.

I divine, he said, that you are considering whether we shall admit tragedy and comedy into our city or not.

Perhaps, said I, and perhaps even more than that. For I certainly do not yet know myself, but whithersoever the wind, as it were, of the argument blows, there lies our course.

Well said, he replied.

This then, Adimantus, is the point we must keep in view. Do we e wish our guardians to be good mimics or not? Or is this also a consequence of what we said before, that each one could practice well only one pursuit and not many, but if he attempted the latter, dabbling in many things, he would fail of distinction in all?

Of course it is.

And does not the same rule hold for imitation, that the same man is not able to imitate many things well as he can one?

No, he is not.

Still less, then, will he be able to combine the practice of any worthy pursuit with the imitation of many things and the quality of
a mimic, since, unless I mistake, the same men cannot practice well at once even the two forms of imitation that appear most nearly akin, as the writing of tragedy and comedy. Did you not just now call these two imitations?

I did, and you are right in saying that the same men are not able to succeed in both.

Nor yet to be at once good rhapsodists and actors?

True.

But neither can the same men be actors for tragedies and comedies—and all these are imitations, are they not?

Yes, imitations.

And to still smaller coinage than this, in my opinion, Adimantus, proceeds the fractioning of human faculty, so as to be incapable of imitating many things or of doing the things themselves of which the imitations are likenesses.

Most true, he replied.

If, then, we are to maintain our original principle, that our guardians, released from all other crafts, are to be expert craftsmen of civic liberty, and pursue nothing else that does not conduce to this, it would not be fitting for these to do nor yet to imitate anything else. But if they imitate they should from childhood up imitate what is appropriate to them—men, that is, who are brave, sober, pious, free, and all things of that kind—but things unbecoming the free man they should neither do nor be clever at imitating, nor yet any other shameful thing, lest from the imitation they imbibe the reality. Or have you not observed that imitations, if continued from youth far into life, settle down into habits and second nature in the body, the speech, and the thought?

Yes, indeed, said he.

We will not then allow our charges, whom we expect to prove good men, being men, to play the parts of women and imitate a woman young or old wrangling with her husband, defying heaven, loudly boasting, fortunate in her own conceit, or involved in misfortune and possessed by grief and lamentation—still less a woman that is sick, in love, or in labor.

Most certainly not, he replied.

Nor may they imitate slaves, female and male, doing the offices of slaves.

No, not that either.

Nor yet, as it seems, bad men who are cowards and who do the opposite of the things we just now spoke of, reviling and lampooning one another, speaking foul words in their cups or when sober and in other ways sinning against themselves and others in word and deed after the fashion of such men. And I take it they must not form the habit of likening themselves to madmen either in words nor yet in
hail and axles and pulleys, and the notes of trumpets and flutes and Panpipes, and the sounds of all instruments, and the cries of dogs, sheep, and birds—and so his style will depend wholly on imitation in voice and gesture, or will contain but a little of pure narration.

That too follows of necessity, he said.

These, then, said I, were the two types of diction of which I was speaking.

There are those two, he replied.

Now does not one of the two involve slight variations, and if we assign a suitable pitch and rhythm to the diction, is not the result that the right speaker speaks almost on the same note and in one cadence— for the changes are slight—and similarly in a rhythm of nearly the same kind?

Quite so.

But what of the other type? Does it not require the opposite, every kind of pitch and all rhythms, if it too is to have appropriate expression, since it involves manifold forms of variation?

Emphatically so.

And do all poets and speakers hit upon one type or the other of diction or some blend which they combine of both?

They must, he said.

What, then, said I, are we to do? Shall we admit all of these into the city, or one of the unmixed types, or the mixed type?

If my vote prevails, he said, the unmixed imitator of the good.

Nay, but the mixed type also is pleasing, Adimantus, and far most pleasing to boys and their tutors and the great mob is the opposite of your choice.

Most pleasing it is.

But perhaps, said I, you would affirm it to be ill suited to our polity, because there is no twofold or manifold man among us, since every man does one thing.

It is not suited.

And is this not the reason why such a city is the only one in which we shall find the cobbler a cobbler and not a pilot in addition to his cobbling, and the farmer a farmer and not a judge added to his farming, and the soldier a soldier and not a money-maker in addition to his soldiery, and so of all the rest?

True, he said.

If a man, then, it seems, who was capable by his cunning of assuming every kind of shape and imitating all things should arrive in our city, bringing with himself the poems which he wished to exhibit, we should fall down and worship him as a holy and wondrous and delightful creature, but should say to him that there is no man of that kind among us in our city, nor is it lawful for such a man to arise among us, and we should send him away to another city, after pouring
Will you make any use of them for warriors?
None at all, he said, but it would seem that you have left the Dorian and the Phrygian.

I don't know the musical modes, I said, but leave us that mode that would fittingly imitate the utterances and the accents of a brave man who is engaged in warfare or in any enforced business, and who, when he has failed, either meeting wounds or death or having fallen into some other mishap, in all these conditions confronts fortune with steadfast endurance and repels her strokes. And another for such a man engaged in works of peace, not enforced but voluntary, either trying to persuade somebody of something and imploring him—whether it be a god, through prayer, or a man, by teaching and admonition—or contrariwise yielding himself to another who is petitioning or teaching him or trying to change his opinions, and in consequence faring according to his wish, and not bearing himself arrogantly, but in all this acting modestly and moderately and acquiescing in the outcome. Leave us these two modes—the enforced and the voluntary—that will best imitate the utterances of men failing or succeeding, the temperate, the brave—leave us these.

Well, said he, you are asking me to leave none other than those I just spoke of.

Then, said I, we shall not need in our songs and airs instruments of many strings or whose compass includes all the harmonies.

Not in my opinion, said he.
Then we shall not maintain makers of triangles and harps and all other many-stringed and polyharmonic instruments.

Apparently not.
Well, will you admit to the city flute makers and flute players? Or is not the flute the most 'many-stringed' of instruments and do not the panharmonics themselves imitate it?

Clearly, he said.
You have left, said I, the lyre and the cithara. These are useful in the city, and in the fields the shepherds would have a little piccolo to pipe on.

So our argument indicates, he said.

We are not innovating, my friend, in preferring Apollo and the instruments of Apollo to Marsyas and his instruments.

No, by heaven! he said. I think not.
And by the dog, said I, we have all unawares purged the city which a little while ago we said was luxurious.

In that we show our good sense, he said.

Come then, let us complete the purification. For upon harmonies would follow the consideration of rhythms; we must not pursue complexity nor great variety in the basic movements, but must observe what are the rhythms of a life that is orderly and brave, and after observing them require the foot and the air to conform to that
kind of man's speech and not the speech to the foot and the tune. What those rhythms would be, it is for you to tell us as you did the musical modes.

Nay, in faith, he said, I cannot tell. For that there are some three forms from which the feet are combined, just as there are four in the notes of the voice whence come all harmonies, is a thing that I have observed and could tell. But which are imitations of which sort of life, I am unable to say.

Well, said I, on this point we will take counsel with Damon, too, as to which are the feet appropriate to illiberality, and insolence or madness or other evils, and what rhythms we must leave for their opposites. And I believe I have heard him obscurely speaking of a foot that he called the enoplitos, a composite foot, and a dactyl and a heroic foot, which he arranged, I know not how, to be equal up and down in the interchange of long and short, and unless I am mistaken he used the term iambic, and there was another foot that he called the trochaic, and he added the quantities long and short. And in some of these, I believe, he censured and commended the tempo of the foot no less than the rhythm itself, or else some combination of the two, I can't say. But, as I said, let this matter be postponed for Damon's consideration. For to determine the truth of these would require no little discourse. Do you think otherwise?

No, by heaven, I do not.

But this you are able to determine—that seemliness and unseemliness are attendant upon the good rhythm and the bad.

Of course.

And, further, that good rhythm and bad rhythm accompany, the one fair diction, assimilating itself thereto, and the other the opposite, and so of the apt and the unapt, if, as we were just now saying, the rhythm and harmony follow the words and not the words these. They certainly must follow the speech, he said.

And what of the manner of the diction, and the speech? said I. Do they not follow and conform to the disposition of the soul?

Of course.

And all the rest to the diction?

Yes.

Good speech, then, good accord, and good grace, and good rhythm wait upon a good disposition, not that weakness of head which we euphemistically style goodness of heart, but the truly good and fair disposition of the character and the mind.

By all means, he said.

And must not our youth pursue these everywhere if they are to do what it is truly theirs to do?

They must indeed.

And there is surely much of these qualities in painting and in all similar craftsmanship—weaving is full of them and embroidery
part ever so little from their prescribed regimen these athletes are liable to great and violent diseases?

I do.

Then, said I, we need some more ingenious form of training for our athletes of war, since these must be as it were sleepless hounds, and have the keenest possible perceptions of sight and hearing, and in their campaigns undergo many changes in their drinking water, their food, and in exposure to the heat of the sun and to storms, without disturbance of their health.

I think so.

Would not, then, the best gymnastics be akin to the music that we were just now describing?

What do you mean?

It would be a simple and flexible gymnastic training, and especially so in the training for war.

In what way?

One could learn that, said I, even from Homer. For you are aware that in the banqueting of the heroes on campaign he does not feast them on fish, though they are at the seaside on the Hellespont, nor on boiled meat, but only on roast, which is what soldiers could most easily procure. For everywhere, one may say, it is of easier provision to use the bare fire than to convey pots and pans along.

Indeed it is.

Neither, as I believe, does Homer ever make mention of sweetmeats. Is not that something which all men in training understand—that if one is to keep his body in good condition he must abstain from such things altogether?

They are right, he said, in that they know it and do abstain.

Then, my friend, if you think this is the right way, you apparently do not approve of a Syracusan table and the Sicilian variety of dishes.

I think not.

You would frown, then, on a little Corinthian maid as the chère amie of men who were to keep themselves fit?

Most certainly.

And also on the seeming delights of Attic pastry?

Inevitably.

In general, I take it, if we likened that kind of food and regimen to music and song expressed in the panharmonic mode and in every variety of rhythm it would be a fair comparison.

Quite so.

And there variety engendered licentiousness, did it not, but here disease, while simplicity in music begets sobriety in the souls, and in gymnastic training it begets health in bodies?

Most true, he said.

And when licentiousness and disease multiply in a city, are not many courts of law and dispensaries opened? And the arts of chicane
and medicine give themselves airs when even free men in great num-
bers take them very seriously.
How can they help it? he said.
Will you be able to find a surer proof of an evil and shameful
state of education in a city than the necessity of first-rate physicians
and judges, not only for the base and mechanical, but for those who
claim to have been bred in the fashion of free men? Do you not think
it disgraceful and a notable mark of bad breeding to have to make use
of a justice imported from others, who thus become your masters and
judges, from lack of such qualities in yourself?
The most shameful thing in the world.
Is it? said I. Or is this still more shameful—when a man not only
wears out the better part of his days in the courts of law as defendant
or accuser, but from the lack of all true sense of values is led to plume
himself on this very thing, as being a smart fellow to 'put over' an un-
cjust act and cunningly to try every dodge and practice, every evasion,
and wriggle out of every hold in defeating justice, and that too for
trifles and worthless things, because he does not know how much
nobler and better it is to arrange his life so as to have no need of a
nodding jurymen?
That is, said he, still more shameful than the other.
And to require medicine, said I, not merely for wounds or the in-
cidence of some seasonal maladies, but, because of sloth and such a
regimen as we described, to fill one's body up with winds and humors
like a marsh and compel the ingenious sons of Asclepius to invent
for diseases such names as fluxes and flatulences—don't you think
that disgraceful?
Those surely are, he said, newfangled and monstrous strange
names of diseases.
There was nothing of the kind, I fancy, said I, in the days of
Asclepius. I infer this from the fact that at Troy his sons did not
d find fault with the damsel who gave to the wounded Eurypylus to
drink a posset of Pramnian wine plentifully sprinkled with barley and
gratings of cheese, inflammatory ingredients of a surety, nor did they
censure Patroclus, who was in charge of the case.
It was indeed, said he, a strange potion for a man in that con-
dition.
Not so strange, said I, if you reflect that the former Asclepiads
made no use of our modern coddling medication of diseases before
the time of Herodicus. But Herodicus was a trainer and became a
valetudinarian, and blended gymnastics and medicine, for the tor-
ment first and chiefly of himself and then of many successors.
How so? he said.
By lingering out his death, said I. For living in perpetual observ-
ance of his malady, which was incurable, he was not able to effect a
tion nor of any inquiry and does not participate in any discussion or any other form of culture, it becomes feeble, deaf, and blind, because it is not aroused or fed nor are its perceptions purified and quickened?

That is so, he said.

And so such a man, I take it, becomes a misologist and a stranger to the Muses. He no longer makes any use of persuasion by speech but achieves all his ends like a beast by violence and savagery, and in his brute ignorance and ineptitude lives a life of disharmony and gracelessness.

That is entirely true, he said.

For these two, then, it seems there are two arts which I would say some god gave to mankind, music and gymnastics for the service of the high-spirited principle and the love of knowledge in them—not for the soul and the body except incidentally, but for the harmonious adjustment of these two principles by the proper degree of tension and relaxation of each.

That seems likely, Socrates, he said.

And shall we not also need in our city, Glaucon, a permanent overseer of this kind if its constitution is to be preserved?

b We most certainly shall.

Such would be the outlines of their education and breeding. For why should one recite the list of the dances of such citizens, their hunts and chases with hounds, their athletic contests and races? It is pretty plain that they must conform to these principles and there is no longer any difficulty in discovering them.

There is, it may be, no difficulty, he said.

Very well, said I. What, then, have we next to determine? Is it not which ones among them shall be the rulers and the ruled?

c Certainly.

That the rulers must be the elder and the ruled the younger is obvious.

It is.

And that the rulers must be their best?

This too.

And do not the best of the farmers prove the best farmers?

Yes.

And in this case, since we want them to be the best of the guardians, must they not be the best guardians, the most regardful of the state?

Yes.
They must then to begin with be intelligent in such matters and capable, and furthermore careful of the interests of the state? That is so. But one would be most likely to be careful of that which he loved. Necessarily. And again, one would be most likely to love that whose interests he supposed to coincide with his own, and thought that when it prospered he too would prosper and if not, the contrary. So it is, he said. Then we must pick out from the other guardians such men as to our observation appear most inclined through the entire course of their lives to be zealous to do what they think for the interest of the state, and who would be least likely to consent to do the opposite. That would be a suitable choice, he said. I think, then, we shall have to observe them at every period of life, to see if they are conservators and guardians of this conviction in their minds and never by sorcery nor by force can be brought to expel from their souls unawares this conviction that they must do what is best for the state.

What do you mean by the 'expelling'? he said. I will tell you, said I. It seems to me that the exit of a belief from the mind is either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary is the departure of the false belief from one who learns better, involuntary that of every true belief.

The voluntary, he said, I understand, but I need instruction about the involuntary. How now, said I, don’t you agree with me in thinking that men are unwillingly deprived of good things but willingly of evil? Or is it not an evil to be deceived in respect of the truth and a good to possess truth? And don’t you think that to opine the things that are is to possess the truth?

Why, yes, said he, you are right, and I agree that men are unwillingly deprived of true opinions. And doesn’t this happen to them by theft, by the spells of sorcery, or by force?

I don’t understand now either, he said. I must be talking in high tragic style, I said. By those who have their opinions stolen from them I mean those who are overpersuaded and those who forget, because in the one case time, in the other argument strips them unawares of their beliefs. Now I presume you understand, do you not?

Yes. Well then, by those who are constrained or forced I mean those whom some pain or suffering compels to change their minds. That too I understand and you are right.
And the victims of sorcery I am sure you too would say are they who alter their opinions under the spell of pleasure or terrified by some fear.

Yes, he said, everything that deceives appears to cast a spell upon the mind.

Well then, as I was just saying, we must look for those who are the best guardians of the indwelling conviction that what they have to do is what they at any time believe to be best for the state. Then we must observe them from childhood up and propose for them tasks in which one would be most likely to forget this principle or be deceived, and he whose memory is sure and who cannot be beguiled we must accept and the other kind we must cross off from our list. Is not that so?

Yes.

And again we must subject them to toils and pains and competitions in which we have to watch for the same traits.

Right, he said.

Then, said I, must we not institute a third kind of competitive test with regard to sorcery and observe them in that? Just as men conduct colts to noises and uproar to see if they are liable to take fright, so we must bring these lads while young into fears and again pass them into pleasures, testing them much more carefully than men do gold in the fire, to see if the man remains immune to such witchcraft and preserves his composure throughout, a good guardian of himself and the culture which he has received, maintaining the true rhythm and harmony of his being in all those conditions, and the character that would make him most useful to himself and to the state. And he who as boy, lad, and man endures the test and issues from it unspoiled we must establish as ruler over our city and its guardian, and bestow rewards upon him in life, and in death the allotment of the supreme honors of burial rites and other memorials. But the man of the other type we must reject. Such, said I, appears to me, Glaucon, the general notion of our selection and appointment of rulers and guardians as sketched in outline, but not drawn out in detail.

I too, he said, think much the same.

Then would it not truly be most proper to designate these as guardians in the full sense of the word, watchers against foemen without and friends within, so that the latter shall not wish and the former shall not be able to work harm, but to name those youths whom we were calling guardians just now helpers and aids for the decrees of the rulers?

I think so, he replied.

How, then, said I, might we contrive one of those opportune falsehoods of which we were just now speaking, so as by one noble lie to persuade if possible the rulers themselves, but failing that the rest of the city?
Tell me first, I said, whether, if they have to fight, they will not be fighting as athletes of war against men of wealth?

Yes, that is true, he said.

Answer me then, Adimantus. Do you not think that one boxer perfectly trained in the art could easily fight two fat rich men who knew nothing of it?

Not at the same time perhaps, said he.

Not even, said I, if he were allowed to retreat and then turn and strike the one who came up first, and if he repeated the procedure many times under a burning and stifling sun? Would not such a fighter down even a number of such opponents?

Doubtless, he said, it wouldn't be surprising if he did.

Well, don't you think that the rich have more of the skill and practice of boxing than of the art of war?

I do, he said.

It will be easy, then, for our athletes in all probability to fight with double and triple their number.

I shall have to concede the point, he said, for I believe you are right.

Well then, if they send an embassy to the other city and say what is in fact true, 'We make no use of gold and silver nor is it lawful for us, but it is for you; do then join us in the war and keep the spoils of the enemy'—do you suppose any who heard such a proposal would choose to fight against hard and wiry hounds rather than with the aid of the hounds against fat and tender sheep?

I think not. Yet consider whether the accumulation of all the wealth of other cities in one does not involve danger for the state that has no wealth.

What happy innocence, said I, to suppose that you can properly use the name city of any other than the one we are constructing.

Why, what should we say? he said.

A greater predication, said I, must be applied to the others. For they are each one of them many cities, not a city, as it goes in the game. There are two at the least at enmity with one another, the city of the rich and the city of the poor, and in each of these there are many. If you deal with them as one you will altogether miss the mark, but if you treat them as a multiplicity by offering to the one faction the property, the power, the very persons of the other, you will continue always to have few enemies and many allies. And so long as your city is governed soberly in the order just laid down, it will be the greatest of cities. I do not mean greatest in repute, but in reality, even though it have only a thousand defenders. For a city of this size that is really one you will not easily discover either among Greeks or barbarians—but of those that seem so you will find many and many times the size of this. Or do you think otherwise?

No, indeed I don't, said he.
Would not this, then, be the best rule and measure for our governors of the proper size of the city and of the territory that they should mark off for a city of that size and seek no more?

What is the measure?
I think, said I, that they should let it grow so long as in its growth it consents to remain a unity, but no further.

Excellent, he said.

Then is not this still another injunction that we should lay upon our guardians, to keep guard in every way that the city shall not be too small, nor great only in seeming, but that it shall be a sufficient city and one?

That behest will perhaps be an easy one for them, he said.

And still easier, haply, I said, is this that we mentioned before when we said that if a degenerate offspring was born to the guardians he must be sent away to the other classes, and likewise if a superior to the others he must be enrolled among the guardians, and the purport of all this was that the other citizens too must be sent to the task for which their natures were fitted, one man to one work, in order that each of them fulfilling his own function may be not many men, but one, and so the entire city may come to be not a multiplicity but a unity.

Why yes, he said, this is even more trifling than that.

These are not, my good Adimantus, as one might suppose, numerous and difficult injunctions that we are imposing upon them, but they are all easy, provided they guard, as the saying is, the one great thing—or instead of great let us call it sufficient.

What is that? he said.

Their education and nurture, I replied. For if a right education makes of them reasonable men they will easily discover everything of this kind—and other principles that we now pass over, as that the possession of wives and marriage, and the procreation of children and all that sort of thing should be made as far as possible the proverbial goods of friends that are common.

Yes, that would be the best way, he said.

And, moreover, said I, the state, if it once starts well, proceeds as it were in a cycle of growth. I mean that a sound nurture and education if kept up create good natures in the state, and sound natures in turn receiving an education of this sort develop into better men than their predecessors both for other purposes and for the production of offspring, as among animals also.

It is probable, he said.

To put it briefly, then, said I, it is to this that the overseers of our state must cleave and be watchful against its insensible corruption. They must throughout be watchful against innovations in music and gymnastics counter to the established order, and to the best of their power guard against them, fearing when anyone says that that song is
most regarded among men 'which hovers newest on the singer's lips,'\textsuperscript{39} lest haply it be supposed that the poet means not new songs but a new way of song and is commending this. But we must not praise that sort of thing nor conceive it to be the poet's meaning. For a change to a new type of music is something to beware of as a hazard of all our fortunes. For the modes of music are never disturbed without unsettling of the most fundamental political and social conventions, as Damon affirms and as I am convinced.

Set me too down in the number of the convinced, said Adimantus.

d It is here, then, I said, in music, as it seems, that our guardians must build their guardhouse and post of watch.

It is certain, he said, that this is the kind of lawlessness that easily insinuates itself unobserved.

Yes, said I, because it is supposed to be only a form of play and to work no harm.

Nor does it work any, he said, except that by gradual infiltration it softly overflows upon the characters and pursuits of men and from these issues forth grown greater to attack their business dealings, and from these relations it proceeds against the laws and the constitution with wanton license, Socrates, till finally it overthrows all things public and private.

Well, said I, are these things so?

I think so, he said.

Then, as we were saying in the beginning, our youth must join in a more law-abiding play, since, if play grows lawless and the children likewise, it is impossible that they should grow up to be men of serious temper and lawful spirit.

Of course, he said.

And so we may reason that when children in their earliest play are imbued with the spirit of law and order through their music, the opposite of the former supposition happens—this spirit waits upon them in all things and fosters their growth, and restores and sets up again whatever was overthrown in the other type of state.

True indeed, he said.

Then such men rediscover for themselves those seemingly trifling conventions which their predecessors abolished altogether.

Of what sort?

b Such things as the becoming silence of the young in the presence of their elders, the giving place to them and rising up before them, and dutiful service of parents, and the cut of the hair and the garments and the fashion of the footgear, and in general the deportment of the body and everything of the kind. Don't you think so?

I do.

\textsuperscript{39} Odyssey I.351.
I think that our speech censures this as a reproach, and calls the man in this plight unself-controlled and licentious. That seems likely, he said.

Turn your eyes now upon our new city, said I, and you will find one of these conditions existent in it. For you will say that it is justly spoken of as master of itself if that in which the superior rules the inferior is to be called sober and self-mastered.

I do turn my eyes upon it, he said, and it is as you say. And again, the mob of motley appetites and pleasures and pains one would find chiefly in children and women and slaves and in the base rabble of those who are free men in name. By all means.

But the simple and moderate appetites which with the aid of reason and right opinion are guided by consideration you will find in few and those the best born and best educated. True, he said.

And do you not find this too in your city and a domination there of the desires in the multitude and the rabble by the desires and the wisdom that dwell in the minority of the better sort? I do, he said.

If, then, there is any city that deserves to be described as master of its pleasures and desires and self-mastered, this one merits that designation. Most assuredly, he said. And is it not also to be called sober in all these respects? Indeed it is, he said.

And yet again, if there is any city in which the rulers and the ruled are of one mind as to who ought to rule, that condition will be found in this. Don’t you think so? I most emphatically do, he said.

In which class of the citizens, then, will you say that the virtue of soberness has its seat when this is their condition? In the rulers or in the ruled? In both, I suppose, he said. Do you see then, said I, that our intuition was not a bad one just now that discerned a likeness between soberness and a kind of harmony? Why so?

Because its operation is unlike that of courage and wisdom, which residing in separate parts respectively made the city, the one wise and the other brave. That is not the way of soberness, but it extends literally through the entire gamut throughout, bringing about the unison in the same chant of the strongest, the weakest, and the intermediate, whether in wisdom or, if you please, in strength, or for that matter in numbers, wealth, or any similar criterion. So that we should be quite right in affirming this unanimity to be soberness, the concord of the
How so?
Because, said I, these are in the soul what the healthful and the
diseaseful are in the body; there is no difference.
In what respect? he said.
Healthful things surely engender health and diseaseful disease.
Yes.
Then does not doing just acts engender justice and unjust in-
djustice?
Of necessity.
But to produce health is to establish the elements in a body in
the natural relation of dominating and being dominated by one an-
other, while to cause disease is to bring it about that one rules or is
ruled by the other contrary to nature.
Yes, that is so.
And is it not likewise the production of justice in the soul to
establish its principles in the natural relation of controlling and being
controlled by one another, while injustice is to cause the one to rule or
be ruled by the other contrary to nature?
Exactly so, he said.
Virtue, then, as it seems, would be a kind of health and beauty e
and good condition of the soul, and vice would be disease, ugliness,
and weakness.
It is so.
Then is it not also true that beautiful and honorable pursuits
tend to the winning of virtue and the ugly to vice?
Of necessity.
And now at last, it seems, it remains for us to consider whether it is
profitable to do justice and practice honorable pursuits and be just,
whether one is known to be such or not, or whether injustice profits,
and to be unjust, if only a man escape punishment and is not bettered
by chastisement.
Nay, Socrates, he said, I think that from this point on our inquiry
becomes an absurdity—if, while life is admittedly intolerable with a
ruined constitution of body even though accompanied by all the food
and drink and wealth and power in the world, we are yet to be asked
to suppose that, when the very nature and constitution of that
whereby we live is disordered and corrupted, life is going to be worth
living, if a man can only do as he pleases, and pleases to do any-
thing save that which will rid him of evil and injustice and make him
possessed of justice and virtue—now that the two have been shown to
be as we have described them.
Yes, it is absurd, said I, but nevertheless, now that we have won
to this height, we must not grow weary in endeavoring to discover
with the utmost possible clearness that these things are so.
That is the last thing in the world we must do, he said.
Come up here then, said I, that you may see how many are the e
kinds of evil, I mean those that it is worth while to observe and distinguish.

I am with you, he said. Only do you say on.

And truly, said I, now that we have come to this height of argument I seem to see as from a point of outlook that there is one form of excellence, and that the forms of evil are infinite, yet that there are some four among them that it is worth while to take note of.

What do you mean? he said.

As many as are the varieties of political constitutions that constitute specific types, so many, it seems likely, are the characters of soul.

How many, pray?

There are five kinds of constitutions, said I, and five kinds of soul.

Tell me what they are, he said.

I tell you, said I, that one way of government would be the constitution that we have just expounded, but the names that might be applied to it are two. If one man of surpassing merit rose among the rulers, it would be denominated royalty; if more than one, aristocracy.

True, he said.

Well, then, I said, this is one of the forms I have in mind. For neither would a number of such men, nor one if he arose among them, alter to any extent worth mentioning the laws of our city—if he preserved the breeding and the education that we have described.

It is not likely, he said.

BOOK V

To such a city, then, or constitution I apply the terms good and right—and to the corresponding kind of man—but the others I describe as bad and mistaken, if this one is right, in respect both to the administration of states and to the formation of the character of the individual soul, they falling under four forms of badness.

What are these? he said.

And I was going on to enumerate them in what seemed to me the order of their evolution from one another, when Polemarchus—he sat at some little distance from Adimantus—stretched forth his hand, and, taking hold of his garment from above by the shoulder, drew the other toward him and, leaning forward himself, spoke a few words in his ear, of which we overheard nothing else save only this. Shall we let him off, then, he said, or what shall we do?

By no means, said Adimantus, now raising his voice.

What, pray, said I, is it that you are not letting off?

You, said he.

And for what special reason, pray? said I.
A fair guerdon, indeed, he said.

Do you recall, said I, that in the preceding argument the objection of somebody or other rebuked us for not making our guardians happy, since, though it was in their power to have everything of the citizens, they had nothing, and we, I believe, replied that this was a consideration to which we would return if occasion offered, but that at present we were making our guardians guardians and the city as a whole as happy as possible, and that we were not modeling our ideal of happiness with reference to any one class?

I do remember, he said.

Well then, since now the life of our helpers has been shown to be far fairer and better than that of the victors at Olympia, need we compare it with the life of cobblers and other craftsmen and farmers?

I think not, he said.

But further, we may fairly repeat what I was saying then also, that if the guardian shall strive for a kind of happiness that will unmake him as a guardian and shall not be content with the way of life that is so moderate and secure and, as we affirm, the best, but if some senseless and childish opinion about happiness shall beset him and impel him to use his power to appropriate everything in the city for himself, then he will find out that Hesiod was indeed wise, who said that the half was in some sort more than the whole.

If he accepts my counsel, he said, he will abide in this way of life.

You accept, then, as we have described it, this partnership of the women with our men in the matter of education and children and the guardianship of the other citizens, and you admit that both within the city and when they go forth to war they ought to keep guard together and hunt together as it were like hounds, and have all things in every way, so far as possible, in common, and that so doing they will do what is for the best and nothing that is contrary to female human nature in comparison with male or to their natural fellowship with one another.

I do admit it, he said.

Then, I said, is not the thing that it remains to determine this, whether, namely, it is possible for such a community to be brought about among men as it is in the other animals, and in what way it is possible?

You have anticipated, he said, the point I was about to raise.

For as for their wars, I said, the manner in which they will conduct them is too obvious for discussion.

How so? said he.

It is obvious that they will march out together, and, what is more, will conduct their children to war when they are sturdy, in order that, like the children of other craftsmen, they may observe the processes of which they must be masters in their maturity, and in addition to looking on they must assist and minister in all the business
the prime of his youth is that from which both honor and strength will accrue to him.

Most rightly, he said.

We will then, said I, take Homer as our guide in this at least. We, too, at sacrifices and on other like occasions, will reward the good so far as they have proved themselves good with hymns and the other privileges of which we have just spoken, and also with 'seats of honor and meat and full cups,' so as to combine physical training with honor for the good, both men and women.

Nothing could be better, he said.

We will, then, said I, take Homer as our guide in this at least. We, too, at sacrifices and on other like occasions, will reward the good so far as they have proved themselves good with hymns and the other privileges of which we have just spoken, and also with 'seats of honor and meat and full cups,' so as to combine physical training with honor for the good, both men and women.

Nothing could be better, he said.

Very well, and of those who die on campaign, if anyone's death has been especially glorious, shall we not, to begin with, affirm that he belongs to the golden race?

By all means.

And shall we not believe Hesiod who tells us that when men of this race die, so it is that they become

Hallowed spirits dwelling on earth, averters of evil,

Guardians watchful and good of articulate-speaking mortals?

We certainly shall believe him.

We will inquire of Apollo, then, how and with what distinction we are to bury men of more than human, of divine, qualities, and deal with them according to his response.

How can we do otherwise?

And ever after we will bestow on their graves the tendance and worship paid to spirits divine. And we will practice the same observance when any who have been adjudged exceptionally good in the ordinary course of life die of old age or otherwise?

That will surely be right, he said.

But again, how will our soldiers conduct themselves toward enemies?

In what respect?

First, in the matter of making slaves of the defeated, do you think it right for Greeks to reduce Greek cities to slavery, or rather that, so far as they are able, they should not suffer any other city to do so, but should accustom Greeks to spare Greeks, foreseeing the danger of enslavement by the barbarians?

Sparing them is wholly and altogether the better, said he.

They are not, then, themselves to own Greek slaves, either, and they should advise the other Greeks not to?

By all means, he said. At any rate in that way they would be more likely to turn against the barbarians and keep their hands from one another.

And how about stripping the dead after victory of anything except

41 Iliad 8.162. 42 Works and Days 121 sq.
their weapons—is that well? Does it not furnish a pretext to cowards not to advance on the living foe, as if they were doing something needful when poking about the dead? Has not this snatching at the spoils ere now destroyed many an army?

Yes, indeed.

And don't you think it illiberal and greedy to plunder a corpse, and is it not the mark of a womanish and petty spirit to deem the body of the dead an enemy when the real foeman has flown away and left behind only the instrument with which he fought? Do you see any difference between such conduct and that of the dogs who snarl at the stones that hit them but don't touch the thrower?

Not the slightest.

We must abandon, then, the plundering of corpses and the refusal to permit their burial.

By heaven, we certainly must, he said.

And again, we will not take weapons to the temples for dedicatory offerings, especially the weapons of Greeks, if we are at all concerned to preserve friendly relations with the other Greeks. Rather we shall fear that there is pollution in bringing such offerings to the temples from our kind unless in a case where the god bids otherwise.

Most rightly, he said.

And in the matter of devastating the land of Greeks and burning their houses, how will your soldiers deal with their enemies? I would gladly hear your opinion of that.

In my view, said I, they ought to do neither, but confine themselves to taking away the annual harvest. Shall I tell you why?

Do.

In my opinion, just as we have the two terms, war and faction, so there are also two things, distinguished by two differentiae. The two things I mean are the friendly and kindred on the one hand and the alien and foreign on the other. Now the term employed for the hostility of the friendly is faction, and for that of the alien is war.

What you say is in nothing beside the mark, he replied.

Consider, then, if this goes to the mark. I affirm that the Hellenic race is friendly to itself and akin, and foreign and alien to the barbarian.

Rightly, he said.

We shall then say that Greeks fight and wage war with barbarians, and barbarians with Greeks, and are enemies by nature, and that war is the fit name for this enmity and hatred. Greeks, however, we shall say, are still by nature the friends of Greeks when they act in this way, but that Greece is sick in that case and divided by faction, and faction is the name we must give to that enmity.

I will allow you that habit of speech, he said.

Then observe, said I, that when anything of this sort occurs in faction, as the word is now used, and a state is divided against itself,
if either party devastates the land and burns the houses of the other such factional strife is thought to be an accursed thing and neither party to be true patriots. Otherwise, they would never have endured thus to outrage their nurse and mother. But the moderate and reasonable thing is thought to be that the victors shall take away the crops of the vanquished, but that their temper shall be that of men who expect to be reconciled and not always to wage war.

That way of feeling, he said, is far less savage than the other. Well, then, said I, is not the city that you are founding to be a Greek city?

It must be, he said.

Will they then not be good and gentle?

Indeed they will.

And won’t they be philhellenes, lovers of Greeks, and will they not regard all Greece as their own and not renounce their part in the holy places common to all Greeks?

Most certainly.

Will they not then regard any difference with Greeks who are their own people as a form of faction and refuse even to speak of it as war?

Most certainly.

And they will conduct their quarrels always looking forward to a reconciliation?

By all means.

They will correct them, then, for their own good, not chastising them with a view to their enslavement or their destruction, but acting as correctors, not as enemies.

They will, he said.

They will not, being Greeks, ravage Greek territory nor burn habitations, and they will not admit that in any city all the population are their enemies, men, women, and children, but will say that only a few at any time are their foes, those, namely, who are to blame for the quarrel. And on all these considerations they will not be willing to lay waste the soil, since the majority are their friends, nor to destroy the houses, but will carry the conflict only to the point of compelling the guilty to do justice by the pressure of the suffering of the innocent.

I, he said, agree that our citizens ought to deal with their Greek opponents on this wise, while treating barbarians as Greeks now treat Greeks.

Shall we lay down this law also, then, for our guardians, that they are not to lay waste the land or burn the houses?

Let us so decree, he said, and assume that this and our preceding prescriptions are right. But I fear, Socrates, that, if you are allowed to go on in this fashion, you will never get to speak of the matter you put aside in order to say all this, namely, the possibility of such a
polity coming into existence, and the way in which it could be brought to pass. I too am ready to admit that if it could be realized everything would be lovely for the state that had it, and I will add what you passed by, that they would also be most successful in war because they would be least likely to desert one another, knowing and addressing each other by the names of brothers, fathers, sons. And if the females should also join in their campaigns, whether in the ranks or marshaled behind to intimidate the enemy, or as reserves in case of need, I recognize that all this too would make them irresistible. And at home, also, I observe all the benefits that you omit to mention. But, taking it for granted that I concede these and countless other advantages, consequent on the realization of this polity, don’t labor that point further, but let us at once proceed to try to convince ourselves of just this, that it is possible and how it is possible, dismissing everything else.

This is a sudden assault, indeed, said I, that you have made on my theory, without any regard for my natural hesitation. Perhaps you don’t realize that when I have hardly escaped the first two waves, you are now rolling up against me the ‘great third wave’ of paradox, the worst of all. When you have seen and heard that, you will be very ready to be lenient, recognizing that I had good reason after all for shrinking and fearing to enter upon the discussion of so paradoxical a notion.

The more such excuses you offer, he said, the less you will be released by us from telling in what way the realization of this polity is possible. Speak on, then, and do not put us off.

The first thing to recall, then, I said, is that it was the inquiry into the nature of justice and injustice that brought us to this pass.

Yes, but what of it? he said.

Oh, nothing, I replied, only this. If we do discover what justice is, are we to demand that the just man shall differ from it in no respect, but shall conform in every way to the ideal? Or will it suffice us if he approximate to it as nearly as possible and partake of it more than others?

That will content us, he said.

A pattern, then, said I, was what we wanted when we were inquiring into the nature of ideal justice and asking what would be the character of the perfectly just man, supposing him to exist, and, likewise, in regard to injustice and the completely unjust man. We wished to fix our eyes upon them as types and models, so that whatever we discerned in them of happiness or the reverse would necessarily apply to ourselves in the sense that whosoever is likeliest them will have the allotment most like to theirs. Our purpose was not to demonstrate the possibility of the realization of these ideals.

In that, he said, you speak truly.

Do you think, then, that he would be any the less a good painter,
who, after portraying a pattern of the ideally beautiful man and omitting no touch required for the perfection of the picture, should not be able to prove that it is actually possible for such a man to exist?

Not I, by Zeus, he said.

Then were not we, as we say, trying to create in words the pattern of a good state?

Certainly.

Do you think, then, that our words are any the less well spoken if we find ourselves unable to prove that it is possible for a state to be governed in accordance with our words?

Of course not, he said.

That, then, said I, is the truth of the matter. But if, to please you, we must do our best to show how most probably and in what respect these things would be most nearly realized, again, with a view to such a demonstration, grant me the same point.

What?

Is it possible for anything to be realized in deed as it is spoken in word, or is it the nature of things that action should partake of exact truth less than speech, even if some deny it? Do you admit it or not?

I do, he said.

Then don't insist, said I, that I must exhibit as realized in action precisely what we expounded in words. But if we can discover how a state might be constituted most nearly answering to our description, you must say that we have discovered that possibility of realization which you demanded. Will you not be content if you get this? I for my part would.

And I too, he said.

Next, it seems, we must try to discover and point out what it is that is now badly managed in our cities, and that prevents them from being so governed, and what is the smallest change that would bring a state to this manner of government, preferably a change in one thing, if not, then in two, and, failing that, the fewest possible in number and the slightest in potency.

By all means, he said.

There is one change, then, said I, which I think that we can show would bring about the desired transformation. It is not a slight or an easy thing but it is possible.

What is that? said he.

I am on the very verge, said I, of what we likened to the greatest wave of paradox. But say it I will, even if, to keep the figure, it is likely to wash us away on billows of laughter and scorn. Listen.

I am all attention, he said.

Unless, said I, either philosophers become kings in our states or those whom we now call our kings and rulers take to the pursuit of philosophy seriously and adequately, and there is a conjunction of these two things, political power and philosophical intelligence, while
the motley horde of the natures who at present pursue either apart
from the other are compulsorily excluded, there can be no cessation of
troubles, dear Glaucon, for our states, nor, I fancy, for the human race
either. Nor, until this happens, will this constitution which we have
been expounding in theory ever be put into practice within the
limits of possibility and see the light of the sun. But this is the thing
that has made me so long shrink from speaking out, because I saw that
it would be a very paradoxical saying. For it is not easy to see that
there is no other way of happiness either for private or public life.

Whereupon he said, Socrates, after hurling at us such an utter­
ance and statement as that, you must expect to be attacked by a great
multitude of our men of light and leading, who forthwith will, so to
speak, cast off their garments and strip and, snatching the first 474
weapon that comes to hand, rush at you with might and main, pre­
pared to do dreadful deeds. And if you don’t find words to defend your­
self against them, and escape their assault, then to be scorned
and flouted will in very truth be the penalty you will have to pay.

And isn’t it you, said I, that have brought this upon me and are to
blame?

And a good thing, too, said he, but I won’t let you down, and will
defend you with what I can. I can do so with my good will and my
encouragement, and perhaps I might answer your questions more
suitably than another. So, with such an aid to back you, try to make it
plain to the doubters that the truth is as you say.

I must try, I replied, since you proffer so strong an alliance. I
think it requisite, then, if we are to escape the assailants you speak
of, that we should define for them whom we mean by the philosophers,
who we dare to say ought to be our rulers. When these are clearly
discriminated it will be possible to defend ourselves by showing that to
them by their very nature belong the study of philosophy and political
leadership, while it befits the other sort to let philosophy alone and to
follow their leader.

It is high time, he said, to produce your definition.

Come, then, follow me on this line, if we may in some fashion or
other explain our meaning.

Proceed, he said.

Must I remind you, then, said I, or do you remember, that when
we affirm that a man is a lover of something, it must be apparent that
he is fond of all of it? It will not do to say that some of
it he likes and
some does not.

I think you will have to remind me, he said, for I don’t appre­
hend at all.

That reply, Glaucon, said I, befitted another rather than you. It
does not become a lover to forget that all adolescents in some sort
sting and stir the amorous lover of youth and appear to him deserving
of his attention and desirable. Is not that your ‘reaction’ to the
fair? One, because his nose is tiptilted, you will praise as piquant, the beak of another you pronounce right royal, the intermediate type you say strikes the harmonious mean, the swarthy are of manly aspect, the white are children of the gods divinely fair, and as for honey-hued, do you suppose the very word is anything but the euphemistic invention of some lover who can feel no distaste for sallowness when it accompanies the blooming time of youth? And, in short, there is no pretext you do not allege and there is nothing you shrink from saying to justify you in not rejecting any who are in the bloom of their prime.

If it is your pleasure, he said, to take me as your example of this trait in lovers, I admit it for the sake of the argument. Again, said I, do you not observe the same thing in the lovers of wine? They welcome every wine on any pretext. They do, indeed. And so I take it you have observed that men who are covetous of honor, if they can’t get themselves elected generals, are captains of a company. And if they can’t be honored by great men and dignitaries, are satisfied with honor from little men and nobodies. But honor they desire and must have.

Yes, indeed. Admit, then, or reject my proposition. When we say a man is keen about something, shall we say that he has an appetite for the whole class or that he desires only a part and a part not?

The whole, he said. Then the lover of wisdom, too, we shall affirm, desires all wisdom, not a part and a part not. Certainly.

The student, then, who is finical about his studies, especially when he is young and cannot yet know by reason what is useful and what is not, we shall say is not a lover of learning or a lover of wisdom, just as we say that one who is dainty about his food is not really hungry, has not an appetite for food, and is not a lover of food, but a poor feeder.

We shall rightly say so. But the one who feels no distaste in sampling every study, and who attacks his task of learning gladly and cannot get enough of it, him we shall justly pronounce the lover of wisdom, the philosopher, shall we not?

To which Glaucon replied, You will then be giving the name to a numerous and strange band, for all the lovers of spectacles are what they are, I fancy, by virtue of their delight in learning something. And those who always want to hear some new thing are a very queer lot to be reckoned among philosophers. You couldn’t induce them to attend a serious debate or any such entertainment, but as if they had farmed out their ears to listen to every chorus in the land, they
run about to all the Dionysiac festivals, never missing one, either in the towns or in the country villages. Are we to designate all these, then, and similar folk and all the practitioners of the minor arts as philosophers?

Not at all, I said, but they do bear a certain likeness to philosophers.

Whom do you mean, then, by the true philosophers?

Those for whom the truth is the spectacle of which they are enamored, said I.

Right again, said he, but in what sense do you mean it?

It would be by no means easy to explain it to another, I said, but I think that you will grant me this.

What?

That since the fair and honorable is the opposite of the base and ugly, they are two.

Of course.

And since they are two, each is one.

That also.

And in respect of the just and the unjust, the good and the bad, and all the ideas or forms, the same statement holds, that in itself each is one, but that by virtue of their communion with actions and bodies and with one another they present themselves everywhere, each as a multiplicity of aspects.

Right, he said.

This, then, said I, is my division. I set apart and distinguish those of whom you were just speaking, the lovers of spectacles and the arts, and men of action, and separate from them again those with whom our argument is concerned and who alone deserve the appellation of philosophers or lovers of wisdom.

What do you mean? he said.

The lovers of sounds and sights, I said, delight in beautiful tones and colors and shapes and in everything that art fashions out of these, but their thought is incapable of apprehending and taking delight in the nature of the beautiful in itself.

Why, yes, he said, that is so.

And on the other hand, will not those be few who would be able to approach beauty itself and contemplate it in and by itself?

They would, indeed.

He, then, who believes in beautiful things, but neither believes in beauty itself nor is able to follow when someone tries to guide him to the knowledge of it—do you think that his life is a dream or a waking? Just consider. Is not the dream state, whether the man is asleep or awake, just this—the mistaking of resemblance for identity?

I should certainly call that dreaming, he said.

Well, then, take the opposite case, the man whose thought recognizes a beauty in itself, and is able to distinguish that self-beautiful...
and the things that participate in it, and neither supposes the participants to be it nor it the participants—is his life, in your opinion, a waking or a dream state?

He is very much awake, he replied.

Could we not rightly, then, call the mental state of the one as knowing, knowledge, and that of the other as opining, opinion?

Assuredly.

Suppose, now, he who we say opines but does not know should be angry and challenge our statement as not true—can we find any way of soothing him and gently winning him over, without telling him too plainly that he is not in his right mind?

We must try, he said.

Come, then, consider what we are to say to him, or would you have us question him in this fashion—premising that if he knows anything, nobody grudges it him, but we should be very glad to see him knowing something—but tell us this, Does he who knows know something or nothing? Do you reply in his behalf?

I will reply, he said, that he knows something.

Is it something that is or is not?

That is. How could that which is not be known?

We are sufficiently assured of this, then, even if we should examine it from every point of view, that that which entirely is is entirely knowable, and that which in no way is is in every way unknowable?

Most sufficiently.

Good. If a thing, then, is so conditioned as both to be and not to be, would it not lie between that which absolutely and unqualifiedly is and that which in no way is?

Between.

Then since knowledge pertains to that which is and ignorance of necessity to that which is not, for that which lies between we must seek for something between nescience and science, if such a thing there be.

By all means.

Is there a thing which we call opinion?

Surely.

Is it a different faculty from science or the same?

A different.

Then opinion is set over one thing and science over another, each by virtue of its own distinctive power or faculty.

That is so.

May we say, then, that science is naturally related to that which is, to know that and how that which is is? But rather, before we proceed, I think we must draw the following distinctions.

What ones?

Shall we say that faculties, powers, abilities are a class of entities
by virtue of which we and all other things are able to do what we or they are able to do? I mean that sight and hearing, for example, are faculties, if so be that you understand the class or type that I am trying to describe.

I understand, he said.

Hear, then, my notion about them. In a faculty I cannot see any color or shape or similar mark such as those on which in many other cases I fix my eyes in discriminating in my thought one thing from another. But in the case of a faculty I look to one thing only—that to which it is related and what it effects, and it is in this way that I come to call each one of them a faculty, and that which is related to the same thing and accomplishes the same thing I call the same faculty, and that to another I call other. How about you, what is your practice?

The same, he said.

To return, then, my friend, said I, to science or true knowledge, do you say that it is a faculty and a power, or in what class do you put it?

Into this, he said, the most potent of all faculties.

And opinion—shall we assign it to some other class than faculty? By no means, he said, for that by which we are able to opine is nothing else than the faculty of opinion.

But not long ago you agreed that science and opinion are not identical.

How could any rational man affirm the identity of the infallible with the fallible?

Excellent, said I, and we are plainly agreed that opinion is a different thing from scientific knowledge.

Yes, different.

Each of them, then, since it has a different power, is related to a different object.

Of necessity.

Science, I presume, to that which is, to know the condition of that which is?

Yes.

But opinion, we say, opines.

Yes.

Does it opine the same thing that science knows, and will the knowable and the opinable be identical, or is that impossible?

Impossible by our admissions, he said. If different faculties are naturally related to different objects and both opinion and science are faculties, but each different from the other, as we say—these admissions do not leave place for the identity of the knowable and the opinable.

Then, if that which is a knowable, something other than that which is would be the opinable.

Something else.
This much premised, let him tell me, I will say, let him answer me, that good fellow who does not think there is a beautiful in itself or any idea of beauty in itself always remaining the same and un­changed, but who does believe in many beautiful things—the lover of spectacles, I mean, who cannot endure to hear anybody say that the beautiful is one and the just one, and so of other things—and this will be our question. My good fellow, is there any one of these many fair and honorable things that will not sometimes appear ugly and base? And of the just things, that will not seem unjust? And of the pious things, that will not seem impious?

No, it is inevitable, he said, that they would appear to be both beautiful in a way and ugly, and so with all the other things you asked about.

And again, do the many double things appear any the less halves than doubles?

None the less.

And likewise of the great and the small things, the light and the heavy things—will they admit these predicates any more than their opposites?

No, he said, each of them will always hold of, partake of, both.

Then is each of these multiples rather than it is not that which one affirms it to be?

They are like those jesters who palter with us in a double sense at banquets, he replied, and resemble the children's riddle about the eunuch and his hitting of the bat—with what and as it sat on what they signify that he struck it. For these things too equivocate, and it is impossible to conceive firmly any one of them to be or not to be or both or neither.

Do you know what to do with them, then? said I. And can you find a better place to put them than that midway between existence or essence and the not to be? For we shall surely not discover a darker region than not-being that they should still more not be, nor a brighter than being that they should still more be.

Most true, he said.

We would seem to have found, then, that the many conventions of the many about the fair and honorable and other things are tumbled about in the mid-region between that which is not and that which is in the true and absolute sense.

We have so found it.

But we agreed in advance that if anything of that sort should be discovered, it must be denominated opinable, not knowable, the wanderer between being caught by the faculty that is betwixt and between.

We did.

We shall affirm, then, that those who view many beautiful things but do not see the beautiful itself and are unable to follow another's
occasionally hear you argue thus feel in this way. They think that owing to their inexperience in the game of question and answer they are at every question led astray a little bit by the argument, and when these bits are accumulated at the conclusion of the discussion mighty is their fall, and the apparent contradiction of what they at first said, and that just as by expert draughts players the unskilled are finally shut in and cannot make a move, so they are finally blocked and have their mouths stopped by this other game of draughts played not with counters but with words; yet the truth is not affected by that outcome. I say this with reference to the present case, for in this instance one might say that he is unable in words to contend against you at each question, but that when it comes to facts he sees that of those who turn to philosophy, not merely touching upon it to complete their education and dropping it while still young, but lingering too long in the study of it, the majority become cranks, not to say rascals, and those accounted the finest spirits among them are still rendered useless to society by the pursuit which you commend. And I, on hearing this, said, Do you think that they are mistaken in saying so? I don't know, said he, but I would gladly hear your opinion. You may hear, then, that I think that what they say is true. How, then, he replied, can it be right to say that our cities will never be freed from their evils until the philosophers, whom we admit to be useless to them, become their rulers? Your question, I said, requires an answer expressed in a comparison or parable. And you, he said, of course, are not accustomed to speak in comparisons! So, said I, you are making fun of me after driving me into such an impasse of argument. But, all the same, hear my comparison so that you may still better see how I strain after imagery. For so cruel is the condition of the better sort in relation to the state that there is no single thing like it in nature. But to find a likeness for it and a defense for them one must bring together many things in such a combination as painters mix when they portray goat stags and similar creatures. Conceive this sort of thing happening either on many ships or on one. Picture a shipmaster in height and strength surpassing all others on the ship, but who is slightly deaf and of similarly impaired vision, and whose knowledge of navigation is on a par with his sight and hearing. Conceive the sailors to be wrangling with one another for control of the helm, each claiming that it is his right to steer though he has never learned the art and cannot point out his teacher or any time when he studied it. And what is more, they affirm that it cannot be taught at all, but they are ready to make mincemeat of anyone who says that it can be taught, and meanwhile they are al-
at nothing to induce him to turn over the helm to them. And sometimes, if they fail and others get his ear, they put the others to death or cast them out from the ship, and then, after binding and stupefying the worthy shipmaster with mandragora or intoxication or otherwise, they take command of the ship, consume its stores and, drinking and feasting, make such a voyage of it as is to be expected from such, and as if that were not enough, they praise and celebrate as a navigator, a pilot, a master of shipcraft, the man who is most cunning to lend a hand in persuading or constraining the shipmaster to let them rule, while the man who lacks this craft they censure as useless. They have no suspicion that the true pilot must give his attention to the time of the year, the seasons, the sky, the winds, the stars, and all that pertains to his art if he is to be a true ruler of a ship, and that he does not believe that there is any art or science of seizing the helm with or without the consent of others, or any possibility of mastering this alleged art and the practice of it at the same time with the science of navigation. With such goings on aboard ship do you not think that the real pilot would in very deed be called a stargazer, an idle babbler, a useless fellow, by the sailors in ships managed after this fashion?

Quite so, said Adimantus.

You take my meaning, I presume, and do not require us to put the comparison to the proof and show that the condition we have described is the exact counterpart of the relation of the state to the true philosophers.

It is indeed, he said.

To begin with, then, teach this parable to the man who is surprised that philosophers are not honored in our cities, and try to convince him that it would be far more surprising if they were honored.

I will teach him, he said.

And say to him further, You are right in affirming that the finest spirits among the philosophers are of no service to the multitude. But bid him blame for this uselessness, not the finer spirits, but those who do not know how to make use of them. For it is not the natural course of things that the pilot should beg the sailors to be ruled by him or that wise men should go to the doors of the rich. The author of that epigram was a liar. But the true nature of things is that whether the sick man be rich or poor he must needs go to the door of the physician, and everyone who needs to be governed to the door of the man who knows how to govern, not that the ruler should implore his natural subjects to let themselves be ruled, if he is really good for anything. But you will make no mistake in likening our present political rulers to the sort of sailors we were just describing, and those whom these call useless and stargazing ideologists to the true pilots.

Just so, he said.

Hence, and under these conditions, we cannot expect that the noblest pursuit should be highly esteemed by those whose way of life
falls short of its proper perfection when deprived of the food, the season, the place that suits it. For evil is more opposed to the good than to the not-good.

Of course.
So it is, I take it, natural that the best nature should fare worse than the inferior under conditions of nurture unsuited to it.

It is.

Then, said I, Adimantus, shall we not similarly affirm that the best endowed souls become worse than the others under a bad education? Or do you suppose that great crimes and unmixed wickedness spring from a slight nature and not from a vigorous one corrupted by its nurture, while a weak nature will never be the cause of anything great, either for good or evil?

No, he said, that is the case.

Then the nature which we assumed in the philosopher, if it receives the proper teaching, must needs grow and attain to consummate excellence, but, if it be sown and planted and grown in the wrong environment, the outcome will be quite the contrary unless some god comes to the rescue. Or are you too one of the multitude who believe that there are young men who are corrupted by the Sophists, and that there are Sophists in private life who corrupt to any extent worth mentioning, and that it is not rather the very men who talk in this strain who are the chief Sophists and educate most effectively and mold to their own heart's desire young and old, men and women?

When? said he.

Why, when, I said, the multitude are seated together in assemblies or in courtrooms or theaters or camps or any other public gathering of a crowd, and with loud uproar censure some of the things that are said and done and approve others, both in excess, with full-throated clamor and clapping of hands, and thereto the rocks and the region round about re-echoing redouble the din of the censure and the praise. In such case how do you think the young man's heart, as the saying is, is moved within him? What private teaching do you think will hold out and not rather be swept away by the torrent of censure and applause, and borne off on its current, so that he will affirm the same things that they do to be honorable and base, and will do as they do, and be even such as they?

That is quite inevitable, Socrates, he said.

And, moreover, I said, we have not yet mentioned the chief necessity and compulsion.

What is it? said he.

That which these 'educators' and Sophists impose by action when their words fail to convince. Don't you know that they chastise the recalcitrant with loss of civic rights and fines and death?

They most emphatically do, he said.
Bearing all this in mind, recall our former question. Can the multitude possibly tolerate or believe in the reality of the beautiful in itself as opposed to the multiplicity of beautiful things, or can they believe in anything conceived in its essence as opposed to the many particulars?

Not in the least, he said.

Philosophy, then, the love of wisdom, is impossible for the multitude.

Impossible.

It is inevitable, then, that those who philosophize should be censured by them.

Inevitable.

And so likewise by those laymen who, associating with the mob, desire to curry favor with it.

Obviously.

From this point of view do you see any salvation that will suffer the born philosopher to abide in the pursuit and persevere to the end?

Consider it in the light of what we said before. We agreed that quickness in learning, memory, courage, and magnificence were the traits of this nature.

Yes.

Then even as a boy among boys such a one will take the lead in all things, especially if the nature of his body matches the soul.

How could he fail to do so? he said.

His kinsmen and fellow citizens, then, will desire, I presume, to make use of him when he is older for their own affairs.

Of course.

Then they will fawn upon him with petitions and honors, anticipating and flattering the power that will be his.

That certainly is the usual way.

How, then, do you think such a youth will behave in such conditions, especially if it happen that he belongs to a great city and is rich and wellborn therein, and thereto handsome and tall? Will his soul not be filled with unbounded ambitious hopes, and will he not think himself capable of managing the affairs of both Greeks and barbarians, and thereupon exalt himself, haughty of mien and stuffed with empty pride and void of sense?

He surely will, he said.

And if to a man in this state of mind someone gently comes and tells him what is the truth, that he has no sense and sorely needs it, and that the only way to get it is to work like a slave to win it, do you think it will be easy for him to lend an ear to the quiet voice in the midst of and in spite of these evil surroundings?

Far from it, said he.

And even supposing, said I, that owing to a fortunate disposition and his affinity for the words of admonition one such youth appre-
hends something and is moved and drawn toward philosophy, what do we suppose will be the conduct of those who think that they are losing his service and fellowship? Is there any word or deed that they will stick at to keep him from being persuaded and to incapacitate anyone who attempts it, both by private intrigue and public prosecution in the court?

That is inevitable, he said.

Is there any possibility of such a one continuing to philosophize?

None at all, he said.

Do you see, then, said I, that we were not wrong in saying that the very qualities that make up the philosophical nature do, in fact, become, when the environment and nurture are bad, in some sort the cause of its backsliding, and so do the so-called goods—riches and all such instrumentalities?

No, he replied, it was rightly said.

Such, my good friend, and so great as regards the noblest pursuit, is the destruction and corruption of the most excellent nature, which is rare enough in any case, as we affirm. And it is from men of this type that those spring who do the greatest harm to communities and individuals, and the greatest good when the stream chances to be turned into that channel, but a small nature never does anything great to a man or a city.

Most true, said he.

Those, then, to whom she properly belongs, thus falling away and leaving philosophy forlorn and unwed, themselves live an unreal and alien life, while other unworthy wooers rush in and defile her as an orphan bereft of her kin, and attach to her such reproaches as you say her revilers taunt her with, declaring that some of her consorts are of no account and the many accountable for many evils.

Why, yes, he replied, that is what they do say.

And plausibly, said I, for other manikins, observing that the place is unoccupied and full of fine terms and pretensions, just as men escape from prison to take sanctuary in temples, so these gentlemen joyously bound away from the mechanical arts to philosophy, those that are most cunning in their little craft. For in comparison with the other arts the prestige of philosophy even in her present low estate retains a superior dignity, and this is the ambition and aspiration of that multitude of pretenders unfit by nature, whose souls are bowed and mutilated by their vulgar occupations even as their bodies are marred by their arts and crafts. Is not that inevitable?

Quite so, he said.

Is not the picture which they present, I said, precisely that of a little bald-headed tinker who has made money and just been freed from bonds and had a bath and is wearing a new garment and has got himself up like a bridegroom and is about to marry his master's daughter who has fallen into poverty and abandonment?
There is no difference at all, he said. Of what sort will probably be the offspring of such parents? Will they not be bastard and base? Inevitably.

And so when men unfit for culture approach philosophy and consort with her unworthily, what sort of ideas and opinions shall we say they beget? Will they not produce what may in very deed be fairly called sophisms, and nothing that is genuine or that partakes of true intelligence?

Quite so, he said.

There is a very small remnant, then, Adimantus, I said, of those who consort worthily with philosophy, some wellborn and well-bred nature, it may be, held in check by exile, and so in the absence of corrupters remaining true to philosophy, as its quality bids, or it may happen that a great soul born in a little town scorns and disregards its parochial affairs, and a small group perhaps might by natural affinity be drawn to it from other arts which they justly disdain, and the bridle of our companion Theages also might operate as a restraint. For in the case of Theages all other conditions were at hand for his backsliding from philosophy, but his sickly habit of body keeping him out of politics holds him back. My own case, the divine sign, is hardly worth mentioning—for I suppose it has happened to few or none before me. And those who have been of this little company and have tasted the sweetness and blessedness of this possession and who have also come to understand the madness of the multitude sufficiently and have seen that there is nothing, if I may say so, sound or right in any present politics, and that there is no ally with whose aid the champion of justice could escape destruction, but that he would be as a man who has fallen among wild beasts, unwilling to share their misdeeds and unable to hold out singly against the savagery of all, and that he would thus, before he could in any way benefit his friends or the state, come to an untimely end without doing any good to himself or others—for all these reasons I say the philosopher remains quiet, minds his own affair, and, as it were, standing aside under shelter of a wall in a storm and blast of dust and sleet and seeing others filled full of lawlessness, is content if in any way he may keep himself free from iniquity and unholy deeds through this life and take his departure with fair hope, serene and well content when the end comes.

Well, he said, that is no very slight thing to have achieved before taking his departure.

He would not have accomplished any very great thing either, I replied, if it were not his fortune to live in a state adapted to his nature. In such a state only will he himself rather attain his full stature and together with his own preserve the commonweal. The causes and the injustice of the calumnia of philosophy, I think, have been fairly set forth, unless you have something to add.

No, he said, I have nothing further to offer on that point. But
which of our present governments do you think is suitable for philosophy?

None whatever, I said, but the very ground of my complaint is that no polity of today is worthy of the philosophical nature. This is just the cause of its perversion and alteration; as a foreign seed sown in an alien soil is wont to be overcome and die out into the native growth, so this kind does not preserve its own quality but falls away and degenerates into an alien type. But if ever it finds the best polity as it itself is the best, then will it be apparent that this was in truth divine and all the others human in their natures and practices. Obviously then you are next going to ask what is this best form of government.

Wrong, he said. I was going to ask not that but whether it is this one that we have described in our establishment of a state or another. In other respects it is this one, said I, but there is one special further point that we mentioned even then, namely, that there would always have to be resident in such a state an element having the same conception of its constitution that you the lawgiver had in framing its laws.

That was said, he replied. But it was not sufficiently explained, I said, from fear of those objections on your part which have shown that the demonstration of it is long and difficult. And apart from that the remainder of the exposition is by no means easy.

Just what do you mean?

The manner in which a state that occupies itself with philosophy can escape destruction. For all great things are precarious and, as the proverb truly says, 'fine things are hard.'

All the same, he said, our exposition must be completed by making this plain.

It will be no lack of will, I said, but if anything, a lack of ability, that would prevent that. But you shall observe for yourself my zeal. And note again how zealously and recklessly I am prepared to say that the state ought to take up this pursuit in just the reverse of our present fashion.

In what way?

At present, said I, those who do take it up are youths, just out of boyhood, who in the interval before they engage in business and money-making approach the most difficult part of it, and then drop it—and these are regarded forsooth as the best exemplars of philosophy. By the most difficult part I mean discussion. In later life they think they have done much if, when invited, they deign to listen to the philosophical discussions of others. That sort of thing they think should be bywork. And toward old age, with few exceptions, their light is quenched more completely than the sun of Heraclitus, inasmuch as it is never rekindled.

And what should they do? he said.
selves. To affirm that either or both of these things cannot possibly come to pass is, I say, quite unreasonable. Only in that case could we be justly ridiculed as uttering things as futile as daydreams are. Is not that so?

It is.

If, then, the best philosophical natures have ever been constrained to take charge of the state in infinite time past, or now are in some barbaric region far beyond our ken, or shall hereafter be, we are prepared to maintain our contention that the constitution we have described has been, is, or will be realized when this philosophical Muse has taken control of the state. It is not a thing impossible to happen, nor are we speaking of impossibilities. That it is difficult we too admit.

I also think so, he said.

But the multitude—are you going to say?—does not think so, said I.

That may be, he said.

My dear fellow, said I, do not thus absolutely condemn the multitude. They will surely be of another mind if in no spirit of contention but soothingly and endeavoring to do away with the dispraise of learning you point out to them whom you mean by philosophers, and define as we recently did their nature and their pursuits so that the people may not suppose you to mean those of whom they are thinking. Or even if they do look at them in that way, are you still going to deny that they will change their opinion and answer differently? Or do you think that anyone is ungentle to the gentle or grudging to the ungrudging if he himself is ungrudging and mild? I will anticipate you and reply that I think that only in some few and not in the mass of mankind is so ungentle or harsh a temper to be found.

And I, you may be assured, he said, concur.

And do you not also concur in this very point that the blame for this harsh attitude of the many toward philosophy falls on that riotous crew who have burst in where they do not belong, wrangling with one another, filled with spite, and always talking about persons, a thing least befitting philosophy?

Least of all, indeed, he said.

For surely, Adimantus, the man whose mind is truly fixed on eternal realities has no leisure to turn his eyes downward upon the petty affairs of men, and so engaging in strife with them to be filled with envy and hate, but he fixes his gaze upon the things of the eternal and unchanging order, and seeing that they neither wrong nor are wronged by one another, but all abide in harmony as reason bids, he will endeavor to imitate them and, as far as may be, to fashion himself in their likeness and assimilate himself to them. Or do you think it possible not to imitate the things to which anyone attaches himself with admiration?
Much gentler, he said, if they are reasonable.

How can they controvert it? Will they deny that the lovers of wisdom are lovers of reality and truth?

That would be monstrous, he said.

Or that their nature as we have portrayed it is akin to the highest and best?

Not that either.

Well, then, can they deny that such a nature bred in the pursuits that befit it will be perfectly good and philosophical so far as that can be said of anyone? Or will they rather say it of those whom we have excluded?

Surely not.

Will they, then, any longer be fierce with us when we declare that, until the philosophical class wins control, there will be no surcease of trouble for city or citizens nor will the polity which we fable in words be brought to pass in deed?

They will perhaps be less so, he said.

Instead of less so, may we not say that they have been altogether tamed and convinced, so that for very shame, if for no other reason, they may assent?

Certainly, said he.

Let us assume, then, said I, that they are won over to this view. Will anyone contend that there is no chance that the offspring of kings and rulers should be born with the philosophical nature?

Not one, he said.

And can anyone prove that if so born they must necessarily be corrupted? The difficulty of their salvation we too concede, but that in all the course of time not one of all could be saved, will anyone maintain that?

How could he?

But surely, said I, the occurrence of one such is enough, if he has a state which obeys him, to realize all that now seems so incredible.

Yes, one is enough, he said.

For if such a ruler, I said, ordains the laws and institutions that we have described it is surely not impossible that the citizens should be content to carry them out.

By no means.

Would it, then, be at all strange or impossible for others to come to the opinion to which we have come?

I think not, said he.

And further that these things are best, if possible, has already, I take it, been sufficiently shown.

Yes, sufficiently.

Our present opinion, then, about this legislation is that our plan would be best if it could be realized and that this realization is difficult yet not impossible.
Neither, I fancy, said I, do many others, not to say that none require anything of the sort. Or do you know of any?

Not I, he said.

But do you not observe that vision and the visible do have this further need?

How?

Though vision may be in the eyes and its possessor may try to use it, and though color be present, yet without the presence of a third thing specifically and naturally adapted to this purpose, you are aware that vision will see nothing and the colors will remain invisible.

What is this thing of which you speak? he said.

The thing, I said, that you call light.

You say truly, he replied.

The bond, then, that yokes together visibility and the faculty of sight is more precious by no slight form than that which unites the other pairs, if light is not without honor.

It surely is far from being so, he said.

Which one can you name of the divinities in heaven as the author and cause of this, whose light makes our vision see best and visible things to be seen?

Why, the one that you too and other people mean, he said, for your question evidently refers to the sun.

Is not this, then, the relation of vision to that divinity?

What?

Neither vision itself nor its vehicle, which we call the eye, is identical with the sun.

Why, no.

But it is, I think, the most sunlike of all the instruments of sense.

By far the most.

And does it not receive the power which it possesses as an influx, as it were, dispensed from the sun?

Certainly.

Is it not also true that the sun is not vision, yet as being the cause thereof is beheld by vision itself?

That is so, he said.

This, then, you must understand that I meant by the offspring of the good which the good begot to stand in a proportion with itself. As the good is in the intelligible region to reason and the objects of reason, so is this in the visible world to vision and the objects of vision.

How is that? he said. Explain further.

You are aware, I said, that when the eyes are no longer turned upon objects upon whose colors the light of day falls but that of the dim luminaries of night, their edge is blunted and they appear almost blind, as if pure vision did not dwell in them.

Yes, indeed, he said.

But when, I take it, they are directed upon objects illumined by
the sun, they see clearly, and vision appears to reside in these same eyes.

Certainly.

Apply this comparison to the soul also in this way. When it is firmly fixed on the domain where truth and reality shine resplendent it apprehends and knows them and appears to possess reason, but when it inclines to that region which is mingled with darkness, the world of becoming and passing away, it opines only and its edge is blunted, and it shifts its opinions hither and thither, and again seems as if it lacked reason.

Yes, it does.

This reality, then, that gives their truth to the objects of knowledge and the power of knowing to the knower, you must say is the idea of good, and you must conceive it as being the cause of knowledge, and of truth in so far as known. Yet fair as they both are, knowledge and truth, in supposing it to be something fairer still than those you will think rightly of it. But as for knowledge and truth, even as in our illustration it is right to deem light and vision sunlike, but never to think that they are the sun, so here it is right to consider these two their counterparts, as being like the good or boniform, but to think that either of them is the good is not right. Still higher honor belongs to the possession and habit of the good.

An inconceivable beauty you speak of, he said, if it is the source of knowledge and truth, and yet itself surpasses them in beauty. For you surely cannot mean that it is pleasure.

Hush, said I, but examine the similitude of it still further in this way.

The sun, I presume you will say, not only furnishes to visibles the power of visibility but it also provides for their generation and growth and nurture though it is not itself generation.

Of course not.

In like manner, then, you are to say that the objects of knowledge not only receive from the presence of the good their being known, but their very existence and essence is derived to them from it, though the good itself is not essence but still transcends essence in dignity and surpassing power.

And Glaucon very ludicrously said, Heaven save us, hyperbole can no further go.

The fault is yours, I said, for compelling me to utter my thoughts about it.

And don’t desist, he said, but at least expound the similitude of the sun, if there is anything that you are omitting.

Why, certainly, I said, I am omitting a great deal.

Well, don’t omit the least bit, he said.

I fancy, I said, that I shall have to pass over much, but neverthe-
will they refuse to share in the labors of state each in his turn while permitted to dwell most of the time with one another in that purer world?

Impossible, he said, for we shall be imposing just commands on men who are just. Yet they will assuredly approach office as an unavoidable necessity, and in the opposite temper from that of the present rulers in our cities.

For the fact is, dear friend, said I, if you can discover a better way of life than office holding for your future rulers, a well-governed city becomes a possibility. For only in such a state will those rule who are really rich, not in gold, but in the wealth that makes happiness—a good and wise life. But if, being beggars and starvelings from lack of goods of their own, they turn to affairs of state thinking that it is thence that they should grasp their own good, then it is impossible. For when office and rule become the prizes of contention, such a civil and internecine strife destroys the office seekers themselves and the city as well.

Most true, he said.

Can you name any other type or ideal of life that looks with scorn on political office except the life of true philosophers? I asked.

No, by Zeus, he said.

But what we require, I said, is that those who take office should not be lovers of rule. Otherwise there will be a contest with rival lovers.

Surely.

What others, then, will you compel to undertake the guardianship of the city than those who have most intelligence of the principles that are the means of good government and who possess distinctions of another kind and a life that is preferable to the political life?

No others, he said.

Would you, then, have us proceed to consider how such men may be produced in a state and how they may be led upward to the light even as some are fabled to have ascended from Hades to the gods?

Of course I would.

So this, it seems, would not be the whirling of the shell in the children’s game, but a conversion and turning about of the soul from a day whose light is darkness to the veritable day—that ascension to reality of our parable which we will affirm to be true philosophy.

By all means.

Must we not, then, consider what studies have the power to effect this?

Of course.

What, then, Glaucon, would be the study that would draw the soul away from the world of becoming to the world of being? A thought strikes me while I speak. Did we not say that these men in youth must be athletes of war?
show you, no longer an image and symbol of my meaning, but the very truth, as it appears to me—though whether rightly or not I may not properly affirm. But that something like this is what we have to see, I must affirm. Is not that so?

Surely.

And may we not also declare that nothing less than the power of dialectic could reveal this, and that only to one experienced in the studies we have described, and that the thing is in no other wise possible?

That, too, he said, we may properly affirm.

This, at any rate, said I, no one will maintain in dispute against us, that there is any other way of inquiry that attempts systematically and in all cases to determine what each thing really is. But all the other arts have for their object the opinions and desires of men or are wholly concerned with generation and composition or with the service and tendance of the things that grow and are put together, while the remnant which we said did in some sort lay hold on reality—geometry and the studies that accompany it—are, as we see, dreaming about being, but the clear waking vision of it is impossible for them as long as they leave the assumptions which they employ undisturbed and cannot give any account of them. For where the starting point is something that the reasoner does not know, and the conclusion and all that intervenes is a tissue of things not really known, what possibility is there that assent in such cases can ever be converted into true knowledge or science?

None, said he.

Then, said I, is not dialectic the only process of inquiry that advances in this manner, doing away with hypotheses, up to the first principle itself in order to find confirmation there? And it is literally true that when the eye of the soul is sunk in the barbaric slough of the Orphic myth, dialectic gently draws it forth and leads it up, employing as helpers and co-operators in this conversion the studies and sciences which we enumerated, which we called sciences often from habit, though they really need some other designation, connoting more clearness than opinion and more obscurity than science. 'Understanding,' I believe, was the term we employed. But I presume we shall not dispute about the name when things of such moment lie before us for consideration.

No, indeed, he said.

Are you satisfied, then, said I, as before, to call the first division science, the second understanding, the third belief, and the fourth conjecture or picture thought—and the last two collectively opinion, and the first two intellection, opinion dealing with generation, and intellection with essence, and this relation being expressed in the proportion: as essence is to generation, so is intellection to opinion, and as intellection is to opinion, so is science to belief, and understanding
shall preserve the state and our polity. But, if we introduce into it the other sort, the outcome will be just the opposite, and we shall pour a still greater flood of ridicule upon philosophy. That would indeed be shameful, he said.

Most certainly, said I, but here again I am making myself a little ridiculous.

In what way?

I forgot, said I, that we were jesting, and I spoke with too great intensity. For, while speaking, I turned my eyes upon philosophy, and when I saw how she is undeservedly reviled, I was revolted, and, as if in anger, spoke too earnestly to those who are in fault.

No, by Zeus, not too earnestly for me as a hearer.

But too much so for me as a speaker, I said. But this we must not forget, that in our former selection we chose old men, but in this one that will not do. For we must not take Solon's word for it that growing old a man is able to learn many things. He is less able to do that than to run a race. To the young belong all heavy and frequent labors. Necessarily, he said.

Now, all this study of reckoning and geometry and all the preliminary studies that are indispensable preparation for dialectic must be presented to them while still young, not in the form of compulsory instruction.

Why so?

Because, said I, a free soul ought not to pursue any study slavishly, for while bodily labors performed under constraint do not harm the body, nothing that is learned under compulsion stays with the mind.

True, he said.

Do not, then, my friend, keep children to their studies by compulsion but by play. That will also better enable you to discern the natural capacities of each.

There is reason in that, he said.

And do you not remember, I said, that we also declared that we must conduct the children to war on horseback to be spectators, and wherever it may be safe, bring them to the front and give them a taste of blood as we do with whelps?

I do remember.

And those who as time goes on show the most facility in all these toils and studies and alarms are to be selected and enrolled on a list.

At what age? he said.

When they are released from their prescribed gymnastics. For that period, whether it be two or three years, incapacitates them for other occupations. For great fatigue and much sleep are the foes of study, and moreover one of our tests of them, and not the least, will be their behavior in their physical exercises.

Surely it is, he said.
After this period, I said, those who are given preference from the twenty-year class will receive greater honors than the others, and they will be required to gather the studies which they disconnectedly pursued as children in their former education into a comprehensive survey of their affinities with one another and with the nature of things.

That, at any rate, he said, is the only instruction that abides with those who receive it.

And it is also, said I, the chief test of the dialectic nature and its opposite. For he who can view things in their connection is a dialectician; he who cannot, is not.

I concur, he said.

With these qualities in mind, I said, it will be your task to make a selection of those who manifest them best from the group who are steadfast in their studies and in war and in all lawful requirements, and when they have passed the thirtieth year to promote them, by a second selection from those preferred in the first, to greater honors, and to prove and test them by the power of dialectic to see which of them is able to disregard the eyes and other senses and go on to being itself in company with truth. And at this point, my friend, the greatest care is requisite.

How so? he said.

Do you not note, said I, how great is the harm caused by our present treatment of dialectic?

Do you suppose, I said, that there is anything surprising in this state of mind, and do you not think it pardonable?

In what way, pray? he said.

Their case, said I, resembles that of a supposititious son reared in abundant wealth and a great and numerous family amid many flatterers, who on arriving at manhood should become aware that he is not the child of those who call themselves his parents, and should not be able to find his true father and mother. Can you divine what would be his feelings toward the flatterers and his supposed parents in the time when he did not know the truth about his adoption, and, again, when he knew it? Or would you like to hear my surmise?

I would.

Well, then, my surmise is, I said, that he would be more likely to honor his reputed father and mother and other kin than the flatterers, and that there would be less likelihood of his allowing them to lack for anything, and that he would be less inclined to do or say to them anything unlawful, and less liable to disobey them in great matters than to disobey the flatterers—during the time when he did not know the truth.
doubt, there are hereditary principalities and purchased kingships, and similar intermediate constitutions which one could find in even greater numbers among the barbarians than among the Greeks. Certainly many strange ones are reported, he said.

Are you aware, then, said I, that there must be as many types of character among men as there are forms of government? Or do you suppose that constitutions spring from the proverbial oak or rock and not from the characters of the citizens, which, as it were, by their momentum and weight in the scales draw other things after them? They could not possibly come from any other source, he said.

Then if the forms of government are five, the patterns of individual souls must be five also.

Surely.

Now we have already described the man corresponding to aristocracy or the government of the best, whom we aver to be the truly good and just man.

We have.

Must we not, then, next after this, survey the inferior types, the man who is contentious and covetous of honor, corresponding to the Laconian constitution, and the oligarchic man in turn, and the democratic and the tyrannical, in order that, after observing the most unjust of all, we may oppose him to the most just, and complete our inquiry as to the relation of pure justice and pure injustice in respect of the happiness and unhappiness of the possessor, so that we may either follow the counsel of Thrasymachus and pursue injustice or the present argument and pursue justice?

Assuredly, he said, that is what we have to do.

Shall we, then, as we began by examining moral qualities in states before individuals, as being more manifest there, so now consider first the constitution based on the love of honor? I do not know of any special name for it in use. We must call it either timocracy or timarchy. And then in connection with this we will consider the man of that type, and thereafter oligarchy and the oligarch, and again, fixing our eyes on democracy, we will contemplate the democratic man, and fourthly, after coming to the city ruled by a tyrant and observing it, we will in turn take a look into the tyrannical soul, and so try to make ourselves competent judges of the question before us.

That would be at least a systematic and consistent way of conducting the observation and the decision, he said.

Come, then, said I, let us try to tell in what way a timocracy would arise out of an aristocracy. Or is this the simple and unvarying rule, that in every form of government revolution takes its start from the ruling class itself, when dissension arises in that, but so long as it is at one with itself, however small it be, innovation is impossible?

Yes, that is so.

How, then, Glaucon, I said, will disturbance arise in our city,
Then, said I, is not the transition from oligarchy to democracy effected in some such way as this—by the insatiable greed for that which it set before itself as the good, the attainment of the greatest possible wealth?

In what way?

c  Why, since its rulers owe their offices to their wealth, they are not willing to prohibit by law the prodigals who arise among the youth from spending and wasting their substance. Their object is, by lending money on the property of such men, and buying it in, to become still richer and more esteemed.

By all means.

And is it not at once apparent in a state that this honoring of wealth is incompatible with a sober and temperate citizenship, but that one or the other of these two ideals is inevitably neglected.

d  That is pretty clear, he said.

And such negligence and encouragement of licentiousness in oligarchies not infrequently has reduced to poverty men of no ignoble quality.

It surely has.

And there they sit, I fancy, within the city, furnished with stings, that is, arms, some burdened with debt, others disfranchised, others both, hating and conspiring against the acquirers of their estates and the rest of the citizens, and eager for revolution.

'Tis so.

e  But these money-makers with down-bent heads, pretending not even to see them, but inserting the sting of their money into any of the remainder who do not resist, and harvesting from them in interest as it were a manifold progeny of the parent sum, foster the drone and pauper element in the state.

They do indeed multiply it, he said.

And they are not willing to quench the evil as it bursts into flame either by way of a law prohibiting a man from doing as he likes with his own, or in this way, by a second law that does away with such abuses.

What law?

The law that is next best, and compels the citizens to pay heed to virtue. For if a law commanded that most voluntary contracts should be at the contractor’s risk, the pursuit of wealth would be less shameless in the state and fewer of the evils of which we spoke just now would grow up there.

Much fewer, he said.

But as it is, and for all these reasons, this is the plight to which the rulers in the state reduce their subjects, and as for themselves and their offspring, do they not make the young spoiled wantons averse to toil of body and mind, and too soft to stand up against pleasure and pain, and mere idlers?

Surely.
And do they not fasten upon themselves the habit of neglect of everything except the making of money, and as complete an indifference to virtue as the paupers exhibit?

Little they care.

And when, thus conditioned, the rulers and the ruled are brought together on the march, in wayfaring, or in some other common undertaking, either a religious festival, or a campaign, or as shipmates or fellow soldiers or, for that matter, in actual battle, and observe one another, then the poor are not in the least scorned by the rich, but on the contrary, do you not suppose it often happens that when a lean, sinewy, sunburned pauper is stationed in battle beside a rich man bred in the shade, and burdened with superfluous flesh, and sees him panting and helpless—do you not suppose he will think that such fellows keep their wealth by the cowardice of the poor, and that when the latter are together in private, one will pass the word to another, 'our men are good for nothing'?

Nay, I know very well that they do, said he.

And just as an unhealthy body requires but a slight impulse from outside to fall into sickness, and sometimes, even without that, all the man is one internal war, in like manner does not the corresponding type of state need only a slight occasion, the one party bringing in allies from an oligarchic state, or the other from a democratic, to become diseased and wage war with itself, and sometimes even apart from any external impulse faction arises?

Most emphatically.

And a democracy, I suppose, comes into being when the poor, winning the victory, put to death some of the other party, drive out others, and grant the rest of the citizens an equal share in both citizenship and offices—and for the most part these offices are assigned by lot.

Why, yes, he said, that is the constitution of democracy alike whether it is established by force of arms or by terrorism resulting in the withdrawal of one of the parties.

What, then, said I, is the manner of their life and what is the quality of such a constitution? For it is plain that the man of this quality will turn out to be a democratic sort of man.

It is plain, he said.

To begin with, are they not free? And is not the city chock-full of liberty and freedom of speech? And has not every man license to do as he likes?

So it is said, be replied.

And where there is such license, it is obvious that everyone would arrange a plan for leading his own life in the way that pleases him.

Obvious.

All sorts and conditions of men, then, would arise in this polity more than in any other?

Of course.
Possibly, said I, this is the most beautiful of polities; as a garment of many colors, embroidered with all kinds of hues, so this, decked and diversified with every type of character, would appear the most beautiful. And perhaps many would judge it to be the most beautiful, like boys and women when they see bright-colored things.

Yes indeed, he said.

d Yes, said I, and it is the fit place, my good friend, in which to look for a constitution.

Why so?

Because, owing to this license, it includes all kinds, and it seems likely that anyone who wishes to organize a state, as we were just now doing, must find his way to a democratic city and select the model that pleases him, as if in a bazaar of constitutions, and after making his choice, establish his own.

e Perhaps at any rate, he said, he would not be at a loss for patterns.

And the freedom from all compulsion to hold office in such a city, even if you are qualified, or again, to submit to rule, unless you please, or to make war when the rest are at war, or to keep the peace when the others do so, unless you desire peace, and again, the liberty, in defiance of any law that forbids you, to hold office and sit on juries nonetheless, if it occurs to you to do so, is not all that a heavenly and delicious entertainment for the time being?

Perhaps, he said, for so long.

And is not the placability of some convicted criminals exquisite? Or have you never seen in such a state men condemned to death or exile who nonetheless stay on, and go to and fro among the people, and as if no one saw or heeded him, the man slips in and out like a revenant?

Yes, many, he said.

And the tolerance of democracy, its superiority to all our meticulous requirements, its disdain for our solemn pronouncements made when we were founding our city, that except in the case of transcendent natural gifts no one could ever become a good man unless from childhood his play and all his pursuits were concerned with things fair and good—how superbly it tramples underfoot all such ideals, caring nothing from what practices and way of life a man turns to politics, but honoring him if only he says that he loves the people!

It is a noble polity, indeed! he said.

These and qualities akin to these democracy would exhibit, and it would, it seems, be a delightful form of government, anarchic and motley, assigning a kind of equality indiscriminately to equals and unequals alike!

Yes, he said, everybody knows that.

Observe, then, the corresponding private character. Or must we first, as in the case of the polity, consider the origin of the type?
unmixed wine, and then, if its so-called governors are not extremely mild and gentle with it and do not dispense the liberty unstintedly, it chastises them and accuses them of being accursed oligarchs.

Yes, that is what they do, he replied.

But those who obey the rulers, I said, it reviles as willing slaves and men of nought, but it commends and honors in public and private rulers who resemble subjects and subjects who are like rulers. Is it not inevitable that in such a state the spirit of liberty should go to all lengths?

Of course.

And this anarchic temper, said I, my friend, must penetrate into private homes and finally enter into the very animals.

Just what do we mean by that? he said.

Why, I said, the father habitually tries to resemble the child and is afraid of his sons, and the son likens himself to the father and feels no awe or fear of his parents, so that he may be forsooth a free man. And the resident alien feels himself equal to the citizen and the citizen to him, and the foreigner likewise.

Yes, these things do happen, he said.

They do, said I, and such other trifles as these. The teacher in such case fears and fawns upon the pupils, and the pupils pay no heed to the teacher or to their overseers either. And in general the young ape their elders and vie with them in speech and action, while the old, accommodating themselves to the young, are full of pleasantry and graciousness, imitating the young for fear they may be thought disagreeable and authoritative.

By all means, he said.

And the climax of popular liberty, my friend, I said, is attained in such a city when the purchased slaves, male and female, are no less free than the owners who paid for them. And I almost forgot to mention the spirit of freedom and equal rights in the relation of men to women and women to men.

Shall we not, then, said he, in Aeschylean phrase, say 'whatever rises to our lips'?

Certainly, I said, so I will. Without experience of it no one would believe how much freer the very beasts subject to men are in such a city than elsewhere. The dogs literally verify the adage and 'like their mistresses become.' And likewise the horses and asses are wont to hold on their way with the utmost freedom and dignity, bumping into everyone who meets them and who does not step aside. And so all things everywhere are just bursting with the spirit of liberty.

It is my own dream you are telling me, he said, for it often happens to me when I go to the country.

And do you note that the sum total of all these items when footed up is that they render the souls of the citizens so sensitive that they chafe at the slightest suggestion of servitude and will not endure it?
For you are aware that they finally pay no heed even to the laws written or unwritten, so that forsooth they may have no master anywhere over them.

I know it very well, said he.

This, then, my friend, said I, is the fine and vigorous root from which tyranny grows, in my opinion.

Vigorous indeed, he said, but what next?

The same malady, I said, that, arising in oligarchy, destroyed it, this more widely diffused and more violent as a result of this license, enslaves democracy. And in truth, any excess is wont to bring about a corresponding reaction to the opposite in the seasons, in plants, in animal bodies, and most especially in political societies.

Probably, he said.

And so the probable outcome of too much freedom is only too much slavery in the individual and the state.

Yes, that is probable.

Probably, then, tyranny develops out of no other constitution than democracy—from the height of liberty, I take it, the fiercest extreme of servitude.

That is reasonable, he said.

That, however, I believe, was not your question, but what identical malady arising in democracy as well as in oligarchy enslaves it? You say truly, he replied.

That then, I said, was what I had in mind, the class of idle and spendthrift men, the most enterprising and vigorous portion being leaders and the less manly spirits followers. We were likening them to drones, some equipped with stings and others stingless.

And rightly too, he said.

These two kinds, then, I said, when they arise in any state, create a disturbance like that produced in the body by phlegm and gall. And so a good physician and lawgiver must be on his guard from afar against the two kinds, like a prudent apiarist, first and chiefly to prevent their springing up, but if they do arise to have them as quickly as may be cut out, cells and all.

Yes, by Zeus, he said, by all means.

Then let us take it in this way, I said, so that we may contemplate our purpose more distinctly.

How?

Let us in our theory make a tripartite division of the democratic state, which is in fact its structure. One such class, as we have described, grows up in it because of the license, no less than in the oligarchic state.

That is so.

But it is far fiercer in this state than in that.

How so?

There, because it is not held in honor, but is kept out of office, it
is not exercised and does not grow vigorous. But in a democracy this is
the dominating class, with rare exceptions, and the fiercest part of it
makes speeches and transacts business, and the remainder swarms
and settles about the speaker's stand and keeps up a buzzing and tol-
erates no dissent, so that everything with slight exceptions is adminis-
tered by that class in such a state.

Quite so, he said.

And so from time to time there emerges or is secreted from the
multitude another group of this sort.

What sort? he said.

When all are pursuing wealth the most orderly and thrifty
natures for the most part become the richest.

It is likely.

Then they are the most abundant supply of honey for the drones,
and it is the easiest to extract.

Why, yes, he said, how could one squeeze it out of those who have
little?

The capitalistic class is, I take it, the name by which they are
designated—the pasture of the drones.

Pretty much so, he said.

And the third class, composing the 'people,' would comprise
all quiet cultivators of their own farms who possess little property.
This is the largest and most potent group in a democracy when it
meets in assembly.

Yes, it is, he said, but it will not often do that, unless it gets a
share of the honey.

Well, does it not always share, I said, to the extent that the men
at the head find it possible, in distributing to the people what they
take from the well-to-do, to keep the lion's share for themselves?

Why, yes, he said, it shares in that sense.

And so, I suppose, those who are thus plundered are compelled
to defend themselves by speeches in the assembly and any action in
their power.

Of course.

And thereupon the charge is brought against them by the other
party, though they may have no revolutionary designs, that they are
plotting against the people, and it is said that they are oligarchs.

Surely.

And then finally, when they see the people, not of its own will but
through misapprehension, and being misled by the calumniators, at-
ttempting to wrong them, why then, whether they wish it or not, they
become in very deed oligarchs, not willingly, but this evil too is en-
gendered by those drones which sting them.

Precisely.

And then there ensue impeachments and judgments and lawsuits
on either side.
Yes, indeed.

And is it not always the way of a demos to put forward one man as its special champion and protector and cherish and magnify him?

Yes, it is.

d. This, then, is plain, said I, that when a tyrant arises he sprouts from a protectorate root and from nothing else.

Very plain.

What, then, is the starting point of the transformation of a protector into a tyrant? Is it not obviously when the protector's acts begin to reproduce the legend that is told of the shrine of Lycaean Zeus in Arcadia?

What is that? he said.

The story goes that he who tastes of the one bit of human entrails minced up with those of other victims is inevitably transformed into a wolf. Have you not heard the tale?

I have.

And is it not true that in like manner a leader of the people who, getting control of a docile mob, does not withhold his hand from the shedding of tribal blood, but by the customary unjust accusations brings a citizen into court and assassinates him, blotting out a human life, and with unhallowed tongue and lips that have tasted kindred blood, banishes and slays and hints at the abolition of debts and the partition of lands—is it not the inevitable consequence and decree of fate that such a one be either slain by his enemies or become a tyrant and be transformed from a man into a wolf?

It is quite inevitable, he said.

He it is, I said, who becomes the leader of faction against the possessors of property.

Yes, he.

May it not happen that he is driven into exile and, being restored in defiance of his enemies, returns a finished tyrant?

Obviously.

And if they are unable to expel him or bring about his death by calumniating him to the people, they plot to assassinate him by stealth.

That is certainly wont to happen, said he.

And thereupon those who have reached this stage devise that famous petition of the tyrant—to ask from the people a bodyguard to make their city safe for the friend of democracy.

They do indeed, he said.

And the people grant it, I suppose, fearing for him but unconcerned for themselves.

e. Yes, indeed.

And when he sees this, the man who has wealth and with his wealth the reputed hostility to democracy, then in the words of the oracle delivered to Croesus, 'By the pebble-strewn strand of the
asleep with anger still awake within him, but if he has thus quieted the two elements in his soul and quickened the third, in which reason resides, and so goes to his rest, you are aware that in such case he is most likely to apprehend truth, and the visions of his dreams are b least likely to be lawless.

I certainly think so, he said.

This description has carried us too far, but the point that we have to notice is this, that in fact there exists in every one of us, even in some reputed most respectable, a terrible, fierce, and lawless brood of desires, which it seems are revealed in our sleep. Consider, then, whether there is anything in what I say, and whether you admit it.

Well, I do.

Now recall our characterization of the democratic man. His development was determined by his education from youth under a thrifty father who approved only the acquisitive appetites and disapproved the unnecessary ones whose object is entertainment and display. Is not that so?

Yes.

And by association with more sophisticated men, teeming with the appetites we have just described, he is impelled toward every form of insolence and outrage, and to the adoption of their way of life by his hatred of his father's niggardliness. But since his nature is better than that of his corrupters, being drawn both ways he settles down in a compromise between the two tendencies, and indulging and enjoying each in moderation, forsooth, as he supposes, he lives what he deems a life that is neither illiberal nor lawless, now transformed from an oligarch to a democrat.

That was and is our belief about this type.

Assume, then, again, said I, that such a man when he is older has a son bred in turn in his ways of life.

I so assume.

And suppose the experience of his father to be repeated in his case. He is drawn toward utter lawlessness, which is called by his seducers complete freedom. His father and his other kin lend support to these compromise appetites while the others lend theirs to the opposite group. And when these dread magi and kingmakers come to realize that they have no hope of controlling the youth in any other way, they contrive to engender in his soul a ruling passion to be the protector of his idle and prodigal appetites, a monstrous winged drone. Or do you think the spirit of desire in such men is aught else?

Nothing but that, he said.

And when the other appetites, buzzing about it, replete with incense and myrrh and chaplets and wine, and the pleasures that are released in such revelries, magnifying and fostering it to the utmost, awake in the drone the sting of unsatisfied yearnings, why then this protector of the soul has madness for his bodyguard and runs amuck,
behavior in the hazards of his public life—and if we should ask the
man who has seen all this to be the messenger to report on the hap­
iness or misery of the tyrant as compared with other men?
That also would be a most just challenge, he said.
Shall we, then, make believe, said I, that we are of those who are
thus able to judge and who have ere now lived with tyrants, so that
we may have someone to answer our questions?
By all means.

Come, then, said I, examine it thus. Recall the general likeness
between the city and the man, and then observe in turn what happens
to each of them.

What things? he said.
In the first place, said I, will you call the state governed by a
tyrant free or enslaved, speaking of it as a state?
Utterly enslaved, he said.
And yet you see in it masters and free men.
I see, he said, a small portion of such, but the entirety, so to
speak, and the best part of it, is shamefully and wretchedly enslaved.

If, then, I said, the man resembles the state, must not the same
proportion obtain in him, and his soul teem with boundless servility
and illiberality, the best and most reasonable parts of it being
enslaved, while a small part, the worst and the most frenzied, plays the
despot?
Inevitably, he said.
Then will you say that such a soul is enslaved or free?
Enslaved, I should suppose.
Again, does not the enslaved and tyrannized city least of all do
what it really wishes?
Decidedly so.

Then the tyrannized soul—to speak of the soul as a whole—also
will least of all do what it wishes, but being always perforce driven
and drawn by the gadfly of desire it will be full of confusion and re-
pentance.
Of course.
And must the tyrannized city be rich or poor?
Poor.

Then the tyrant soul also must of necessity always be needy
and suffer from unfulfilled desire.
So it is, he said.
And again, must not such a city, as well as such a man, be full of
terrors and alarms?
It must indeed.
And do you think you will find more lamentations and groans and
wailing and anguish in any other city?
By no means.
And so of man, do you think these things will more abound in
any other than in this tyrant type, that is maddened by its desires and passions?

How could it be so? he said.

In view of all these and other like considerations, then, I take it, b you judged that this city is the most miserable of cities.

And was I not right? he said.

Yes, indeed, said I. But of the tyrant man, what have you to say in view of these same things?

That he is far and away the most miserable of all, he said.

I cannot admit, said I, that you are right in that too.

How so? said he.

This one, said I, I take it, has not yet attained the acme of misery.

Then who has?

Perhaps you will regard the one I am about to name as still more wretched.

What one?

The one, said I, who, being of tyrannical temper, does not live out his life in private station but is so unfortunate that by some unhappy chance he is enabled to become an actual tyrant.

I infer from what has already been said, he replied, that you speak truly.

Yes, said I, but it is not enough to suppose such things. We must examine them thoroughly by reason and an argument such as this. For our inquiry concerns the greatest of all things, the good life or the bad life.

Quite right, he replied.

Consider, then, if there is anything in what I say. For I think we must get a notion of the matter from these examples.

From which?

From individual wealthy private citizens in our states who possess many slaves. For these resemble the tyrant in being rulers over many, only the tyrant’s numbers are greater.

Yes, they are.

You are aware, then, that they are unafraid and do not fear their slaves?

What should they fear?

Nothing, I said, but do you perceive the reason why?

Yes, because the entire state is ready to defend each citizen.

You are right, I said. But now suppose some god should catch up e a man who has fifty or more slaves and waft him with his wife and children away from the city and set him down with his other possessions and his slaves in a solitude where no free man could come to his rescue. What and how great would be his fear, do you suppose, lest he and his wife and children be destroyed by the slaves?

The greatest in the world, he said, if you ask me.

And would he not forthwith find it necessary to fawn upon some
Then the wise man will bend all his endeavors to this end: throughout his life, he will, to begin with, prize the studies that will give this quality to his soul and disprize the others.

Clearly, he said.

And then, I said, he not only will not abandon the habit and nurture of his body to the brutish and irrational pleasure and live with his face set in that direction, but he will not even make health his chief aim, nor give the first place to the ways of becoming strong or healthy or beautiful unless these things are likely to bring with them sobriety of spirit, but he will always be found attuning the harmonies of his body for the sake of the concord in his soul.

By all means, he replied, if he is to be a true musician.

And will he not deal likewise with the ordering and harmonizing of his possessions? He will not let himself be dazzled by the felicitations of the multitude and pile up the mass of his wealth without measure, involving himself in measureless ills.

No, I think not, he said.

He will rather, I said, keep his eyes fixed on the constitution in his soul, and taking care and watching lest he disturb anything there either by excess or deficiency of wealth, will so steer his course and add to or detract from his wealth on this principle, so far as may be.

Precisely so, he said.

And in the matter of honors and office too this will be his guiding principle. He will gladly take part in and enjoy those which he thinks will make him a better man, but in public and private life he will shun those that may overthrow the established habit of his soul.

Then, if that is his chief concern, he said, he will not willingly take part in politics.

Yes, by the dog, said I, in his own city he certainly will, yet perhaps not in the city of his birth, except in some providential conjunction.

I understand, he said. You mean the city whose establishment we have described, the city whose home is in the ideal, for I think that it can be found nowhere on earth.

Well, said I, perhaps there is a pattern of it laid up in heaven for him who wishes to contemplate it and so beholding to constitute himself its citizen. But it makes no difference whether it exists now or ever will come into being. The politics of this city only will be his and of none other.

That seems probable, he said.

### BOOK X

And truly, I said, many other considerations assure me that we were entirely right in our organization of the state, and especially, I think, in the matter of poetry.
What about it? he said.

In refusing to admit at all so much of it as is imitative, for that it is certainly not to be received is, I think, still more plainly apparent now that we have distinguished the several parts of the soul.

What do you mean?

Why, between ourselves—for you will not betray me to the tragic poets and all other imitators—that kind of art seems to be a corruption of the mind of all listeners who do not possess as an antidote a knowledge of its real nature.

What is your idea in saying this? he said.

I must speak out, I said, though a certain love and reverence for Homer that has possessed me from a boy would stay me from speaking. For he appears to have been the first teacher and beginner of all these beauties of tragedy. Yet all the same we must not honor a man above truth, but, as I say, speak our minds.

By all means, he said.

Listen, then, or rather, answer my question.

Ask it, he said.

Could you tell me in general what imitation is? For neither do I myself quite apprehend what it would be at.

It is likely, then, he said, that I should apprehend.

It would be nothing strange, said I, since it often happens that the dimmer vision sees things in advance of the keener.

That is so, he said, but in your presence I could not even be eager to try to state anything that appears to me, but do you yourself consider it.

Shall we, then, start the inquiry at this point by our customary procedure? We are in the habit, I take it, of positing a single idea or form in the case of the various multiplicities to which we give the same name. Do you not understand?

I do.

In the present case, then, let us take any multiplicity you please; for example, there are many couches and tables.

Of course.

But these utensils imply, I suppose, only two ideas or forms, one of a couch and one of a table.

Yes.

And are we not also in the habit of saying that the craftsman who produces either of them fixes his eyes on the idea or form, and so makes in the one case the couches and in the other the tables that we use, and similarly of other things? For surely no craftsman makes the idea itself. How could he?

By no means.

But now consider what name you would give to this craftsman.

What one?
Shall we, then, use these very examples in our quest for the true nature of this imitator?

If you please, he said.

We get, then, these three couches, one, that in nature, which, I take it, we would say that God produces, or who else?

No one, I think.

And then there was one which the carpenter made.

Yes, he said.

And one which the painter. Is not that so?

So be it.

The painter, then, the cabinetmaker, and God, there are these three presiding over three kinds of couches.

Yes, three.

c Now God, whether because he so willed or because some compulsion was laid upon him not to make more than one couch in nature, so wrought and created one only, the couch which really and in itself is. But two or more such were never created by God and never will come into being.

How so? he said.

Because, said I, if he should make only two, there would again appear one of which they both would possess the form or idea, and that would be the couch that really is in and of itself, and not the other two.

Right, he said.

d God, then, I take it, knowing this and wishing to be the real author of the couch that has real being and not of some particular couch, nor yet a particular cabinetmaker, produced it in nature unique.

So it seems.

Shall we, then, call him its true and natural begetter, or something of the kind?

That would certainly be right, he said, since it is by and in nature that he has made this and all other things.

And what of the carpenter? Shall we not call him the creator of a couch?

Yes.

Shall we also say that the painter is the creator and maker of that sort of thing?

By no means.

What will you say he is in relation to the couch.

e This, said he, seems to me the most reasonable designation for him, that he is the imitator of the thing which those others produce.

Very good, said I. The producer of the product three removes from nature you call the imitator?

By all means, he said.

This, then, will apply to the maker of tragedies also, if he is an
whether the things he portrays are or are not beautiful and right, or
will he, from compulsory association with the man who knows and
taking orders from him for the right making of them, have right
opinion?
Neither.
Then the imitator will neither know nor opine rightly concerning
the beauty or the badness of his imitations.
It seems not.
Most charming, then, would be the state of mind of the poetical
imitator in respect of true wisdom about his creations.
Not at all.
Yet still he will nonetheless imitate, though in every case he does not
know in what way the thing is bad or good. But, as it seems, the
thing he will imitate will be the thing that appears beautiful to the ig-
norant multitude.
Why, what else?
On this, then, as it seems, we are fairly agreed, that the imitator
knows nothing worth mentioning of the things he imitates, but that
imitation is a form of play, not to be taken seriously, and that those
who attempt tragic poetry, whether in iambics or heroic verse, are all
altogether imitators.
By all means.
The same magnitude, I presume, viewed from near and
from far does not appear equal.
Why, no.
The same things appear bent and straight to those who view
them in water and out, or concave and convex, owing to similar errors
of vision about colors, and there is obviously every confusion of this
sort in our souls. And so scene painting in its exploitation of this weak-
ness of our nature falls nothing short of witchcraft, and so do jugglery
and many other such contrivances.
True.
And have not measuring and numbering and weighing proved to
be most gracious aids to prevent the domination in our soul of the ap-
parently greater or less or more or heavier, and to give the control to
that which has reckoned and numbered or even weighed?
Certainly.
But this surely would be the function of the part of the soul that
reasons and calculates.
Why, yes, of that.
Yes, indeed, he said.

And so in regard to the emotions of sex and anger, and all the appetites and pains and pleasures of the soul which we say accompany all our actions, the effect of poetic imitation is the same. For it waters and fosters these feelings when what we ought to do is to dry them up, and it establishes them as our rulers when they ought to be ruled, to the end that we may be better and happier men instead of worse and more miserable.

I cannot deny it, said he.

Then, Glaucon, said I, when you meet encomiasts of Homer who tell us that this poet has been the educator of Hellas, and that for the conduct and refinement of human life he is worthy of our study and devotion, and that we should order our entire lives by the guidance of this poet, we must love and salute them as doing the best they can, and concede to them that Homer is the most poetic of poets and the first of tragedians, but we must know the truth, that we can admit no poetry into our city save only hymns to the gods and the praises of good men. For if you grant admission to the honeyed Muse in lyric or epic, pleasure and pain will be lords of your city instead of law and that which shall from time to time have approved itself to the general reason as the best.

Most true, he said.

Let us, then, conclude our return to the topic of poetry and our apology, and affirm that we really had good grounds then for dismissing her from our city, since such was her character. For reason constrained us. And let us further say to her, lest she condemn us for harshness and rusticity, that there is from of old a quarrel between philosophy and poetry. For such expressions as 'the yelping hound barking at her master and mighty in the idle babble of fools,' and 'the mob that masters those who are too wise for their own good,' and the subtle thinkers who reason that after all they are poor, and countless others are tokens of this ancient enmity. But nevertheless let it be declared that, if the mimetic and dulcet poetry can show any reason for her existence in a well-governed state, we would gladly admit her, since we ourselves are very conscious of her spell. But all the same it would be impious to betray what we believe to be the truth. Is not that so, friend? Do not you yourself feel her magic and especially when Homer is her interpreter?

Greatly.

Then may she not justly return from this exile after she has pleaded her defense, whether in lyric or other measure?

By all means.

And we would allow her advocates who are not poets but lovers of poetry to plead her cause in prose without meter, and show that she is not only delightful but beneficial to orderly government and all the life of man. And we shall listen benevolently, for it will be clear
patterns of lives before them on the ground, far more numerous than
the assembly. They were of every variety, for there were lives of all
kinds of animals and all sorts of human lives, for there were tyrannies
among them, some uninterrupted till the end and others destroyed
midway and issuing in penuries and exiles and beggarries, and there
were lives of men of repute for their forms and beauty and bodily
strength otherwise and prowess and the high birth and the virtues of
their ancestors, and others of ill repute in the same things, and simi-
larly of women. But there was no determination of the quality of soul,
because the choice of a different life inevitably determined a dif-
ferent character. But all other things were commingled with one an-
other and with wealth and poverty and sickness and health and the
intermediate conditions.

And there, dear Glaucon, it appears, is the supreme hazard for a
c
man. And this is the chief reason why it should be our main concern
that each of us, neglecting all other studies, should seek after and
study this thing—if in any way he may be able to learn of and dis-
cover the man who will give him the ability and the knowledge to
distinguish the life that is good from that which is bad, and always
and everywhere to choose the best that the conditions allow, and,
taking into account all the things of which we have spoken and esti-
mating the effect on the goodness of his life of their conjunction or
their severance, to know how beauty commingled with poverty or
e
wealth and combined with what habit of soul operates for good or for
evil, and what are the effects of high and low birth and private station
and office and strength and weakness and quickness of apprehension
and dullness and all similar natural and acquired habits of the soul,
when blended and combined with one another, so that with con-
sideration of all these things he will be able to make a reasoned choice
between the better and the worse life, with his eyes fixed on the
nature of his soul, naming the worse life that which will tend to
make it more unjust and the better that which will make it more just.
But all other considerations he will dismiss, for we have seen that this
is the best choice, both for life and death. And a man must take with
him to the house of death an adamantine faith in this, that even there
he may be undazzled by riches and similar trumpery, and may not
precipitate himself into tyrannies and similar doings and so work
many evils past cure and suffer still greater himself, but may know
how always to choose in such things the life that is seated in the mean and
shun the excess in either direction, both in this world so far as
may be and in all the life to come, for this is the greatest happiness
for man.

And at that time also the messenger from that other world re-
ported that the prophet spoke thus: 'Even for him who comes forward
last, if he make his choice wisely and live strenuously, there is re-
served an acceptable life, no evil one. Let not the foremost in the
choice be heedless nor the last be discouraged.' When the prophet had thus spoken he said that the drawer of the first lot at once sprang to seize the greatest tyranny, and that in his folly and greed he chose it without sufficient examination, and failed to observe that it involved the fate of eating his own children, and other horrors, and that when he inspected it at leisure he beat his breast and bewailed his choice, not abiding by the forewarning of the prophet. For he did not blame himself for his woes, but fortune and the gods and anything except himself. He was one of those who had come down from heaven, a man who had lived in a well-ordered polity in his former existence, participating in virtue by habit and not by philosophy, and one may perhaps say that a majority of those who were thus caught were of the company that had come from heaven, inasmuch as they were unexercised in suffering. But the most of those who came up from the earth, since they had themselves suffered and seen the sufferings of others, did not make their choice precipitately. For which reason also there was an interchange of good and evil for most of the souls, as well as because of the chances of the lot. Yet if at each return to the life of this world a man loved wisdom sanely, and the lot of his choice did not fall out among the last, we may venture to affirm, from what was reported thence, that not only will he be happy here but that the path of his journey thither and the return to this world will not be underground and rough but smooth and through the heavens. For he said that it was a sight worth seeing to observe how the several souls selected their lives. He said it was a strange, pitiful, and ridiculous spectacle, as the choice was determined for the most part by the habits of their former lives. He saw the soul that had been Orpheus', he said, selecting the life of a swan, because from hatred of the tribe of women, owing to his death at their hands, it was unwilling to be conceived and born of a woman. He saw the soul of Thamyris choosing the life of a nightingale, and he saw a swan changing to the choice of the life of man, and similarly other musical animals. The soul that drew the twentieth lot chose the life of a lion; it was the soul of Ajax, the son of Telamon, which, because it remembered the adjudication of the arms of Achilles, was unwilling to become a man. The next, the soul of Agamemnon, likewise from hatred of the human race because of its sufferings, substituted the life of an eagle. Drawing one of the middle lots the soul of Atalanta caught sight of the great honors attached to an athlete's life and could not pass them by but snatched at them. After her, he said, he saw the soul of Epeus, the son of Panopeus, entering into the nature of an arts and crafts woman. Far off in the rear he saw the soul of the buffoon Thersites clothing itself in the body of an ape. And it fell out that the soul of Odysseus drew the last lot of all and came to make its choice, and, from memory of its former toils having flung away ambition, went about for a long time in quest of the life of an ordinary citizen who minded his
own business, and with difficulty found it lying in some corner dis-
regarded by the others, and upon seeing it said that it would have done
the same had it drawn the first lot, and chose it gladly. And in like
manner, of the other beasts some entered into men and into one an-
other, the unjust into wild creatures, the just transformed to tame,
and there was every kind of mixture and combination.

But when, to conclude, all the souls had chosen their lives in the
621
order of their lots, they were marshaled and went before Lachesis.
And she sent with each, as the guardian of his life and the fulfil-
ner of his choice, the genius that he had chosen, and this divinity led the
soul first to Clotho, under her hand and her turning of the spindle
to ratify the destiny of his lot and choice, and after contact with her
the genius again led the soul to the spinning of Atropos to make the
web of its destiny irreversible, and then without a backward look it
passed beneath the throne of Necessity. And after it had passed
through that, when the others also had passed, they all journeyed to
the Plain of Oblivion, through a terrible and stifling heat, for it was
bare of trees and all plants, and there they camped at eventide by the
River of Forgetfulness, whose waters no vessel can contain. They
were all required to drink a measure of the water, and those who were
not saved by their good sense drank more than the measure, and each
one as he drank forgot all things. And after they had fallen asleep
and it was the middle of the night, there was a sound of thunder and
a quaking of the earth, and they were suddenly wafted thence, one
this way, one that, upward to their birth like shooting stars. Er
himself, he said, was not allowed to drink of the water, yet how and in
what way he returned to the body he said he did not know, but
suddenly recovering his sight he saw himself at dawn lying on the
funeral pyre.

And so, Glaucon, the tale was saved, as the saying is, and was not
lost. And it will save us if we believe it, and we shall safely cross
the River of Lethe, and keep our soul unspotted from the world. But if
we are guided by me we shall believe that the soul is immortal and
capable of enduring all extremes of good and evil, and so we shall
hold ever to the upward way and pursue righteousness with wis-
dom always and ever, that we may be dear to ourselves and to the
gods both during our sojourn here and when we receive our reward,
as the victors in the games go about to gather in theirs. And thus both
here and in that journey of a thousand years, whereof I have told
you, we shall fare well.
the matter slip till this moment. Why should we not go through it now? In any case I am in need of a rest after my walk to town.

Euclides: For that matter, I should be glad of a rest myself; for I went as far as Erineum with Theaetetus. Let us go indoors, and while we are resting, my servant shall read to us.

Terpsion: Very well.

Euclides: This is the book, Terpsion. You see how I wrote the conversation—not in narrative form, as I heard it from Socrates, but as a dialogue between him and the other persons he told me had taken part. These were Theodorus the geometer and Theaetetus. I wanted to avoid in the written account the tiresome effect of bits of narrative interrupting the dialogue, such as 'and I said' or 'and I remarked' wherever Socrates was speaking of himself, and 'he assented' or 'he did not agree,' where he reported the answer. So I left out everything of that sort, and wrote it as a direct conversation between the actual speakers.

Terpsion: That was quite a good notion, Euclides.

Euclides: Well, boy, take the book and read.

Socrates: If I took more interest in the affairs of Cyrene, Theodorus, I should ask you for the news from those parts and whether any of the young men there are devoting themselves to geometry or to any other sort of liberal study. But really I care more for our young men here and I am anxious rather to know which of them are thought likely to distinguish themselves. That is what I am always on the lookout for myself, to the best of my powers, and I make inquiries of anyone whose society I see the young men ready to seek. Now you attract a large following, as you deserve for your skill in geometry, not to mention your other merits. So, if you have met with anyone worthy of mention, I should be glad to hear of it.

Theodorus: Yes, Socrates, I have met with a youth of this city who certainly deserves mention, and you will find it worth while to hear me describe him. If he were handsome, I should be afraid to use strong terms, lest I should be suspected of being in love with him. However, he is not handsome, but—for my saying so—he resembles you in being snub-nosed and having prominent eyes, though these features are less marked in him. So I can speak without fear. I assure you that, among all the young men I have met with—and I have had to do with a good many—I have never found such admirable gifts. The combination of a rare quickness of intelligence with exceptional gentleness and of an incomparably virile spirit with both, is a thing that I should hardly have believed could exist, and I have never seen it before. In general, people who have such keen and ready wits and such good memories as he are also quick-tempered and passionate; they dart about like ships without ballast, and their temperament is rather enthusiastic than strong, whereas the steadier sort are somewhat dull when they come to face study, and they for-
THEAETETUS: I have heard that.
SOCRATES: Have you also been told that I practice the same art?
THEAETETUS: No, never.
SOCRATES: It is true, though; only don't give away my secret. It is not known that I possess this skill; so the ignorant world describes me in other terms as an eccentric person who reduces people to hopeless perplexity. Have you been told that too?
THEAETETUS: I have.
SOCRATES: Shall I tell you the reason?
THEAETETUS: Please do.
SOCRATES: Consider, then, how it is with all midwives; that will help you to understand what I mean. I dare say you know that they never attend other women in childbirth so long as they themselves can conceive and bear children, but only when they are too old for that.
THEAETETUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: They say that is because Artemis, the patroness of childbirth, is herself childless, and so, while she did not allow barren women to be midwives, because it is beyond the power of human nature to achieve skill without any experience, she assigned the privilege to women who were past childbearing, out of respect to their likeness to herself.
THEAETETUS: That sounds likely.
SOCRATES: And it is more than likely, is it not, that no one can tell so well as a midwife whether women are pregnant or not?
THEAETETUS: Assuredly.
SOCRATES: Moreover, with the drugs and incantations they administer, midwives can either bring on the pains of travail or allay them at their will, make a difficult labor easy, and at an early stage cause a miscarriage if they so decide.
THEAETETUS: True.
SOCRATES: Have you also observed that they are the cleverest matchmakers, having an unerring skill in selecting a pair whose marriage will produce the best children?
THEAETETUS: I was not aware of that.
SOCRATES: Well, you may be sure they pride themselves on that more than on cutting the umbilical cord. Consider the knowledge of the sort of plant or seed that should be sown in any given soil. Does not that go together with skill in tending and harvesting the fruits of the earth? They are not two different arts?
THEAETETUS: No, the same.
SOCRATES: And so with a woman; skill in the sowing is not to be separated from skill in the harvesting?
THEAETETUS: Probably not.
SOCRATES: No. Only, because there is that wrong and ignorant
their hands and do not admit that actions or processes or anything invisible can count as real.

**THEAETETUS**: They sound like a very hard and repellent sort of people.

**SOCRATES**: It is true, they are remarkably crude. The others, into whose secrets I am going to initiate you, are much more refined and subtle. Their first principle, on which all that we said just now depends, is that the universe really is motion and nothing else. And there are two kinds of motion. Of each kind there are any number of instances, but they differ in that the one kind has the power of acting, the other of being acted upon. From the intercourse and friction of these with one another arise offspring, endless in number, but in pairs of twins. One of each pair is something perceived, the other a perception, whose birth always coincides with that of the thing perceived. Now, for the perceptions we have names like 'seeing,' 'hearing,' 'smelling,' 'feeling cold,' 'feeling hot,' and again pleasures and pains and desires and fears, as they are called, and so on. There are any number that are nameless, though names have been found for a whole multitude. On the other side, the brood of things perceived always comes to birth at the same moment with one or another of these—with instances of seeing, colors of corresponding variety, with instances of hearing, sounds in the same way, and with all the other perceptions, the other things perceived that are akin to them. Now, what light does this story throw on what has gone before, Theaetetus? Do you see?

**THEAETETUS**: Not very clearly, Socrates.

**SOCRATES**: Well, consider whether we can round it off. The point is that all these things are, as we were saying, in motion, but there is a quickness or slowness in their motion. The slow sort has its motion without change of place and with respect to what comes within range of it, and that is how it generates offspring, but the offspring generated are quicker, inasmuch as they move from place to place and their motion consists in change of place. As soon, then, as an eye and something else whose structure is adjusted to the eye come within range and give birth to the whiteness together with its cognate perception—things that would never have come into existence if either of the two had approached anything else—then it is that, as the vision from the eyes and the whiteness from the thing that joins in giving birth to the color pass in the space between, the eye becomes filled with vision and now sees, and becomes, not vision, but a seeing eye, while the other parent of the color is saturated with whiteness and becomes, on its side, not whiteness, but a white thing, be it stock or stone or whatever else may chance to be so colored.

And so, too, we must think in the same way of the rest—'hard,' 'hot,' and all of them—that no one of them has any being just by itself, as indeed we said before, but that it is in their intercourse with
one another that all arise in all their variety as a result of their motion, since it is impossible to have any 'firm notion,' as they say, of either what is active or what is passive in them, in any single case, as having any being. For there is no such thing as an agent until it meets with a patient, nor any patient until it meets with its agent. Also what meets with something and behaves as agent, if it encounters something different at another time, shows itself as patient.

The conclusion from all this is, as we said at the outset, that nothing is one thing just by itself, but is always in process of becoming for someone, and being is to be ruled out altogether, though, needless to say, we have been betrayed by habit and inobservance into using the word more than once only just now. But that was wrong, these wise men tell us, and we must not admit the expressions 'something' or 'somebody's' or 'mine' or 'this' or 'that' or any other word that brings things to a standstill, but rather speak, in accordance with nature, of what is 'becoming,' 'being produced,' 'perishing,' 'changing.' For anyone who talks so as to bring things to a standstill is easily refuted. So we must express ourselves in each individual case and in speaking of an assemblage of many—to which assemblage people give the name of 'man' or 'stone' or of any living creature or kind.

Does all this please you, Theaetetus? Will you accept it as palatable to your taste?

THEAETETUS: Really, I am not sure, Socrates. I cannot even make out about you, whether you are stating this as something you believe or merely putting me to the test.

SOCRATES: You forget, my friend, that I know nothing of such matters and cannot claim to be producing any offspring of my own. I am only trying to deliver yours, and to that end uttering charms over you and tempting your appetite with a variety of delicacies from the table of wisdom, until by my aid your own belief shall be brought to light. Once that is done, I shall see whether it proves to have some life in it or not. Meanwhile, have courage and patience, and answer my questions bravely in accordance with your convictions.

THEAETETUS: Go on with your questioning.

SOCRATES: Once more, then, tell me whether you like this notion that nothing is, but is always becoming, good or beautiful or any of the other things we mentioned?

THEAETETUS: Well, when I hear you explaining it as you have, it strikes me as extraordinarily reasonable, and to be accepted as you have stated it.

SOCRATES: Then let us not leave it incomplete. There remains the question of dreams and disorders, especially madness and all the mistakes madness is said to make in seeing or hearing or otherwise misperceiving. You know, of course, that in all these cases the theory we have just stated is supposed to be admittedly disproved, on the ground that in these conditions we certainly have false perceptions,
THEAETETUS: That is quite true, Socrates.

SOCRATES: What argument, then, is left for one who maintains that perception is knowledge, and that what appears to each man also is for him to whom it appears?

THEAETETUS: I hesitate to say that I have no reply, Socrates, because just now you rebuked me for saying that. Really, I cannot undertake to deny that madmen and dreamers believe what is false, when madmen imagine they are gods or dreamers think they have wings and are flying in their sleep.

SOCRATES: Have you not taken note of another doubt that is raised in these cases, especially about sleeping and waking?

THEAETETUS: What is that?

SOCRATES: The question I imagine you have often heard asked—what evidence could be appealed to, supposing we were asked at this very moment whether we are asleep or awake, dreaming all that passes through our minds or talking to one another in the waking state?

THEAETETUS: Indeed, Socrates, I do not see by what evidence it is to be proved, for the two conditions correspond in every circumstance like exact counterparts. The conversation we have just had might equally well be one that we merely think we are carrying on in our sleep, and when it comes to thinking in a dream that we are telling other dreams, the two states are extraordinarily alike.

SOCRATES: You see, then, that there is plenty of room for doubt, when we even doubt whether we are asleep or awake. And in fact, our time being equally divided between waking and sleeping, in each condition our mind strenuously contends that the convictions of the moment are certainly true, so that for equal times we affirm the reality of the one world and of the other, and are just as confident of both.

THEAETETUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And the same holds true of disorders and madness, except that the times are not equal.

THEAETETUS: That is so.

SOCRATES: Well, is the truth to be decided by length or shortness of time?

THEAETETUS: No, that would be absurd in many ways.

SOCRATES: Have you any other certain test to show which of these beliefs is true?

THEAETETUS: I don't think I have.

SOCRATES: Then let me tell you what sort of account would be given of these cases by those who lay it down that whatever at any time seems to anyone is true to him. I imagine they would ask this question, Tell us, Theaetetus, when one thing is entirely different
delighted with his statement that what seems to anyone also is, but I am surprised that he did not begin his Truth with the words, The measure of all things is the pig, or the baboon, or some sentient creature still more uncouth. There would have been something magnificent in so disdainful an opening, telling us that all the time, while we were admiring him for a wisdom more than mortal, he was in fact no wiser than a tadpole, to say nothing of any other human being. What else can we say, Theodorus? If what every man believes as a result of perception is indeed to be true for him; if, just as no one is to be a better judge of what another experiences, so no one is better entitled to consider whether what another thinks is true or false, and, as we have said more than once, every man is to have his own beliefs for himself alone and they are all right and true—then, my friend, where is the wisdom of Protagoras, to justify his setting up to teach others and to be handsomely paid for it, and where is our comparative ignorance or the need for us to go and sit at his feet, when each of us is himself the measure of his own wisdom? Must we not suppose that Protagoras speaks in this way to flatter the ears of the public? I say nothing of my own case or of the ludicrous predicament to which my art of midwifery is brought, and, for that matter, this whole business of philosophical conversation, for to set about overhauling and testing one another's notions and opinions when those of each and every one are right, is a tedious and monstrous display of folly, if the Truth of Protagoras is really truthful and not amusing herself with oracles delivered from the unapproachable shrine of his book.

THEODORUS: Protagoras was my friend, Socrates, as you were saying, and I would rather he were not refuted by means of any admissions of mine. On the other hand, I cannot resist you against my convictions; so you had better go back to Theaetetus, whose answers have shown, in any case, how well he can follow your meaning.

SOCRATES: If you went to a wrestling school at Sparta, Theodorus, would you expect to look on at the naked wrestlers, some of them making a poor show, and not strip so as to let them compare your own figure?

THEODORUS: Why not, if they were likely to listen to me and not insist, just as I believe I shall persuade you to let me look on now? The limbs are stiff at my age, and instead of dragging me into your exercises, you will try a fall with a more supple youth.

SOCRATES: Well, Theodorus, as the proverb says, 'What likes you mislikes not me.' So I will have recourse to the wisdom of Theaetetus.

Tell me, then, first, Theaetetus, about the point we have just made. Are not you surprised that you should turn out, all of a sudden, to be every bit as wise as any other man and even as any god? Or would you say that Protagoras' maxim about the measure does not apply to gods just as much as to men?
THEODORUS: No, Socrates, let us have your description first. As you said quite rightly, we are not the servants of the argument, which must stand and wait for the moment when we choose to pursue this or that topic to a conclusion. We are not in a court under the judge's eye, nor in the theater with an audience to criticize our philosophical evolutions.

SOCRATES: Then, if that is your wish, let us speak of the leaders in philosophy, for the weaker members may be neglected. From their youth up they have never known the way to market place or law court or Council Chamber or any other place of public assembly; they never hear a decree read out or look at the text of a law. To take any interest in the rivalries of political cliques, in meetings, dinners, and merrymakings with flute girls, never occurs to them even in dreams. Whether any fellow citizen is well- or ill-born or has inherited some defect from his ancestors on either side, the philosopher knows no more than how many pints of water there are in the sea. He is not even aware that he knows nothing of all this, for if he holds aloof, it is not for reputation's sake, but because it is really only his body that sojourns in his city, while his thought, disdaining all such things as worthless, takes wings, as Pindar says, 'beyond the sky, beneath the earth,' searching the heavens and measuring the plains, everywhere seeking the true nature of everything as a whole, never sinking to what lies close at hand.

THEODORUS: What do you mean, Socrates?

SOCRATES: The same thing as the story about the Thracian maidservant who exercised her wit at the expense of Thales, when he was looking up to study the stars and tumbled down a well. She scoffed at him for being so eager to know what was happening in the sky that he could not see what lay at his feet. Anyone who gives his life to philosophy is open to such mockery. It is true that he is unaware what his next-door neighbor is doing, hardly knows, indeed, whether the creature is a man at all; he spends all his pains on the question, what man is, and what powers and properties distinguish such a nature from any other. You see what I mean, Theodorus?

THEODORUS: Yes, and it is true.

SOCRATES: And so, my friend, as I said at first, on a public occasion or in private company, in a law court or anywhere else, when he is forced to talk about what lies at his feet or is before his eyes, the whole rabble will join the maidservants in laughing at him, as from inexperience he walks blindly and stumbles into every pitfall. His terrible clumsiness makes him seem so stupid. He cannot engage in an exchange of abuse, for, never having made a study of anyone's peculiar weaknesses, he has no personal scandals to bring up; so in his helplessness he looks a fool. When people vaunt their own or other men's merits, his unaffected laughter makes him conspicuous and they think he is frivolous. When a despot or king is eulogized, he fancies he is hearing some keeper of swine or sheep or cows being
congratulated on the quantity of milk he has squeezed out of his flock; only he reflects that the animal that princes tend and milk is more given than sheep or cows to nurse a sullen grievance, and that a herdsman of this sort, penned up in his castle, is doomed by sheer press of work to be as rude and uncultivated as the shepherd in his mountain fold. He hears of the marvelous wealth of some landlord who owns ten thousand acres or more, but that seems a small matter to one accustomed to think of the earth as a whole. When they harp upon birth—some gentleman who can point to seven generations of wealthy ancestors—he thinks that such commendation must come from men of purblind vision, too uneducated to keep their eyes fixed on the whole or to reflect that any man has had countless myriads of ancestors and among them any number of rich men and beggars, kings and slaves, Greeks and barbarians. To pride oneself on a catalogue of twenty-five progenitors going back to Heracles, son of Amphitryon, strikes him as showing a strange pettiness of outlook. He laughs at a man who cannot rid his mind of foolish vanity by reckoning that before Amphitryon there was a twenty-fifth ancestor, and before him a fiftieth, whose fortunes were as luck would have it. But in all these matters the world has the laugh of the philosopher, partly because he seems arrogant, partly because of his helpless ignorance in matters of daily life. THEODORUS: Yes, Socrates, that is exactly what happens.

SOCRATES: On the other hand, my friend, when the philosopher drags the other upward to a height at which he may consent to drop the question, 'What injustice have I done to you or you to me?' and to think about justice and injustice in themselves, what each is, and how they differ from one another and from anything else, or to stop quoting poetry about the happiness of kings or of men with gold in store and think about the meaning of kingship and the whole question of human happiness and misery, what their nature is, and how humanity can gain the one and escape the other—in all this field, when that small, shrewd, legal mind has to render an account, then the situation is reversed. Now it is he who is dizzy from hanging at such an unaccustomed height and looking down from mid-air. Lost and dismayed and stammering, he will be laughed at, not by maidservants or the uneducated—they will not see what is happening—but by everyone whose breeding has been the antithesis of a slave's.

Such are the two characters, Theodorus. The one is nursed in freedom and leisure, the philosopher, as you call him. He may be excused if he looks foolish or useless when faced with some menial task, if he cannot tie up bedclothes into a neat bundle or flavor a dish with spices and a speech with flattery. The other is smart in the dispatch of all such services, but has not learned to wear his cloak like a gentleman, or caught the accent of discourse that will rightly celebrate the true life of happiness for gods and men.

THEODORUS: If you could convince everyone, Socrates, as you
convince me, there would be more peace and fewer evils in the world.

Socrates: Evils, Theodorus, can never be done away with, for the good must always have its contrary; nor have they any place in the divine world, but they must needs haunt this region of our mortal nature. That is why we should make all speed to take flight from this world to the other, and that means becoming like the divine so far as we can, and that again is to become righteous with the help of wisdom. But it is no such easy matter to convince men that the reasons for avoiding wickedness and seeking after goodness are not those which the world gives. The right motive is not that one should seem innocent and good—that is no better, to my thinking, than an old wives' tale—but let us state the truth in this way. In the divine there is no shadow of unrighteousness, only the perfection of righteousness, and nothing is more like the divine than any one of us who becomes as righteous as possible. It is here that a man shows his true spirit and power or lack of spirit and nothingness. For to know this is wisdom and excellence of the genuine sort; not to know it is to be manifestly blind and base. All other forms of seeming power and intelligence in the rulers of society are as mean and vulgar as the mechanic's skill in handicraft. If a man's words and deeds are unrighteous and profane, he had best not persuade himself that he is a great man because he sticks at nothing, glorying in his shame as such men do when they fancy that others say of them, They are no fools, no useless burdens to the earth, but men of the right sort to weather the storms of public life.

Let the truth be told. They are what they fancy they are not, all the more for deceiving themselves, for they are ignorant of the very thing it most concerns them to know—the penalty of injustice. This is not, as they imagine, stripes and death, which do not always fall on the wrongdoer, but a penalty that cannot be escaped.

Theodorus: What penalty is that?

Socrates: There are two patterns, my friend, in the unchangeable nature of things, one of divine happiness, the other of godless misery—a truth to which their folly makes them utterly blind, unaware that in doing injustice they are growing less like one of these patterns and more like the other. The penalty they pay is the life they lead, answering to the pattern they resemble. But if we tell them that, unless they rid themselves of their superior cunning, that other region which is free from all evil will not receive them after death, but here on earth they will dwell for all time in some form of life resembling their own and in the society of things as evil as themselves, all this will sound like foolishness to such strong and unscrupulous minds.

Theodorus: So it will, Socrates.

Socrates: I have good reason to know it, my friend. But there is one thing about them; when you get them alone and make them
explain their objections to philosophy, then, if they are men enough
to face a long examination without running away, it is odd how they
end by finding their own arguments unsatisfying. Somehow their flow
of eloquence runs dry, and they become as speechless as an infant.
All this, however, is a digression. We must stop now, and dam
the flood of topics that threatens to break in and drown our original
argument. With your leave, let us go back to where we were before.

THEODORUS: For my part, I rather prefer listening to your di-
gressions, Socrates; they are easier to follow at my time of life. How-
ever, let us go back, if you like.

SOCRATES: Very well. I think the point we had reached was
this. We were saying that the believers in a perpetually changing real-
ity and in the doctrine that what seems to an individual at any time
also is for him would, in most matters, strongly insist upon their prin-
ciple, and not least in the case of what is right they would maintain
that any enactments a state may decide on certainly are right for
that state so long as they remain in force. But when it comes to what
is good, we said that the boldest would not go to the length of contend-
ing that whatever a state may believe and declare to be advantageous
for itself is in fact advantageous for so long as it is declared to be so—
unless he meant that the name ‘advantageous’ would continue to be
so applied, but that would be turning our subject into a joke.

THEODORUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: We will suppose, then, that he does not mean the
name, but has in view the thing that bears it.

THEODORUS: We will.

SOCRATES: Whatever name the state may give it, advantage is
surely the aim of its legislation, and all its laws, to the full extent of
its belief and power, are laid down as being for its own best profit. Or
has it any other object in view when it makes laws?

THEODORUS: None.

SOCRATES: Then does it also hit the mark every time? Or does
every state often miss its aim completely?

THEODORUS: I should say that mistakes are often made.

SOCRATES: We may have a still better chance of getting every-
one to assent to that, if we start from a question covering the whole
class of things which includes the advantageous. It is, I suggest, a
thing that has to do with future time. When we legislate, we make our
laws with the idea that they will be advantageous in time to come. We
may call this class ‘what is going to be.’

THEODORUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Here, then, is a question for Protagoras or anyone
else who agrees with him. According to you and your friends, Pro-
tagoras, man is the measure of all things—of white and heavy and
light and everything of that sort. He possesses in himself the test of
Socrates: Then we may quite reasonably put it to your master
that he must admit that one man is wiser than another and that the
wiser man is the measure, whereas an ignorant person like myself is
not in any way bound to be a measure, as our defense of Protagoras
tried to make me, whether I liked it or not.

Theodorus: I think that is the weakest point in the theory,
Socrates, though it is also assailable in that it makes other people's
opinions valid when, as it turns out, they hold Protagoras' assertions
to be quite untrue.

Socrates: There are many other ways, Theodorus, of assaulting
such a position and proving that not every opinion of every person
is true. But with regard to what the individual experiences at the mo-
ment—the source of his sensations and the judgments in accordance
with them—it is harder to assail the truth of these. Perhaps it is
wrong to say 'harder'; maybe they are unassailable, and those who
assert that they are transparently clear and are instances of knowl-
edge may be in the right, and Theaetetus was not beside the mark
d when he said that perception and knowledge were the same thing.

We must, then, look more closely into the matter, as our defense
of Protagoras enjoined, and study this moving reality, ringing its
metal to hear if it sounds true or cracked. However that may be,
there has been no inconsiderable battle over it, and not a few com-
batants.

Theodorus: Anything but inconsiderable; in Ionia, indeed, it
is actually growing in violence. The followers of Heraclitus lead the
choir of this persuasion with the greatest vigor.

Socrates: All the more reason, my dear Theodorus, to look
e into it carefully and to follow their lead by tracing it to its source.

Theodorus: By all means. For there is no discussing these
principles of Heraclitus—or, as you say, of Homer or still more an-
cient sages—with the Ephesians themselves, who profess to be fa-
familier with them; you might as well talk to a maniac. Faithful to their
own treatises they are literally in perpetual motion; their capacity
for staying still to attend to an argument or a question or for a quiet
interchange of question and answer amounts to less than nothing, or
rather even a minus quantity is too strong an expression for the ab-
sence of the least modulus of repose in these gentry. When you put a
question, they pluck from their quiver little oracular aphorisms to let
fly at you, and if you try to obtain some account of their meaning, you
will be instantly transfixed by another, barbed with some newly forged
metaphor. You will never get anywhere with any of them; for that
matter they cannot get anywhere with one another, but they take very
good care to leave nothing settled either in discourse or in their own
b minds. I suppose they think that would be something stationary—a
thing they will fight against to the last and do their utmost to banish
from the universe.
SOCRATES: Perhaps, Theodorus, you have seen these gentlemen in the fray and never met them in their peaceable moments; indeed they are no friends of yours. I dare say they keep such matters to be explained at leisure to their pupils whom they want to make like themselves.

THEODORUS: Pupils indeed! My good friend, there is no such thing as a master or pupil among them; they spring up like mushrooms. Each one gets his inspiration wherever he can, and not one of them thinks that another understands anything. So, as I was going to say, you can never bring them to book, either with or without their consent. We must take over the question ourselves and try to solve it like a problem.

SOCRATES: That is a reasonable proposal. As to this problem, then, have we not here a tradition from the ancients, who hid their meaning from the common herd in poetical figures, that Oceanus and Tethys, the source of all things, are flowing streams and nothing is at rest? And do not the moderns, in their superior wisdom, declare the same quite openly, in order that the very cobbler may hear and understand their wisdom and, abandoning their simple faith that some things stand still while others move, may reverence those who teach them that everything is in motion?

But I had almost forgotten, Theodorus, another school which teaches just the opposite—that reality 'is one, immovable, being is the name of the all,' and much else that men like Melissus and Parmenides maintain in opposition to all those people, telling us that all things are a unity which stays still within itself, having no room to move in. How are we to deal with all these combatants? For, little by little, our advance has brought us, without our knowing it, between the two lines, and, unless we can somehow fend them off and slip through, we shall suffer for it, as in that game they play in the wrestling schools, where the players are caught by both sides and dragged both ways at once across the line. The best plan, I think, will be to begin by taking a look at the party whom we first approached, the men of flux, and if there seems to be anything in what they say, we will help them to pull us over to their side and try to elude the others. But if we find more truth in the partisans of the immovable whole, we will desert to them from these revolutionaries who leave no landmark unremoved. If both sides turn out to be quite unreasonable, we shall merely look foolish if we suppose that nobodies like ourselves can make any contribution after rejecting such paragons of ancient wisdom. Do you think it worth while to go further in the teeth of such danger, Theodorus?

THEODORUS: Certainly, Socrates. I could not bear to stop before we have found out what each of the two parties means.

SOCRATES: Well, if you feel so strongly about it, we must look 8 Parmenides, line 98 (ed. Mullach).
Either course would be wrong. My business is rather to try, by means of my midwife’s art, to deliver Theaetetus of his conceptions about knowledge.

THEODORUS: Well, do so, if you think that best.

SOCRATES: Well then, Theaetetus, here is a point for you to consider. The answer you gave was that knowledge is perception, wasn’t it?

THEAETETUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now suppose you were asked, When a man sees white or black things or hears high or low tones, what does he see or hear with? I suppose you would say with eyes and ears.

THEAETETUS: Yes, I should.

SOCRATES: To use words and phrases in an easygoing way without scrutinizing them too curiously is not, in general, a mark of ill breeding; on the contrary there is something lowbred in being too precise. But sometimes there is no help for it, and this is a case in which I must take exception to the form of your answer. Consider. Is it more correct to say that we see and hear with our eyes and ears or through them?

THEAETETUS: I should say we always perceive through them, rather than with them.

SOCRATES: Yes, it would surely be strange that there should be a number of senses ensconced inside us, like the warriors in the Trojan horse, and all these things should not converge and meet in some single nature—a mind, or whatever it is to be called—through which we perceive all the objects of perception through the senses as instruments.

THEAETETUS: Yes, I think that is a better description.

SOCRATES: My object in being so precise is to know whether there is some part of ourselves, the same in all cases, with which we apprehend black or white through the eyes, and objects of other kinds through the other senses. Can you, if the question is put to you, refer all such acts of apprehension to the body? Perhaps, however, it would be better you should speak for yourself in reply to questions, instead of my taking the words out of your mouth. Tell me, all these instruments through which you perceive what is warm or hard or light or sweet are parts of the body, aren’t they, not of anything else?

THEAETETUS: Of nothing else.

SOCRATES: Now will you also agree that the objects you perceive through one faculty cannot be perceived through another—objects of hearing, for instance, through sight, or objects of sight through hearing?

THEAETETUS: Of course I will.

SOCRATES: Then, if you have some thought about both objects at once, you cannot be having a perception including both at once through either the one or the other organ.
THEAETETUS: No.

Socrates: Now take sound and color. Have you not, to begin with, this thought which includes both at once—that they both exist?

THEAETETUS: I have.

Socrates: And, further, that each of the two is different from the other and the same as itself?

THEAETETUS: Naturally.

Socrates: And again, that both together are two, and each of them is one?

THEAETETUS: Yes.

Socrates: And also you can ask yourself whether they are unlike each other or alike?

THEAETETUS: Naturally.

Socrates: Then through what organ do you think all this about them both? What is common to them both cannot be apprehended either through hearing or through sight. Besides, here is further evidence for my point. Suppose it were possible to inquire whether sound and color were both brackish or not; no doubt you could tell me what faculty you would use—obviously not sight or hearing, but some other.

THEAETETUS: Of course, the faculty that works through the tongue.

Socrates: Very good. But now, through what organ does that faculty work, which tells you what is common not only to these objects but to all things—what you mean by the words 'exists' and 'does not exist' and the other terms applied to them in the questions I put a moment ago? What sort of organs can you mention, corresponding to all these terms, through which the perceiving part of us perceives each one of them?

THEAETETUS: You mean existence and nonexistence, likeness and unlikeness, sameness and difference, and also unity and numbers in general as applied to them, and clearly your question covers 'even' and 'odd' and all that kind of notions. You are asking through what part of the body our mind perceives these?

Socrates: You follow me most admirably, Theaetetus; that is exactly my question.

THEAETETUS: Really, Socrates, I could not say, except that I think there is no special organ at all for these things, as there is for the others. It is clear to me that the mind in itself is its own instrument for contemplating the common terms that apply to everything.

Socrates: In fact, Theaetetus, you are handsome, not ugly as Theodorus said you were, for in a discussion handsome is that handsome does. And you have treated me more than handsomely in saving me the trouble of a very long argument, if it is clear to you that the mind contemplates some things through its own instrumentality, oth-
ers through the bodily faculties. That was indeed what I thought myself, but I wanted you to agree.

**THEAETETUS:** Well, it is clear to me.

**SOCRATES:** Under which head, then, do you place existence? 186 For that is, above all, a thing that belongs to everything.

**THEAETETUS:** I should put it among the things that the mind apprehends by itself.

**SOCRATES:** And also likeness and unlikeness and sameness and difference?

**THEAETETUS:** Yes.

**SOCRATES:** And how about 'honorable' and 'dishonorable' and 'good' and 'bad'?

**THEAETETUS:** Those again seem to me, above all, to be things whose being is considered, one in comparison with another, by the mind, when it reflects within itself upon the past and the present with an eye to the future.

**SOCRATES:** Wait a moment. The hardness of something hard and the softness of something soft will be perceived by the mind through touch, will they not?

**THEAETETUS:** Yes.

**SOCRATES:** But their existence and the fact that they both exist, and their contrariety to one another and again the existence of this contrariety are things which the mind itself undertakes to judge for us, when it reflects upon them and compares one with another.

**THEAETETUS:** Certainly.

**SOCRATES:** Is it not true, then, that whereas all the impressions which penetrate to the mind through the body are things which men and animals alike are naturally constituted to perceive from the moment of birth, reflections about them with respect to their existence and usefulness only come, if they come at all, with difficulty through a long and troublesome process of education?

**THEAETETUS:** Assuredly.

**SOCRATES:** Is it possible, then, to reach truth when one cannot reach existence?

**THEAETETUS:** It is impossible.

**SOCRATES:** But if a man cannot reach the truth of a thing, can he possibly know that thing?

**THEAETETUS:** No, Socrates, how could he?

**SOCRATES:** If that is so, knowledge does not reside in the impressions, but in our reflection upon them. It is there, seemingly, and not in the impressions, that it is possible to grasp existence and truth.

**THEAETETUS:** Evidently.

**SOCRATES:** Then are you going to give the same name to two things which differ so widely?

**THEAETETUS:** Surely that would not be right.
SOCRATES: Well then, what name do you give to the first one—to seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling cold and feeling warm?

THEAETETUS: Perceiving. What other name is there for it?

SOCRATES: Taking it all together, then, you call this perception?

THEAETETUS: Necessarily.

SOCRATES: A thing which, we agree, has no part in apprehending truth, since it has none in apprehending existence.

THEAETETUS: No, it has none.

SOCRATES: Nor, consequently, in knowledge either.

THEAETETUS: No.

SOCRATES: Then, Theaetetus, perception and knowledge cannot possibly be the same thing.

THEAETETUS: Evidently not, Socrates. Indeed, it is now perfectly plain that knowledge is something different from perception.

SOCRATES: But when we began our talk it was certainly not our object to find out what knowledge is not, but what it is. Still, we have advanced so far as to see that we must not look for it in sense perception at all, but in what goes on when the mind is occupied with things by itself, whatever name you give to that.

THEAETETUS: Well, Socrates, the name for that, I imagine, is 'making judgments.'

SOCRATES: You are right, my friend. Now begin all over again. Blot out all we have been saying, and see if you can get a clearer view from the position you have now reached. Tell us once more what knowledge is.

THEAETETUS: I cannot say it is judgment as a whole, because there is false judgment, but perhaps true judgment is knowledge. You may take that as my answer. If, as we go further, it turns out to be less convincing than it seems now, I will try to find another.

SOCRATES: Good, Theaetetus. This promptness is much better than hanging back as you did at first. If we go on like this, either we shall find what we are after, or we shall be less inclined to imagine we know something of which we know nothing whatever, and that surely is a reward not to be despised. And now, what is this you say—that there are two sorts of judgment, one true, the other false, and you define knowledge as judgment that is true?

THEAETETUS: Yes, that is the view I have come to now.

SOCRATES: Then, had we better go back to a point that came up about judgment?

THEAETETUS: What point do you mean?

SOCRATES: A question that worries me now, as often before, and has much perplexed me in my own mind and also in talking to others. I cannot explain the nature of this experience we have, or how it can arise in our minds.
SOCRATES: If so, it is impossible to think what is not, either about anything that is, or absolutely.
THEAETETUS: Evidently.

SOCRATES: Then thinking falsely must be something different from thinking what is not.
THEAETETUS: So it seems.

SOCRATES: False judgment, then, is no more possible for us on these lines than on those we were following just now.
THEAETETUS: No, it certainly is not.

SOCRATES: Well, does the thing we call false judgment arise in this way?
THEAETETUS: How?

SOCRATES: We do recognize the existence of false judgment as a sort of misjudgment that occurs when a person interchanges in his mind two things, both of which are, and asserts that the one is the other. In this way he is always thinking of something which is, but of one thing in place of another, and since he misses the mark he may fairly be said to be judging falsely.

THEAETETUS: I believe you have got it quite right now. When a person thinks 'ugly' in place of 'beautiful' or 'beautiful' in place of 'ugly,' he is really and truly thinking what is false.

SOCRATES: I can see that you are no longer in awe of me, Theaetetus, but beginning to despise me.
THEAETETUS: Why, precisely?

SOCRATES: I believe you think I shall miss the opening you give me by speaking of 'truly thinking what is false,' and not ask you whether a thing can be slowly quick or heavily light or whether any contrary can desert its own nature and behave like its opposite. However, I will justify your boldness by letting that pass. So you like this notion that false judgment is mistaken.

THEAETETUS: I do.

SOCRATES: According to you, then, it is possible for the mind to take one thing for another, and not for itself.
THEAETETUS: Yes, it is.

SOCRATES: And when the mind does that, must it not be thinking either of both things or of one of the two?
THEAETETUS: Certainly it must, either at the same time or one after the other.

SOCRATES: Excellent. And do you accept my description of the process of thinking?
THEAETETUS: How do you describe it?

SOCRATES: As a discourse that the mind carries on with itself about any subject it is considering. You must take this explanation as coming from an ignoramus, but I have a notion that, when the mind is thinking, it is simply talking to itself, asking questions and answering them, and saying yes or no. When it reaches a decision—which
may come slowly or in a sudden rush—when doubt is over and the two voices affirm the same thing, then we call that its 'judgment.' So I should describe thinking as discourse, and judgment as a statement pronounced, not aloud to someone else, but silently to oneself.

THEAETETUS: I agree.

SOCRATES: It seems, then, that when a person thinks of one thing as another, he is affirming to himself that the one is the other.

THEAETETUS: Now search your memory and see if you have ever said to yourself, 'Certainly, what is beautiful is ugly,' or 'What is unjust is just.' To put it generally, consider if you have ever set about convincing yourself that any one thing is certainly another thing, or whether, on the contrary, you have never, even in a dream, gone so far as to say to yourself that odd numbers must be even, or anything of that sort.

THEAETETUS: That is true.

SOCRATES: Do you suppose anyone else, mad or sane, ever goes so far as to talk himself over, in his own mind, into stating seriously that an ox must be a horse or that two must be one?

THEAETETUS: Certainly not.

SOCRATES: So, if making a statement to oneself is the same as judging, then, so long as a man is making a statement or judgment about both things at once and his mind has hold of both, he cannot say or judge that one of them is the other. You, in your turn, must not cavil at my language; I mean it in the sense that no one thinks 'the ugly is beautiful' or anything of that kind.

THEAETETUS: I will not cavil, Socrates. I agree with you.

SOCRATES: So long, then, as a person is thinking of both, he cannot think of the one as the other.

THEAETETUS: So it appears.

SOCRATES: On the other hand, if he is thinking of one only and not of the other at all, he will never think that the one is the other.

THEAETETUS: True, for then he would have to have before his mind the thing he was not thinking of.

SOCRATES: It follows, then, that 'mistaking' is impossible, whether he thinks of both things or of one only. So there will be no sense in defining false judgment as 'misjudgment.' It does not appear that false judgment exists in us in this form any more than in those we dismissed earlier.

THEAETETUS: So it seems.

SOCRATES: And yet, Theaetetus, if we cannot show that false judgment does exist, we shall be driven into admitting all sorts of absurdities.

THEAETETUS: For instance?

SOCRATES: I will not mention them until I have tried to look at the question from every quarter. So long as we cannot see our way, I should feel some shame at our being forced into such admissions.
THEAETETUS: Undoubtedly.

SOCRATES: Then supposing you should ever henceforth try to conceive afresh, Theaetetus, if you succeed, your embryo thoughts will be the better as a consequence of today's scrutiny, and if you remain barren, you will be gentler and more agreeable to your companions, having the good sense not to fancy you know what you do not know. For that, and no more, is all that my art can effect; nor have I any of that knowledge possessed by all the great and admirable men of our own day or of the past. But this midwife's art is a gift from heaven; my mother had it for women, and I for young men of a generous spirit and for all in whom beauty dwells.

Now I must go to the portico of the King-Archon to meet the indictment which Meletus has drawn up against me. But tomorrow morning, Theodorus, let us meet here again.
I am afraid that is so.
Then here is a still more formidable consequence for you to con­sider.

What is that?

You will grant, I suppose, that if there is such a thing as a form, knowledge itself, it is much more perfect than the knowledge in our world, and so with beauty and all the rest.

Yes.

And if anything has part in this knowledge itself, you would agree that a god has a better title than anyone else to possess the most perfect knowledge?

Undoubtedly.

Then will the god, who possesses knowledge itself, be able to d­know the things in our world?

Why not?

Because we have agreed that those forms have no significance with reference to things in our world, nor have things in our world any significance with reference to them. Each set has it only among themselves.

Yes, we did.

Then if this most perfect mastership and most perfect knowledge are in the god’s world, the gods’ mastership can never be exercised over us, nor their knowledge know us or anything in our world. Just as we do not rule over them by virtue of rule as it exists in our world and we know nothing that is divine by our knowledge, so they, on the same principle, being gods, are not our masters nor do they know anything of human concerns.

But surely, said Socrates, an argument which would deprive the gods of knowledge would be too strange.

And yet, Socrates, Parmenides went on, these difficulties and many more besides are inevitably involved in the forms, if these characters of things really exist and one is going to distinguish each form as a thing just by itself. The result is that the hearer is perplexed and inclined either to question their existence, or to contend that, if they do exist, they must certainly be unknowable by our human nature. Moreover, there seems to be some weight in these objections, and, as we were saying, it is extraordinarily difficult to convert the objector. Only a man of exceptional gifts will be able to see that a form, or essence just by itself, does exist in each case, and it will require some­one still more remarkable to discover it and to instruct another who has thoroughly examined all these difficulties.

I admit that, Parmenides. I quite agree with what you are saying.

But on the other hand, Parmenides continued, if, in view of all these difficulties and others like them, a man refuses to admit that forms of things exist or to distinguish a definite form in every case, he will have nothing on which to fix his thought, so long as he will not
allow that each thing has a character which is always the same, and in so doing he will completely destroy the significance of all discourse. But of that consequence I think you are only too well aware.

True.

What are you going to do about philosophy, then? Where will you turn while the answers to these questions remain unknown?

I can see no way out at the present moment.

That is because you are undertaking to define 'beautiful,' 'just,' 'good,' and other particular forms, too soon, before you have had a preliminary training. I noticed that the other day when I heard you talking here with Aristoteles. Believe me, there is something noble and inspired in your passion for argument, but you must make an effort and submit yourself, while you are still young, to a severer training in what the world calls idle talk and condemns as useless. Otherwise, the truth will escape you.

What form, then, should this exercise take, Parmenides?

The form that Zeno used in the treatise you have been listening to. With this exception—there was one thing you said to him which impressed me very much—you would not allow the survey to be confined to visible things or to range only over that field; it was to extend to those objects which are specially apprehended by discourse and can be regarded as forms.

Yes, because in that other field there seems to be no difficulty about showing that things are both like and unlike and have any other character you please.

You are right. But there is one thing more you must do. If you want to be thoroughly exercised, you must not merely make the supposition that such and such a thing is and then consider the consequences; you must also take the supposition that that same thing is not.

How do you mean?

Take, if you like, the supposition that Zeno made—'If there is a plurality of things.' You must consider what consequences must follow both for those many things with reference to one another and to the one, and also for the one with reference to itself and to the many. Then again, on the supposition that there is not a plurality, you must consider what will follow both for the one and for the many, with reference to themselves and to each other. Or, once more, if you suppose that 'likeness exists,' or 'does not exist,' what will follow on either supposition both for the terms supposed and for other things, with reference to themselves and to each other. And so again with unlikeness, motion, and rest, coming-to-be and perishing, and being and not-being themselves. In a word, whenever you suppose that anything whatsoever exists or does not exist or has any other character, you ought to consider the consequences with reference to itself and to any one of the other things that you may select, or several of them, or all of
way be many and not one. But it is to be one and not many. Therefore, if the one is to be one, it will not be a whole nor have parts.

And, if it has no parts, it cannot have a beginning or an end or a middle, for such things would be parts of it. Further, the beginning and end of a thing are its limits. Therefore, if the one has neither beginning nor end, it is without limits.

Consequently the one has no shape; it is not either round or straight. Round is that whose extremity is everywhere equidistant from its center, and straight is that of which the middle is in front of both extremities. So if the one had either straight or round shape, it would have parts and so be many. Therefore, since it has no parts, it is neither straight nor round.

Further, being such as we have described, it cannot be anywhere, for it cannot be either (a) in another, or (b) in itself:

(a) If it were in another, it would be encompassed all round by that in which it was contained, and would have many contacts with it at many points, but there cannot be contact at many points all round with a thing which is one and has no parts and is not round.

(b) On the other hand, if it were in itself, it would have, to encompass it, none other than itself, since it would actually be within itself, and nothing can be within something without being encompassed by that thing. Thus the encompassing thing would be one thing, the encompassed another, for the same thing cannot as a whole both encompass and be encompassed at the same time, and so, in that case, the one would no longer be one, but two.

Therefore, the one is not anywhere, being neither in itself nor in another.

Next consider whether, such being its condition, it can be (a) in motion or (b) at rest.

(a) If it were in motion, it would have to be either moving in place or undergoing alteration, for there are no other kinds of motion. Now, if the one alters, so as to become different from itself, it surely cannot still be one. Therefore, it does not move in the sense of suffering alteration.

Does it, then, move in place? If it does, then it must either turn round in the same place or shift from one place to another. If it turns round, it must rest on a center and have those parts which revolve round the center as different parts of itself. But a thing which cannot have a center or parts cannot possibly be carried round on its center. If it moves at all, then, it must move by changing its place and coming to be in different places at different times. Now we saw that it could not be anywhere in anything. It is still more impossible that it should come to be in anything. If a thing is coming to be in something, it cannot be in that thing so long as it is still coming to be in it, nor yet can it be altogether outside it, since it is already coming to be in it. Accordingly this can happen only to a thing which has parts,
for part of it will be already in the other thing and part of it outside at the same time, and a thing which has no parts surely cannot possibly be, at the same time, neither wholly inside nor wholly outside something. It is still more impossible that a thing which has no parts and is not a whole should come to be in anything, since it cannot do so either part by part or as a whole. Hence it does not change its place either by traveling anywhere and coming to be in something, or by revolving in the same place, or by changing.

Therefore the one is immovable in respect of every kind of motion.

(b) On the other hand, we also assert that it cannot actually be in anything. Consequently it can never be in the same [place or condition], because then it would be in that selfsame [place or condition], and we saw that it could not be either in itself or in anything else. The one, then, is never in the same [place or condition]. But what is never in the same [place or condition] is not at rest or stationary.

It appears, then, that the one is neither at rest nor in motion. Further the one cannot be either the same as another or the same as itself, nor yet other than itself or other than another.

(a) Were it other than itself, it would be other than one and so would not be one. (b) And if it were the same as another, it would be that other and not be itself, so that, in this case again, it would not be just what it is, one, but other than one.

Therefore the one will not be the same as another or other than itself.

(c) Nor can it be other than another, so long as it is one. To be other than something properly belongs, not to 'one,' but only to an 'other-than-another.' Consequently it will not be other in virtue of its 'being one, and so not in virtue of being itself, and so not as itself, and if as itself it is not in any sense other, it cannot be other than anything.

(d) Nor yet can it be the same as itself. For the character (φοινική) of unity is one thing, the character of sameness another. This is evident because when a thing becomes 'the same' as something, it does not become 'one.' For instance, if it becomes the same as the many, it must become many, not one, whereas if there were no difference whatever between unity and sameness, whenever a thing became 'the same,' it would always become one, and whenever one, the same. So if the one is to be the same as itself, it will not be one with itself, and thus will be one and not one, and that is impossible. Consequently it is equally impossible for the one to be either other than another or the same as itself.

Thus the one cannot be other than, or the same as, either itself or another.

Nor can the one be (a) like or (b) unlike anything, whether itself or another.
A like thing is a thing which has an identical character. But we have seen that the character 'same' is distinct from the character 'one.' Now if the one has any character distinct from being one, it must have the character of being more things than one, and that is impossible. So it is quite impossible that the one should be a thing 'having the same character' as either another or itself.

Therefore the one cannot be like another or like itself.

But neither is it true of the one that it is different, for, in that case again, it would be true of it that it was more things than one. But if 'like' means that of which the same thing is true, a thing that is unlike itself or another will be that which can be truly said to be different from itself or another. And the one, it appears, cannot be said to be different in any way. Consequently, the one is in no way unlike either itself or anything else.

Therefore the one cannot be like or unlike either another or itself. Further, the one, being such as we have described, will not be either (a) equal or (b) unequal either to itself or to another.

If it is equal, it will have the same number of measures as anything to which it is equal. If greater or less, it will have more or fewer measures than things, less or greater than itself, which are commensurable with it. Or, if they are incommensurable with it, it will have smaller measures in the one case, greater in the other.

(a) Now a thing which has no sameness cannot have the same number of measures or of anything else. Therefore the one, not having the same number of measures, cannot be equal to itself or to another.

(b) On the other hand, if it had more or fewer measures, it would have as many parts as measures, and thus, once more, it would be no longer one, but as many as its measures. And if it were of one measure, it would be equal to that measure, whereas we saw that it could not be equal to anything.

Therefore, since it has neither one measure, nor many, nor few, and has no sameness at all, it appears that it can never be equal to itself or to another, nor yet greater or less than itself or another.

Again, can it be held that the one can be older or younger than anything or of the same age with anything?

If it is of the same age with itself or another, it will have equality of duration and likeness, and we have said that the one has neither likeness nor equality. We also said that it has no unlikeness or inequality. Such a thing cannot, then, be either older or younger than, or of the same age with, anything.

Therefore the one cannot be younger or older than, or of the same age with, either itself or another.

We may infer that the one, if it is such as we have described, cannot even occupy time at all. Whatever occupies time must always be becoming older than itself, and 'older' always means older than
something younger. Consequently, whatever is becoming older than it-

self, if it is to have something than which it is becoming older, must

also be at the same time becoming younger than itself. What I mean

is this. If one thing is already different from another, there is no ques-

tion of its becoming different; either they both are now, or they both

have been, or they both will be, different. But if one is in process of

becoming different, you cannot say that the other has been, or will

be, or as yet is, different; it can only be in process of becoming differ-

cent. Now the difference signified by 'older' is always a difference e

from something younger. Consequently, what is becoming older than

itself must also at the same time be becoming younger than itself.

Now, in the process of becoming it cannot take a longer or shorter
time than itself; it must take the same time with itself, whether it is
becoming, or is, or has been, or will be. So, it seems, any one of the
things that occupy time and have a temporal character must be of the
same age as itself and also be becoming at once both older and a
younger than itself. But we saw that none of these characters can at-
tach to the one.

Therefore the one has nothing to do with time and does not oc-
cupy any stretch of time.

Again, the words 'was,' 'has become,' 'was becoming' are under-
stood to mean connection with past time; 'will be,' 'will be becoming,' e
'will become,' with future time; 'is' and 'is becoming,' with time now
present. Consequently, if the one has nothing to do with any time, it
never has become or was becoming or was, nor can you say it has be-
come now or is becoming or is, or that it will be becoming or will be-
come or will be in the future. Now a thing can have being only in one
of these ways. There is, accordingly, no way in which the one has
being.

Therefore the one in no sense is.

It cannot, then, 'be' even to the extent of 'being' one, for then it
would be a thing that is and has being. Rather, if we can trust such an
argument as this, it appears that the one neither is one nor is at all.

And if a thing is not, you cannot say that it 'has' anything or
that there is anything 'of' it. Consequently, it cannot have a name or be
spoken of, nor can there be any knowledge or perception or opinion of
it. It is not named or spoken of, not an object of opinion or of knowl-
edge, not perceived by any creature.

Now can this possibly be the case with the one?

I do not think so, said Aristoteles.

Shall we, then, go back to our hypothesis and reconsider it from b
the beginning, in the hope of bringing to light some different result?

If a one is,' we say, we have to agree what sort of consequences
follow concerning it. Start afresh, then, and consider. If a one is, it
cannot be, and yet not have being. So there will also be the being which
the one has, and this is not the same thing as the one; otherwise
STRANGER: How?
THEAETETUS: Because then movement itself would come to a complete standstill, and again rest itself would be in movement, if each were to supervene upon the other.
STRANGER: And that is to the last degree impossible—that movement should come to be at rest and rest be in motion?
THEAETETUS: Surely.
STRANGER: Then only the third choice is left.
THEAETETUS: Yes.
STRANGER: And observe that one of these alternatives must be true—either all will blend, or none, or some will and some will not.
THEAETETUS: Certainly.
STRANGER: And two of the three have been found impossible.
THEAETETUS: Yes.
STRANGER: Whoever, then, wishes to give a right answer will assert the remaining one.
THEAETETUS: Quite so.
STRANGER: Then since some will blend, some not, they might be said to be in the same case with the letters of the alphabet. Some of these cannot be conjoined; others will fit together.
THEAETETUS: Of course.
STRANGER: And the vowels are specially good at combination—a sort of bond pervading them all, so that without a vowel the others cannot be fitted together.
THEAETETUS: That is so.
STRANGER: And does everyone know which can combine with which, or does one need an art to do it rightly?
THEAETETUS: It needs art.
STRANGER: And that art is?
THEAETETUS: Grammar.
STRANGER: Again, is it not the same with sounds of high or low pitch? To possess the art of recognizing the sounds that can or cannot be blended is to be a musician; if one doesn't understand that, one is unmusical.
THEAETETUS: True.
STRANGER: And we shall find differences of the same sort between competence and incompetence in any other art.
THEAETETUS: Of course.
STRANGER: Well, now that we have agreed that the kinds stand toward one another in the same way as regards blending, is not some science needed as a guide on the voyage of discourse, if one is to succeed in pointing out which kinds are consonant, and which are incompatible with one another—also, whether there are certain kinds that pervade them all and connect them so that they can blend, and again, where there are divisions [separations], whether there are certain others that traverse wholes and are responsible for the division?
STRANGER: Then we must not say that sameness or difference is [identical with] motion, nor yet with rest.

THEAETETUS: No.

STRANGER: Are we, however, to think of existence and sameness as a single thing?

THEAETETUS: Perhaps.

STRANGER: But if ‘existence’ and ‘sameness’ have no difference in meaning, once more, when we say that motion and rest both ‘exist,’ we shall thereby be speaking of them as being ‘the same.’

THEAETETUS: But that is impossible.

STRANGER: Then sameness and existence cannot be one thing.

THEAETETUS: Hardly.

STRANGER: We may, then, set down sameness as a fourth form, additional to our three.

THEAETETUS: Certainly.

STRANGER: And are we to call difference a fifth? Or must we think of difference and existence as two names for a single kind?

THEAETETUS: Perhaps.

STRANGER: But I suppose you admit that, among things that exist, some are always spoken of as being what they are just in themselves, others as being what they are with reference to other things.

THEAETETUS: Of course.

STRANGER: And what is different is always so called with reference to another thing, isn’t it?

THEAETETUS: That is so.

STRANGER: It would not be so, if existence and difference were not very different things. If difference partook of both characters as existence does, there would sometimes be, within the class of different things, something that was different not with reference to another thing. But in fact we undoubtedly find that whatever is different, as a necessary consequence, is what it is with reference to another.

THEAETETUS: It is as you say.

STRANGER: Then we must call the nature of difference a fifth among the forms we are singling out.

THEAETETUS: Yes.

STRANGER: And moreover we shall say that this nature pervades all the forms, for each one is different from the rest, not by virtue of its own nature, but because it partakes of the character of difference.

THEAETETUS: Quite so.

STRANGER: Now, then, taking our five kinds one by one, let us make some statements about them.

THEAETETUS: What statements?

STRANGER: First about motion, let us say that motion is altogether different from rest. Or is that not so?
THEAETETUS: Yes.

STRANGER: And if it is not about you, it is not about anything else.

THEAETETUS: Certainly.

STRANGER: And if it were about nothing, it would not be a statement at all, for we pointed out that there could not be a statement that was a statement about nothing.

THEAETETUS: Quite true.

STRANGER: So what is stated about you, but so that what is different is stated as the same or what is not as what is—a combination of verbs and names answering to that description finally seems to be really and truly a false statement.

THEAETETUS: Perfectly true.

STRANGER: And next, what of thinking and judgment and appearing? Is it not now clear that all these things occur in our minds both as false and as true?

THEAETETUS: How so?

STRANGER: You will see more easily if you begin by letting me give you an account of their nature and how each differs from the others.

THEAETETUS: Let me have it.

STRANGER: Well, thinking and discourse are the same thing, except that what we call thinking is, precisely, the inward dialogue carried on by the mind with itself without spoken sound.

THEAETETUS: Certainly.

STRANGER: Whereas the stream which flows from the mind through the lips with sound is called discourse.

THEAETETUS: True.

STRANGER: And further there is a thing which we know occurs in discourse.

THEAETETUS: Namely?

STRANGER: Assertion and denial.

THEAETETUS: Yes.

STRANGER: Then when this occurs in the mind in the course of silent thinking, can you call it anything but judgment?

THEAETETUS: No.

STRANGER: And suppose judgment occurs, not independently, but by means of perception; the only right name for such a state of mind is 'appearing.'

THEAETETUS: Yes.

STRANGER: Well then, since we have seen that there is true and false statement, and of these mental processes we have found thinking to be a dialogue of the mind with itself, and judgment to be the conclusion of thinking, and what we mean by 'it appears' a blend of perception and judgment, it follows that these also, being of the same nature as statement, must be, some of them and on some occasions, false.
The Statesman is generally ranked among Plato's most important dialogues, but the first part of it presents difficulties to the reader, not because the thought is hard to understand, but because it is often long drawn out. Plato is now in love with classification, as indeed he is also in the Sophist, but there only briefly. In the Statesman there are pages of division and subdivision in order to reach a definition of what the statesman is. Land dwellers are divided from sea dwellers, the horned from the hornless, the four-legged from the biped, and so on, until we get to man. Government is then divided into that over willing and that over unwilling subjects. But Plato cannot leave it at that. He must also illustrate what government is, first by a mythical story which shows that this world of imperfection has a close relation to the divine, and then by a practical example because, to paraphrase, "there is no outward and visible image of the greatest and noblest things"—the things that are seen are temporal—and we must learn to give a rational account of them." Such illuminating ideas occur again and again throughout the dialogue.

Weaving is chosen to illustrate the statesman's art of rightly dealing with "herds of free bipeds," and many pages are devoted to cutting off the weaver's art from the others and then describing the process of weaving which separates the wool into threads and combines them into cloth, thus exemplifying the many in the one and the one in the many. In the same way the separate activities of men, many as they are, combine under the guidance of the statesman into the firm and enduring union of the good state.

Of greater interest is the discussion in the last third of the dialogue about the various forms of government and the part law plays in them. The best government is lawless. It is guided by the true statesman whose rule is flexible and can be adapted to each individual case. The rule of law, on the contrary, is rigid and inflexible. The difference can be illustrated clearly if we imagine the two methods applied to any art, the art of medicine, for instance. If it were ruled by law, a majority in a general assembly would decide what methods should be used in doctoring people and that these should be invariably followed. Whoever was detected inquiring into its methods would be indicted in court on the charge of corrupting the young, persuading
them to give medicine in an unlawful manner. If we were to do this in everything, science, art, agriculture, carpentry, and so on, what would be the result? They would all perish and could never spring up again because inquiry would be forbidden. “The result would be that life, which is hard enough as it is, would be quite impossible then and not to be endured.”

The best government then is independent of law. Statesmanship is an art just as painting is. A good state can no more be produced and maintained by laws than a good picture can be painted by formulas for mixing colors. When the true statesman rules he knows of himself how to deal justly with all, whereas the law can be the cause of great injustice. But the state is not like a beehive; there is no single, visible head. If no true statesman appears, the rule of law is the next best. Experience has played a signal part in drawing up laws. Unadaptable though they are, they are better than the forms of government without them. But only the true statesman can rightly weave the web of the state, bringing the many minds of men into firm and enduring union.

SOCRATES: Theodorus, I am really very much indebted to you for my introduction to Theaetetus and to our guest from Elea.

THEODORUS: Good, but you are likely to be three times as much in my debt, Socrates, when they have done their task and defined the statesman and the philosopher as well as the Sophist for you.

SOCRATES: Three times as much? Really, my dear Theodorus, must it go on record that we heard our greatest mathematician and geometer say that?

THEODORUS: What do you mean, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Are we to say that we heard you reckoning all these three as of equal value when their real values differ to an extent that defies all your mathematical expressions of proportion?

THEODORUS: By Ammon, god of Libya, well said, Socrates, and a fair hit! Your dropping on my blunder in calculation like this shows that you have really remembered your mathematics! But I will have my revenge for this some other time. Now, sir, we turn to you.

From Plato’s Statesman, translated with introductory essays and footnotes by J. B. Skemp (New Haven and London, 1952). Minor corrections have been made, as suggested by G. E. L. Owen, in his review in Mind, LXII, No. 246 (April 1953). A few English colloquialisms have been changed to standard English.
Pray do not tire of favoring us with your assistance but go on to define the statesman or the philosopher, whichever you prefer to seek.

Stranger: Yes, we must do that, Theodorus. We have set ourselves to the task and now we must not withdraw from it till all our definitions are complete. But we must also consider Theaetetus here—what ought I to do about him?

Theodorus: In what way?

Stranger: Shall we give him a rest from philosophical wrestling and take on his fellow gymnast, the young Socrates, in his place—or have you any other suggestion?

Theodorus: No, take on young Socrates this time, as you suggest. They are both young and will be better able to carry through stiff exercise by being rested in turn.

Socrates: Furthermore, sir, they might both be said to have some sort of kinship with me. Theaetetus, according to you, is like me in looks and Socrates bears the same name. Sharing a name entails kinship in some sense, and, of course, we ought always to seize opportunities of discovering those who may be our kinsfolk by conversing with them. Yesterday I joined in discussion with Theaetetus; today I have listened to him answering you. I have not heard Socrates speak either in discussion or in reply. He too must be tested. So he shall reply to me another time, but this afternoon let him answer you.

Stranger: Very good! Socrates, you hear what Socrates says?

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: Do you agree to his proposal?

Young Socrates: Yes, certainly.

Stranger: Evidently you are putting no obstacles in the way of our advance, and I think I am still less entitled to do so. Well, then, after finding the Sophist, the task we now have to face together is to search out the statesman, or so it seems to me. Tell me, then, Socrates, whether he too must be classified as one of those who possess some kind of expert knowledge, or must we begin with some other kind of definition?

Young Socrates: No, he is to be defined as a kind of expert.

Stranger: Well then, must we distinguish the forms of knowledge as we did when looking for his predecessor?

Young Socrates: It would seem so.

Stranger: But the line of cleavage required now appears to differ from the previous one, Socrates.

Young Socrates: What then?

Stranger: It follows another division.

Young Socrates: It may well be so.

Stranger: Where shall a man find the way of the statesman then? For we must distinguish this path from all the rest by setting upon it the special sign of its distinctive form. All roads divergent
from it we must mark out also as one common class. Thus we must bring our minds to conceive of all forms of knowledge as falling under one or the other of these two classes—statecraft and knowledge other than statecraft.

YOUNG SOCRATES: This must be your task, sir. It is not for me to attempt it.

STRANGER: Yes, but it will be your achievement as well, Socrates, when all becomes clear to us both.

YOUNG SOCRATES: It is kind of you to say so.

STRANGER: Then consider the science of number and certain other sciences closely akin to it. Are they not unconcerned with any form of practical activity, yielding us pure knowledge only?

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is the case.

STRANGER: But it is quite otherwise with carpentry and manufacture in general. These possess science embodied as it were in a practical activity and inseparable from it. Their products do not exist before the arts come into operation and their operation is an integral part of the emergence of the product from its unworked state.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True. What of it?

STRANGER: You must use this distinction to divide the totality of sciences into two classes. Name the one ‘applied,’ the other ‘pure.’

YOUNG SOCRATES: I agree. Let your distinction be drawn, and let all science be divided into these two parts.

STRANGER: Are we then to regard the statesman, the king, the slavemaster, and the master of a household as essentially one though we use all these names for them, or shall we say that four distinct sciences exist, each of them corresponding to one of the four titles? But let me put this in another way easier to follow.

YOUNG SOCRATES: And what is that?

STRANGER: I will tell you. Suppose we find a medical man who is not himself practicing as a public medical officer but who nevertheless is competent to advise a doctor actually serving in that capacity? Must not the expert knowledge the adviser possesses be described by the same title as that of the functionary whom he is advising?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Well then, consider a man who, though himself a private citizen, is capable of giving expert advice to the ruler of a country. Shall we not say that he possesses the same science as the ruler himself possesses—or, rather ought to have possessed?

YOUNG SOCRATES: We shall indeed say so.

STRANGER: But the science possessed by the true king is the science of kingship?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: The possessor of this science then, whether he is
in fact in power or has only the status of a private citizen, will properly be called a ‘statesman’ since his knowledge of the art qualifies him for the title whatever his circumstances.

Young Socrates: Yes, he is undoubtedly entitled to that name.

Stranger: Then consider a further point. The slavemaster and the master of a household are identical.

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: Furthermore, is there much difference between a large household organization and a small-sized city, so far as the exercise of authority over it is concerned?

Young Socrates: None.

Stranger: Well then, our point is clearly made. One science covers all these several spheres and we will not quarrel with a man who prefers any one of the particular names for it; he can call it royal science, political science, or science of household management.

Young Socrates: It makes no difference.

Stranger: Now comes another point that can hardly be controversial. What a king can do to maintain his rule by using his hands or his bodily faculties as a whole is very slight in comparison with what he can do by mental power and force of personality.

Young Socrates: Manifestly.

Stranger: So a king’s art is closer to theoretical knowledge than to manual work or indeed to practical work in general?

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: You agree then that we may speak either of statesmanship and the statesman or of kingship and the king, these terms being convertible, since they are identical in force?

Young Socrates: Certainly.

Stranger: Let us go on to the next stage and see if we can proceed to a division of the kinds of theoretical knowledge.

Young Socrates: Good.

Stranger: Look attentively then and see if we cannot discover a natural cleavage within such knowledge.

Young Socrates: Tell me where it is.

Stranger: See, it is here. There exists, we agree, an art of counting.

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: That belongs quite definitely to the class of theoretical sciences, I presume.

Young Socrates: Of course.

Stranger: Now when the art of counting has ascertained a numerical difference we do not assign it any further task save that of pronouncing on what has been ascertained, do we?

Young Socrates: No.
STRANGER: Similarly heralds receive commands which have
been thought out and issued by someone else; then they issue them at
second hand to others.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Very true.

SOCRATES: Well then, are we going to confound the science of
kingship with the science of the interpreter, the coxswain, the prophet,
or the herald, or with any of this large group of kindred sciences, sim­
ply because all of them are concerned, as admittedly they are, with is­
suming orders? We thought out an analogy just now. Cannot we
think out a name as well, seeing that unfortunately there is no normal
description of the general class of 'givers of firsthand orders'? We will
make the cleavage at this point and name a 'predirective' class into
which we will put the race of kings. The other class, now distinct,
we can neglect, leaving it to someone else to invent a further common
name for the tribes it covers. It is for the king we are searching.—not for
his opposite.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Exactly.

STRANGER: Well then, his group has been distinguished from
the others, the decisive factor being that the kingly group issues its
own commands while the other group merely passes commands on.
Now we must subdivide the kingly group if we find it susceptible of a
division.

YOUNG SOCRATES: We must look for one.

STRANGER: Yes, and I think I have found one. Keep close to
me and share the work of dividing.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Where is the division?

STRANGER: Take any ruler we may observe at his work of is­
suming orders. Is not the purpose of his action the production of some­
thing?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Of course.

STRANGER: Products in general need not detain us; they are
easily divided into two classes.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How?

STRANGER: Considering them as a whole we find some life­
less, the rest alive.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: By this distinction we can divide, if we wish to do
so, the directive group of theoretical sciences.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How?

STRANGER: We assign one section to superintendence of the
production of lifeless things, the other to superintendence of the pro­
cduction of living things. This effects an exhaustive division of the
group.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, it does.

STRANGER: Let us put aside the one section and, taking the
other as our unit, divide it into two.
YOUNG SOCRATES: Which of the two sections do you suggest that we take for subdivision?

STRANGER: Surely the section concerned with the issue of directives about living creatures. It goes without saying that the king is never concerned with directives concerning lifeless things in the way the master builder is. Kingship is a nobler thing; it works among living creatures and its functions have to do with these alone.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: Now the breeding and nurturing of living creatures can be seen to be of two kinds. They may either be reared singly or in flocks collectively.

YOUNG SOCRATES: They may.

STRANGER: But we shall certainly not find the statesman to be a man in charge of one creature like some cowman or groom. He is much more like the man in charge of a whole herd of cows or of a stud of horses.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is quite clear, once it is put as you have put it now.

STRANGER: How shall we describe the section of the art of rearing living things which has to do with rearing them collectively? Shall we call it 'herd nurture' or 'collective nurture'?

YOUNG SOCRATES: We can use whichever name better helps our argument.

STRANGER: Excellently said, Socrates. If you hold fast to this principle of avoiding contention over names you will be seen to be rich with an ever greater store of wisdom as you come to old age. We will apply this sound principle to the present case and do as you bid me. Do you see how we can divide the nurture of herds into twin sections, so as to cordon off the object of our search in one of them and leave him an area only half the size of the one he is free to roam in at present?

YOUNG SOCRATES: I will try my hardest to cordon him off. I think the division is to be made between nurture of men and nurture of beasts.

STRANGER: You were keenness itself and you fenced the king off like a man, but I think we must not let this happen again if we can help it.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Why, what has happened? What have we done?

STRANGER: We must beware lest we break off one small fragment of a class and then contrast it with all the important sections left behind. We must only divide where there is a real cleavage between specific forms. The section must always possess a specific form. It is splendid if one really can divide off the class sought for immediately from all the rest—that is, if the structure of reality authorizes such immediate division. You had such direct tactics in mind just
now and hastened the argument to its conclusion. You saw that our search led us to men, and so you thought you had found the real division. But, it is dangerous, Socrates, to chop reality up into small portions. It is always safer to go down the middle to make our cuts. The real cleavages among the forms are more likely to be found thus, and the whole art of these definitions consists in finding these cleavages.

YOUNG Socrates: What do you mean, sir?

STRANGER: I will try to be still clearer, Socrates, for you are the kind of person it is a pleasure to teach. A fully satisfactory demonstration is not possible now, circumstances being what they are, but we must try for the sake of clearness to push the explanation a stage further.

YOUNG Socrates: Thank you, but what kind of mistake do you say that we made in our division just now?

STRANGER: The kind of mistake a man would make who, seeking to divide the class of human beings into two, divided them into Greeks and barbarians. This is a division most people in this part of the world make. They separate the Greeks from all other nations making them a class apart; thus they group all other nations together as a class, ignoring the fact that it is an indeterminate class made up of peoples who have no intercourse with each other and speak different languages. Lumping all this non-Greek residue together, they think it must constitute one real class because they have a common name 'barbarian' to attach to it. Take another example. A man might think that he was dividing number into its true classes if he cut off the number ten thousand from all others and set it apart as one class. He might go on to invent a single name for the whole of the rest of number, and then claim that because it possessed the invented common name it was in fact the other true class of number—'number other than ten thousand.' Surely it would be better and closer to the real structure of the forms to make a central division of number into odd and even or of humankind into male and female. A division setting Lydians or Phrygians or any other peoples in contradistinction to all the rest can only be made when a man fails to arrive at a true division into two groups each of which after separation is not only a portion of the whole class to be divided but also a real subdivision of it.

YOUNG Socrates: Quite so, sir, but this is just the difficulty. How can one learn to distinguish more clearly between a mere portion and a true subdivision and recognize them as being really different?

STRANGER: My dear Socrates, this is no light order. We have already strayed rather too far from the argument set as our task, and here you are asking that we stray still further! For the moment let us go back to the argument as is only right. We will get on the track of your problem some other time when we are free to do so and then we will follow it out to the end. But there is one caution I will add here.
Do not suppose that in what I say now I have given you a full explanation of the principle.

YOUNG Socrates: What principle do you mean?

Stranger: The principle that a portion and a subdivision of a class are not identical.

YOUNG Socrates: Can you be more explicit?

Stranger: Where a true subdivision of a wider class is made, this subdivision must necessarily also be a portion of the total class of which it is declared a subdivision. But the converse is not true, since a portion is not necessarily a true subdivision. You can claim my authority, Socrates, for asserting this and for denying the contrary.

YOUNG Socrates: This ruling will be followed.

Stranger: Good! Now help me to settle the next question.

YOUNG Socrates: What is that?

Stranger: Consider the class which caused us to stray from the argument and brought us to this point. I think that the trouble began at the moment when you were asked how we were to divide the science of tending herds and you answered with alacrity that there are two classes of living creatures, one of them being mankind, and the other the rest of the animals lumped together.

YOUNG Socrates: True.

Stranger: It became clear to me then that you were breaking off a mere portion, and that because you were able to give the common name ‘animals’ to what was left, namely to all creatures other than man, you thought that these creatures do in actual fact make up one class.

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, that was so.

Stranger: But, my gallant young friend, pray consider this! This kind of classification might be undertaken by any other creature capable of rational thought—for instance cranes are reputed to be rational in this way and there may be others. They might invest themselves with a unique and proper dignity and classify the race of cranes as being distinct from all other creatures; the rest they might well lump together, men included, giving them the common appellation of ‘the beasts.’ So let us try to be on the watch against mistakes of that kind.

YOUNG Socrates: How can we avoid them?

Stranger: By not attempting too general a division of the class of living creatures. We shall be less liable to such errors if we avoid this.

YOUNG Socrates: Indeed we must not do it.

Stranger: No, for it was here our mistake was made just now.

YOUNG Socrates: What precisely was it?

Stranger: The directive section of theoretical science, in so
far as it directs the rearing of living creatures was our concern, but we added ‘the rearing of them in herds.’ That is so, is it not?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: This last element of the definition, ‘rearing in herds,’ implied a prior division of all living creatures according to wildness and tameness. Types amenable to training and control we call tame animals; those resisting control, wild animals.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: Now it will be conceded that the science we are hunting down has always been and still is one that works among tame creatures; furthermore, it is to be looked for among tame creatures which are gregarious.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Let us avoid making divisions in the way we did just now, in a desperate hurry and with our attention fixed only on the whole class. Only thus shall we reach the statesman in good time.

This statesman’s art has already landed us in the situation the proverb warns us against!

YOUNG SOCRATES: Which proverb is this?

STRANGER: ‘More haste’ in our work of correct division has meant ‘less speed’ for us.

YOUNG SOCRATES: But it has been a happy mischance, sir.

STRANGER: That may be so, but now let us try again from the beginning to divide the science of collective rearing. It may well be that the argument itself as we proceed with it will show you more clearly the very thing you are in such eagerness to discover. Answer me this.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What?

STRANGER: I want to know if you happen to have heard people speak of something you can hardly have seen for yourself—herds of tame fishes. I know you have not been to see them in the aquariums in the Nile or in the Great King’s ponds. But you might possibly have seen such fishes in ornamental fountains yourself.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Of course I have seen them, and I have heard many people speak of the others.

STRANGER: It is the same with the flocks of tame cranes and tame geese in Thessaly—you have never toured the Thessalian plains but you have at least heard of them and you believe that such flocks exist.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, of course.

STRANGER: My reason for asking you all this is to show that creatures reared in herds may be of two kinds. Some live in water; others live on land.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, I agree.

STRANGER: Have I your agreement, then, that we have to divide herd rearing on this principle into two sections? May we assign
one subdivision to each of these subsidiary sciences and call the one 'water herd rearing,' the other 'land herd rearing'?

YOUNG Socrates: Again, I agree.

Stranger: One need hardly ask to which of these sciences the kingly art belongs—the answer is obvious.

YOUNG Socrates: Of course.

Stranger: The next subdivision of the land herd rearing section of herd rearing can be made by anyone.

YOUNG Socrates: How?

Stranger: By dividing it between walkers and fliers.

YOUNG Socrates: Oh yes, of course.

Stranger: Well then, is not the statesman's art to be sought among the arts dealing with walking herds? Do you not think that practically everyone, even the most witless, would judge this to be so?

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, I do.

Stranger: Then we must effect a subdivision of land herd tendance into two parts, just as we recently divided number into two.

YOUNG Socrates: Clearly.

Stranger: But see what has happened. In the region into which the argument has moved we see two paths lying before us inviting us to our goal. One path reaches the goal more quickly but divides off a small class from a large one. The other is a longer way round but it observes the principle we enunciated before, that we should always divide down the middle where possible. We can go on by whichever of these paths we prefer.

YOUNG Socrates: Is it impossible to take them both?

Stranger: To take both at once is impossible—that is an amazing suggestion, Socrates! But obviously you can take first one, then the other.

YOUNG Socrates: Then I vote for taking first one way, then the other.

Stranger: That is easy, for there is not much farther to go. At the outset or halfway your command would have been difficult for us to obey, but since we are nearly there and you desire it, let us take the longer path first; we shall get to its end more easily now while we are fresher. See this division then.

YOUNG Socrates: Tell me what it is.

Stranger: We find a division of tame herded walking creatures ready-made in nature.

YOUNG Socrates: What is it?

Stranger: Some have horns; the rest have none.

YOUNG Socrates: That is evident.

Stranger: Divide then the science of rearing walking herds into two sections, assigning each its sphere, but use a general description in doing so. For if you are anxious about naming each, the business will be complicated needlessly.
1030 PLATO: COLLECTED DIALOGUES

YOUNG SOCRATES: How shall we state the matter then?
STRANGER: We will say this. The science of rearing walking herds has been divided into two. The one section of it is assigned to rearing horned herds, and the other to rearing hornless herds.

YOUNG SOCRATES: The division shall stand in these terms. In any case there can be no further question about it.
STRANGER: See now, our king stands out clearly once more; he is shepherd of a hornless herd.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Unmistakably so!
STRANGER: Let us divide up this herd into its component parts then, and try to assign to the king the place really belonging to him.

YOUNG SOCRATES: By all means.
STRANGER: Where shall we divide it? By distinguishing whole-hoofed and cloven-hoofed, or interbreeding and noninterbreeding? Which do you prefer? You understand what I mean, I suppose?

YOUNG SOCRATES: About what?
STRANGER: You know that horses and asses are capable of interbreeding?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.
STRANGER: But all other tame hornless herds are incapable of interbreeding.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Of course.
STRANGER: What of the statesman then? Is the herd he has in his charge capable of interbreeding with another or incapable?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Incapable, of course.
STRANGER: This group we must now divide again into two as before, it would seem.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, we must.

STRANGER: But the class of tame, gregarious living creatures has already been reduced to its component elements save for the division of two of these from each other. For dogs cannot claim to be counted in the class of gregarious animals.

YOUNG SOCRATES: No they cannot, but by what means are we to separate the remaining pair?

STRANGER: By a method very appropriate for application by Theaetetus and yourself, seeing that both of you are geometers.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What is that?
STRANGER: I would say, 'by the diagonal and secondly by the diagonal of the diagonal.'

YOUNG SOCRATES: What do you mean?

STRANGER: What say you of our human constitution? How is this human race of ours endowed? So far as its peripatetic potential is concerned, is it not very like the diagonal? Has it not a potency of two feet?

YOUNG SOCRATES: So it has.

STRANGER: Moreover the character of the remaining component of the class is in turn of the potency possessed by the diagonal
of our human diagonal, since its native peripatetic potential is one of two feet twice over.

**Young Socrates:** Of course it is, and I think I see what you are meaning to say.

**Stranger:** Good! Now here is another conclusion which we have reached by our divisions which is not without its interest for the comedians. Do we see it, Socrates?

**Young Socrates:** What is it?

**Stranger:** For neighbor and competitor in the race this humanity of ours has the most portly and the most easygoing of all the creatures.

**Young Socrates:** Yes, I see. What a funny coincidence!

**Stranger:** Still, isn't it reasonable after all? The slowest shuffle in—or snuffle in—last.

**Young Socrates:** Yes, of course you're right.

**Stranger:** But there is another thing to notice. What a funny situation the king is in! He has kept pace with his herd and so he has been running a race with the man who is of all men best trained for living an easy life!

**Young Socrates:** Yes, just so.

**Stranger:** This is a still clearer illustration of the principle we laid down in our inquiry concerning the Sophist.

**Young Socrates:** What was that?

**Stranger:** That in a philosophical search for a definition, like the present one, the presence or absence of dignity in the object under definition is an irrelevance. Lowly and exalted must receive equal consideration and the argument must proceed by proper stages in its own right to reach the truest conclusion obtainable.

**Young Socrates:** That seems to be right.

**Stranger:** Well now, am I to lead you, without waiting for you to ask me, along the shorter of the roads which we discovered as leading to the definition of the king?

**Young Socrates:** Do so, please.

**Stranger:** In my opinion then, we must start from the point we reached by separating out herded creatures on land and this time divide these forthwith into two-footed and four-footed. We shall then see the human race sharing the occupation of the two-footed class with the winged tribes and none else; having observed this, we shall divide the two-footed herds into winged and wingless. Then the science of shepherding mankind will have been brought to light. Now we must bring our statesman and king and set him over this class like a charioteer, and hand over to him the reins of government of the state, for they belong to him and his alone is this art of government.

**Young Socrates:** Your debt to me, sir, is nobly discharged by the definition you have made—and you have more than paid the debt, for you have thrown in the digression by way of interest.

**Stranger:** Come then, let us gather up the threads of our
argument and work out from start to finish our definition of what is called 'political science.'

Young Socrates: Let us do so by all means.

Stranger: We made a first division of theoretical science by taking the directive part of it. Of this we took the part which we described by analogy with the producer-salesman as 'predirective.' From this predirective science we cut off that which directs the rearing of living things, a very important part of the whole. Animal rearing was divided and we chose out of it rearing in herds, and, next to this, rearing of herds of creatures that live on land. Dividing this again, we chose rearing of hornless herds. We then took a part of this, and if one must employ its name, it will be a name three words long—'non-interbreeding herd tendance.' As for the further divisions, only the class 'man tendance' is left in the two-footed section of the last-named class—and so we reach the object of our search, namely, statesmanship or kingship, which is another name for statesmanship.

Young Socrates: Yes, we really have reached our conclusion.

Stranger: Do you really think so, Socrates? Do you think our task as complete as you make out?

Young Socrates: Why do you ask?

Stranger: Have we dealt fully with the problem we were given to solve? Is there not a fault and a very grave one in our treatment of it, the fault of arriving at a definition of a king but failing to work through to a really complete and adequate definition?

Young Socrates: What do you mean?

Stranger: I will try to make my meaning clearer—to myself as well as to you.

Young Socrates: Do so, please.

Stranger: We found just now many arts of herd tendance of which statesmanship is one particular instance. Statesmanship is in charge of the rearing of a particular kind of herd.

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: Our argument defined it as the science of the collective rearing of men—as distinct from the rearing of horses or other animals.

Young Socrates: Quite so.

Stranger: But we have to notice one respect in which a king differs from all other herdsmen.

Young Socrates: What is that?

Stranger: Do we find any other herdsmen challenged by a rival who practices another art and yet claims that he shares with the herdsmen the duty of feeding the herd?

Young Socrates: How do you mean?

Stranger: You see how merchants, farmers, and all who prepare the grain for food—yes, and teachers of gymnastics and doctors
as well—would all dispute the title 'feeders of mankind' with the herdsman we have called 'statesman.' These others would all contend that they are in charge of the feeding of mankind—and of feeding the leaders themselves as well as the mass of the herd.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Would they not be quite right?

**STRANGER:** Maybe. We will examine this point further, but we can say at once with certainty that no one else disputes a cowherd's position in any of these matters. He feeds his herd himself, and he is also its doctor. He is its matchmaker too, one might say, and none but he understands the midwife's duties when confinements occur and babies have to be brought into the world. Furthermore, in so far as his charges feel a need for games and music, who so good as he to cheer them, who so gifted to charm and soothe them? For he is master of the music best suited to his herd, be it rendered on the pipes or in song unaccompanied. And so it is in the case of every other herdsman, is it not?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Certainly it is.

**STRANGER:** How then can the definition of the king reached in our discussion show up as correct and flawless in the light of these new facts? We are claiming that he alone is herdsman and shepherd of the human flock, but we are merely singling him out as such from a host of competitors.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Certainly this will not do.

**STRANGER:** Then we were quite right to feel anxious a little while ago when the suspicion came over us that though the figure we described was a kingly one we had not yet achieved a real portrait of the statesman. We might well hesitate, for we cannot reveal him finally in his proper quality till we have removed and put apart from him the throng of rivals that crowds around him and claims to share his herdsman-ship.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, we were quite right to hesitate.

**STRANGER:** So we must aim at a complete description, Socrates, unless we are to bring disgrace on our argument in the end.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, for we must avoid that at all costs.

**STRANGER:** Then we must begin all over again from another starting point and travel by another road.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What kind of road must this be?

**STRANGER:** We have to bring in some pleasant stories to relieve the strain. There is a mass of ancient legend a large part of which we must now use for our purposes; after that we must go on as before, dividing always and choosing one part only, until we arrive at the summit of our climb and the object of our journey. Shall we begin?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, certainly.

**STRANGER:** Come then, listen closely to my story as a child would. After all, you are not so very many years too old for stories.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Do continue, please.
Stranger: These old stories have been told before and will be told again. Among them is the one about the portent that settled the famous quarrel between Atreus and Thyestes. I expect you have heard the story and remember the details of it as they are described to us.

Young Socrates: You refer, I suppose, to the strange sign of the golden lamb.

Stranger: Oh no, not to that, but to the alteration in rising and setting of the sun and the other planets. The story tells us that on this famous occasion these all set where they now rise and rose where they now set. Afterward, however, when he had testified by this miracle to the justice of Atreus’s claims, Zeus restored all these heavenly bodies to their present system of motion.

Young Socrates: Yes, that comes into the story too.

Stranger: Then again, we have heard of the reign of Cronus from many storytellers.

Young Socrates: From most of them, I should say.

Stranger: Yes, and what else? Are we not told that men of that former age were earthborn and not born of human parents?

Young Socrates: That is also one of the old stories.

Stranger: All these stories originate from the same event in cosmic history, and so do hosts of others yet more marvelous than these. However, as this great event took place so long ago, some of them have faded from man’s memory; others survive but they have become scattered and have come to be told in a way which obscures their real connection with one another. No one has related the great event of history which gives the setting of all of them; it is this event which we must now recount. Once it has been related, its relevance to our present demonstration of the nature of a king will become apparent.

Young Socrates: Excellent, sir. Please go on, and leave nothing unsaid.

Stranger: Listen then, and you shall hear. There is an era in which God himself assists the universe on its way and guides it by imparting its rotation to it. There is also an era in which he releases his control. He does this when its circuits under his guidance have completed the due limit of the time thereto appointed. Thereafter it begins to revolve in the contrary sense under its own impulse—for it is a living creature and has been endowed with reason by him who framed it in the beginning. Now this capacity for rotation in reverse is of necessity native to it for a reason I must tell.

Young Socrates: Of what nature is it?

Stranger: Ever to be the same, steadfast and abiding, is the prerogative of the divinest of things only. The nature of the bodily does not entitle it to this rank. Now the heaven, or the universe as we have chosen to call it, has received many blessed gifts from him who brought it into being, but it has also been made to partake of bodily
form. Hence it is impossible that it should abide forever free from change, and yet, as far as may be, its movement is uniform, invariable, and in one place. Thus it is that it has received from God a rotation in reverse—the least possible variation of its proper motion. To revolve ever in the same sense belongs to none but the lord and leader of all things that move, and even he cannot move the universe now in the one sense now in the other—for this would flout eternal decrees. For all these reasons there are many doctrines we are forbidden to affirm concerning this universe. We must not say that it moves itself, perpetually revolving in one and the same sense. We may not say that it is God who turns it in its entirety throughout all time in two opposed alternating revolutions. We may not say that a pair of divinities make it revolve alternately in these opposed senses because the mind of the one god is contrary to the mind of the other. We must therefore affirm the doctrine stated above, which is the one remaining possibility. In the one era it is assisted on its way by the transcendent divine cause, receiving a renewal of life from its creator, an immortality of his contriving. In the other era, when it has been released, it moves by its innate force and it has stored up so much momentum at the time of its release that it can revolve in the reverse sense for thousands of revolutions, because its size is so great, its balance so perfect, and the pivot on which it turns so very small.

YOUNG Socrates: Your whole account seems to me very b
consistent and very probable.

Stranger: Let us think about this together. Let us study this great cosmic fact underlying all these miraculous stories in the light of what we have just said. It is this great fact that I have been speaking about.

Young Socrates: What is it?

Stranger: The fact that the revolution of the heaven is sometimes in its present sense, sometimes in the reverse sense.

Young Socrates: How would you state its significance?

Stranger: This change of motion we must regard as the most e
important and the most complete of all 'turnings-back' occurring in the celestial orbits.

Young Socrates: It would seem so.

Stranger: We must believe then, that at the time such changes take place in the universe we human beings living within that universe have to undergo the most drastic changes also.

Young Socrates: That is to be expected.

Stranger: Do we not know from experience that when great changes of any kind come upon them at once, all living beings feel the strain intensely and can hardly stand it?

Young Socrates: We do indeed.

Stranger: So it must needs be that in the cosmic crisis there is widespread destruction of living creatures other than man and
that only a remnant of the human race survives. Many strange new experiences befall this remnant, but there is one of deeper import than all. It follows on God’s first taking over the rewinding of the universe, at the moment when the revolution counter to the one now prevalent begins to operate.

**Young Socrates:** What is it?

**Stranger:** First of all, every living creature, whatever the stage of life it had attained, ceased to grow any older. All mortal beings halted on their way to bent and hoary age, and each began to grow backward, as it were, toward youth and ever greater immaturity. The white hairs of the older men began to grow dark again; the cheeks of bearded men grew smooth once more and restored to each the long-lost bloom of his youth. The bodies of the young men lost the signs of manhood and, growing smaller every day and every night, they returned again to the condition of newborn children, being made like to them in mind as well as in body. Next they faded into non-existence and one by one they were gone. Moreover the bodies of those who died by violence in that time of crisis exhibited these same changes—and did so with such rapidity that in their case disappearance took place within a few days.

**Young Socrates:** But how did living creatures come into being in that era, sir? How did they produce their offspring?

**Stranger:** Clearly, Socrates, it was no part of man’s natural endowment in that era to beget children by intercourse. Our legends tell us that once upon a time there was an earth born race. Now it was this race which at that moment of crisis began to retreat out of the earth. The memory of it has lived on, for it was handed down to us by the earliest of our forebears. These earliest forebears were the children of earthborn parents; they lived in the period directly following the end of the era of the earthborn, at the close of the former period of cosmic rotation and the beginning of the present one. These ancestors of ours passed on to us these stories of the earthborn, and it is an unsound judgment to disbelieve them as so many do nowadays. For I think that we must consider what follows in the cosmic story. It is only to be expected that along with the reversal of the old men’s course of life and their return to childhood, a new race of men should arise too—a new race formed from men dead and long laid in earth but now formed in her womb anew and thence returning to life once more. Such resurrection of the dead was in keeping with the cosmic change, all creation being now turned in the reverse direction. This race was, as it needs must be, ‘born from the earth’; hence comes the name and hence the legend. Birth out of the ground was the law for all of them, save for some few whom God translated to another destiny.

**Young Socrates:** Yes, this is fully in keeping with what went before, but tell me about the life of man in the reign of Cronus.
of which you speak. Did this life obtain in the former world era or in this one? For clearly a change of direction of sun and planets occurs at both points in history at which the universe changes its sense of rotation.

STRANGER: You have followed the story closely. As for your inquiry concerning the age when all good things come without man's labor, the answer is that this also most certainly belongs to the former era, not to the present one. In that era God was supreme governor in charge of the actual rotation of the universe as a whole, but divine also, and in like manner was the government of its several regions, for these were all portioned out to be provinces under the surveillance of tutelary deities. Over every herd of living creatures throughout all their tribes was set a heavenly daemon to be its shepherd. Each of them was all in all to his flock—providing for the needs of all his charges. So it befell that savagery was nowhere to be found nor preying of creature on creature, nor did war rage nor any strife whatsoever. There were numberless consequences of this divine ordering of the world, but we must leave them all aside save those concerning man, for we must go on to explain the origin of our traditions concerning man's life in that paradise. A god was their shepherd and had charge of them and fed them even as men now have charge of the other creatures inferior to them—for men are closer to the divine than they. When God was shepherd there were no political constitutions and no taking of wives and begetting of children. For all men rose up anew into life out of the earth, having no memory of the former things. Instead they had fruits without stint from trees and bushes; these needed no cultivation but sprang up of themselves out of the ground without man's toil. For the most part they disported themselves in the open needing neither clothing nor couch, for the seasons were blended evenly so as to work them no hurt, and the grass which sprang up out of the earth in abundance made a soft bed for them. This is the story, Socrates, of the life of men under the government of Cronus. Our present life—said to be under the government of Zeus—you are alive to experience for yourself. But which of these two makes for greater happiness do you think? Can you give a verdict? And will you do so?

YOUNG Socrates: No, I cannot decide.

STRANGER: Do you want me to make a tentative decision for you?

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, please do.

STRANGER: The crucial question is—did the nurslings of Cronus make a right use of their time? They had abundance of leisure and were at an advantage in being able to converse with the animals as well as with one another. Did they use all these advantages to promote philosophical inquiry? As they associated with one another and with the animals, did they seek to learn from each several tribe of
creatures whether its special faculties enabled it to apprehend some distinctive truth not available to the rest which it could bring as its contribution to swell the common treasure store of wisdom? If they really did all this, it is easy to decide that the happiness of the men of that era was a thousandfold greater than ours. But if, when they had taken their fill of eating and of drinking, the discussions they had with each other and with the animals were of the kind that the surviving stories make them out to have been, then, according to my judgment at any rate, it is equally clear what our verdict must be. But be that as it may, let us leave this question aside till we find someone who can inform us accurately whether or not their hearts were set on gaining knowledge and on the true commerce of minds. But this much must be stated here, so that we may be free to proceed to the rest of the story, for it was precisely to see the age of Cronus in its true setting that we brought the whole story to life again.

For when this whole order of things had come to its destined end, there must needs be universal change once more. For the earthborn seed had by now become quite exhausted—each soul had run through its appointed number of births and had returned as seed to the earth as many times as had been ordained for it. And now the pilot of the ship of the universe—for so we may speak of it—let go the handle of its rudder and retired to his conning tower in a place apart. Then destiny and its own inborn urge took control of the world again and reversed the revolution of it. Then the gods of the provinces, who had ruled under the greatest god, knew at once what was happening and relinquished the oversight of their regions. A shudder passed through the world at the reversing of its rotation, checked as it was between the old control and the new impulse which had turned end into beginning for it and beginning into end. This shock set up a great quaking which caused—in this crisis of the world just as in the former one—destruction of living creatures of all kinds. Then, after the interval needed for its recovery, it gained relief at last from its clamors and confusion, and attaining quiet after great upheaval it returned to its ordered course and continued in it, having control and government of itself and of all within it and remembering, so far as it was able, the instruction it had received from God, its maker and its father. At first it remembered his instructions more clearly, but as time went on its recollection grew dim. The bodily element in its constitution was responsible for its failure. This bodily factor belonged to it in its most primeval condition, for before it came into its present order as a universe it was an utter chaos of disorder. It is from God's act when he set it in its order that it has received all the virtues it possesses, while it is from its primal chaotic condition that all the wrongs and evils arise in it—evils which it engenders in turn in the living creatures within it. When it is guided by the divine pilot, it produces much good and but little evil in the creatures it raises and sustains. When it
must travel on without God, things go well enough in the years immediately after he abandons control, but as time goes on and forgetfulness of God arises in it, the ancient condition of chaos also begins to assert its sway. At last, as this cosmic era draws to its close, this disorder comes to a head. The few good things it produces it corrupts with so gross a taint of evil that it hovers on the very brink of destruction, both of itself and of the creatures in it.

The God looks upon it again, he who first set it in order. Beholding it in its troubles, and anxious for it lest it sink racked by storms and confusion, and be dissolved again in the bottomless abyss of unlikeness, he takes control of the helm once more. Its former sickness he heals; what was disrupted in its former revolution under its own impulse he brings back into the way of regularity, and, so ordering and correcting it, he achieves for it its agelessness and deathlessness.

This is the full tale told, but to meet our need—the delineation of the king—it is enough if we take up the earlier part of our tale. When the most recent cosmic crisis occurred and the cosmic order now existing was established, the course of man's life stood still once more and then began to manifest changes in the opposite sense to the changes accompanying the other cosmic crisis. Creatures which were on the brink of disappearance because of their smallness began to grow again; those who were just born from the earth, stalwart in their prime of life, now grew snowy-haired and then died and returned to the earth again. Following the change in the universe, all other things had to change, and, in particular, a new law governing conception, birth, and nurture was made binding on the whole universe—and therefore on all the creatures, for they must needs imitate its ways. For it was no longer possible for creatures to be brought to birth in the earth by the formative action of external agents. It has now been ordained that the universe must take sole responsibility and control of its course. And so by a like ruling, the same impulse bade its constituent elements achieve by their own power, so far as they might, conception, procreation, and rearing of young. We have now come to the point which the whole of this story of ours has been seeking to reach.

It would take long to tell of all the changes that befell the various creatures and show whence these arose and how they were effected, but man's story is shorter and more relevant for us now. Bereft of the guardian care of the daemon who had governed and reared us up, we had become weak and helpless, and we began to be ravaged by wild beasts—for the many evil-natured beasts had by now turned savage. Men lacked all tools and all crafts in the early years. The earth no longer supplied their food spontaneously and they did not yet know how to win it for themselves; in the absence of necessity they had never been made to learn this. For all these reasons they were in direst straits. It was to meet this need that the gifts of the gods famous in
ancient story were given, along with such teaching and instruction as was indispensable. Fire was the gift of Prometheus, the secrets of the crafts were made known by Hephaestus and his partner in craftsmanship, and seeds and plants were made known by other gods. From these gifts everything has come which has furnished human life since the divine guardianship of men ceased—in the way our story has just described—and men had to manage their lives and fend for themselves in the same way as the whole universe was forced to do. Thus likened to the universe and following its destiny through all time, our life and our begetting are now on this wise now on that.

Here let our work of storytelling come to its end, but now we must use the story to discern the extent of the mistake we made in our earlier argument in our delineation of the king or statesman.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** How did we go wrong then? Do you think that we are seriously off the track?

**STRANGER:** One mistake was not so serious, but the other was a mistake on the grand scale. It is graver and more far-reaching than I thought it was.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** In what way?

275 **STRANGER:** We were asked to define the king and statesman of this present era, and of humanity as we know it, but in fact we took from the contrary cosmic era the shepherd of the human flock as it then was, and described him as the statesman. He is a god, not a mortal. We went as far astray as that. Furthermore, we showed him as ruler of all the life of the state but did not specify the manner of his rule. Here too, what was said was true, but it cannot be regarded as the whole truth or as a clear and sufficient description. We have gone wrong in this also, though not as badly wrong as on the other issue.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** True.

**STRANGER:** Obviously then we must try to define the way in which the statesman controls the state. We can be reasonably confident that in doing this we shall achieve the complete definition of the statesman.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Very good.

**STRANGER:** But our aim when we actually introduced the story was to show two things at once concerning the 'nurture of the herd.' We were anxious to show the host of rivals with whose claims to be 'nurturers of the herd' the statesman whom we now seek has to compete, but we were still more anxious to follow out our analogy and to see the statesman himself in a clearer light as being alone entitled to be called 'shepherd of the people,' feeding humankind in the way shepherds feed their sheep and cowherds their cattle.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** True.

**STRANGER:** It appears to me now, Socrates, that the divine shepherd is so exalted a figure that no king can be said to attain to his eminence. Those who rule these states of ours in this present era are
like their subjects, far closer to them in training and in nurture than ever shepherd could be to flock.

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, that is certainly so.

Stranger: But whether they are human or superhuman creatures, we are still as committed as we were—neither more so nor less—to the task of seeking to reveal their true nature.

YOUNG Socrates: Of course.

Stranger: We must go back again for reconsideration of one of our divisions. We said that there is a 'predirective' art concerned with living creatures, and with these in herds rather than as individuals. Without further division, we described this as 'the science of the rearing of herds.' You recall this, do you not?

YOUNG Socrates: Of course.

Stranger: It was at a point in our tracking down of this art that we began to lose the scent. We did not catch the statesman at all in this definition or name him properly. He eluded us without our knowing it while we were intent on the process of naming.

YOUNG Socrates: How did he do it?

Stranger: There is no other herdsman who is not charged with the bodily nurture of his herd. This characteristic is absent in the statesman and yet we called him a herdsman. We should have used a wider name, covering all guardians, whether nurturers or not.

YOUNG Socrates: You are right if there is in fact such a name.

Stranger: Surely 'concern' is available as such a class name; it implies no specific limitation to bodily nurture or to any other specific activity. If we had named the art 'concern for herds,' 'attention to herds,' or 'charge of herds'—all of them terms which cover all species—we could have included the statesman with the rest, for the run of the argument was indicating to us that we ought to do this.

YOUNG Socrates: True, but how would the subsequent division have proceeded?

Stranger: On the same lines as before. We divided 'nurture of herds' into nurture of land animals, wingless, noninterbreeding, and hornless. We could have divided 'care of herds' in the same way and our definition would then have included both the shepherd king of the reign of Cronus and the ruler of our present era.

YOUNG Socrates: That seems clear, but I still want to know what follows.

Stranger: It is clear that if we had used this correct term 'concern for herds' we should not have had to face the unreasonable objection that some make, that ruling is in no sense an art of tendance, as well as the other reasonable objection we met that there is no specific art of nurture of human beings and that if there were, there would be many more directly involved in its exercise than any ruler is.

YOUNG Socrates: True.
STRANGER: But if it is a question of an art of ‘ responsible charge’ of a whole community, what art has a better or prior claim than statesmanship to fulfill this function? What other art can claim to be the art of bearing sovereign rule, the art which bears sovereign rule over all men?

YOUNG Socrates: None can.

STRANGER: Yes, Socrates, but do we realize that we fell into another considerable error at the very end of our definition?

YOUNG Socrates: What was that?

STRANGER: However clearly we had determined in our minds that there exists an art of nurture of two-footed herds, we were not entitled without further examination to name this art kingship or statesmanship, thereby implying that a full definition of it had been obtained.

YOUNG Socrates: What should we have done then?

STRANGER: First of all, as we have just been saying, the class name has to be modified from ‘nurture’ to ‘concern.’ Secondly, this ‘concern’ must be subdivided, for several further divisions are possible.

YOUNG Socrates: Which are they?

STRANGER: By one division we should have set apart the divine shepherd and the human tender of men.

YOUNG Socrates: True.

STRANGER: By another division we should have divided into two the art assigned to this human tender of men.

YOUNG Socrates: By what division?

STRANGER: By distinguishing enforced tendance from tendance voluntarily accepted.

YOUNG Socrates: Surely.

STRANGER: I think we really went wrong at this point in our earlier definitions; we made a confusion—a needlessly stupid one—of the king and the tyrant, and these are entirely different people, differing in the manner of their rule.

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, they are.

STRANGER: Then let us be right this time, and, as I said, let us divide the art of concern for men into two—enforced tendance and tendance accepted voluntarily.

YOUNG Socrates: Certainly.

STRANGER: Tendance of human herds by violent control is the tyrant’s art; tendance freely accepted by herds of free bipeds we call statesmanship. Shall we now declare that he who possesses this latter art and practices this tendance is the true king and the true statesman?

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, and I should think, sir, that at this point we have really completed our definition of the statesman.

STRANGER: That would be excellent, Socrates, but it is not
enough for you to think so; I must think so too. Now as a matter of fact I think that the likeness of the statesman has not been perfectly drawn yet. Sculptors sometimes rush at their work in ill-timed enthusiasm and then elaborate the details of the work to such an extent that they have to bring in extra material to complete it and this in the end slows down their progress. Something like this happened earlier in our discussion, when we wanted to make it immediately clear where we were mistaken and to give a really impressive demonstration of the point. Supposing that where a king was concerned only large-scale illustrations could be suitable, we reared our massive myth and then had to use more myth material than the occasion warranted; thus our demonstration became too long and we did not give the myth a complete form after all. Our definition, too, seems to me like a portrait which is as yet an outline sketch and does not represent the original clearly because it has still to be painted in colors properly balanced with one another. Remember, however, that a definition couched in words is a better description of a living creature than a drawing or any model of it can be—a better description, I mean, for those capable of following such a definition; for those who cannot do so the model or visible illustration is appropriate enough.

*Young Socrates:* Yes, that is true, but pray make clear where you still find our description of the statesman inadequate.

*Stranger:* It is difficult, my dear Socrates, to demonstrate anything of real importance without the use of examples. Every one of us is like a man who sees things in a dream and thinks that he knows them perfectly and then wakes up, as it were, to find that he knows nothing.

*Young Socrates:* What do you mean by this?

*Stranger:* I have made a real fool of myself by choosing this moment to discuss our strange human plight where the winning of knowledge is concerned.

*Young Socrates:* What do you mean?

*Stranger:* Example, my good friend, has been found to require an example.

*Young Socrates:* What is this? Say on and do not hesitate for my sake.

*Stranger:* I will—in fact, I must, since you are so ready to follow. When young children have only just learned their letters . . .

*Young Socrates:* What is this?

*Stranger:* We know that they distinguish particular letters only in the shortest and simplest syllables; in these, however, they do distinguish them and can tell you correctly what each of them is.

*Young Socrates:* Yes.

*Stranger:* But if they see the same letters combined into other syllables, they fall into doubt once more, and judge them incorrectly by making wrong identifications.
YOUNG SOCRATES: True.
STRANGER: What then is the easiest and best method of leading them to the knowledge they have not yet reached? I think I know it.
YOUNG SOCRATES: What is it?
STRANGER: Take them to the syllables in which they have identified the letters correctly; then set them in front of the syllables they cannot decipher; then place known syllables and unknown syllables side by side and point out to them the similar nature of the letters occurring in both. In the end, by this method when the rightly identified letters have been shown to them and set alongside all the unknown letters—and by being shown thus the known letters have been used as *examples*—the teacher will achieve his aim, which is to have each letter rightly recognized and named in every syllable, for then the pupil will have identified each letter with itself and distinguished it from all the others.
YOUNG SOCRATES: Certainly.
STRANGER: Have we not gathered enough information now to show how the method of example proceeds? It operates, does it not, when a factor identical with a factor in a less-known object is rightly believed to exist in some other better-known object in quite another sphere of life? This common factor in each object, when it has been made the basis of a parallel examination of them both, makes it possible for us to achieve a single true judgment about each of them as forming one of a pair.
YOUNG SOCRATES: That appears to be how it works.
STRANGER: Would we be surprised, then, to find our own mind reacting in the same way to the letters with which the universe is spelled out? Truth sometimes guides the mind to a comprehension of every member of some groups of things and yet the same mind a moment later is hopelessly adrift in its attempt to cope with the members that make up another group. Somehow or other it makes a right judgment of a particular combination of elements but when it sees the same elements transferred to the long and very difficult syllables of everyday existence, it fails to recognize again the very elements it discerned a moment before.
YOUNG SOCRATES: One cannot wonder at it.
STRANGER: It is impossible, is it not, to achieve real understanding in an approach to any part of the total area of true reality, however small, if one begins from a false opinion?
YOUNG SOCRATES: I should say that it is quite impossible.
STRANGER: Well then, if this is the true state of the case, you and I could claim to be sound in our former method and in what we plan to do now. We have tried to discover the nature of example in general by studying a small and particular example of example. What we intend now is to discover scientifically by means of the method of
example the nature of 'tendance' as applied to the whole community, and we intend to do it by taking from lesser realms the quality identical with the kingly quality and to use its lesser manifestation there in order to discern its supreme manifestation in him.

YOUNG SOCRATES: We will hope so.

STRANGER: So we must take up once again an earlier stage of our discussion. For seeing that there prove to be any number of competitors to dispute with the kingly class the duties of the tendance of states, we must surely set aside all competitors and leave only the king in possession. It was to help us to this end that we decided that we needed to employ an example.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: Well then, what example is there on a really small scale which we can take and set beside kingship, and which, because it comprises an activity common to it and to kingship can be of real help to us in finding what we are looking for? By heaven, Socrates, I believe I know one. Do you agree that, if there is no other example ready to hand, it would be quite in order for us to select the art of weaving for the purpose. Would you be prepared for us to choose out weaving—if there is nothing else obviously suitable? Moreover, if you agree, we will not take the whole of weaving, for I think that a part of it, the art of weaving woolens, will prove adequate for us. I suspect that just this section of the weaver's art, if it were chosen as our example, would give the evidence we require concerning the statesman.

YOUNG SOCRATES: It might well prove to be so.

STRANGER: No dallying, then! Why should we not divide weaving now just as we divided the other classes of things, dividing it into its true parts? We must run through each stage as briefly and quickly as we can so as to come back to what is relevant to our present discussion.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What do you mean?

STRANGER: I can best explain by making the actual division for you.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Excellent!

STRANGER: All we make and all we get has one of two aims—the aim of doing something, or the aim of preventing something being done. Preventives may be divided into (a) charms, divine or human, against evils and (b) protections—protections into (a) warlike armaments or defenseworks and (b) other means of fending off—nonmilitary means of fending off into (a) screens and (b) protections from storm and heat—protections from storm and heat into (a) housing and (b) shields for the person—shields for the person into (a) blankets spread below and (b) garments spread around. Garments that we put around us are of one piece or compounded of several. Those compounded of several are either stitched or combined by
fall short of it? Is it not just this matter of attaining the due measure which marks off good men from bad in human society?

YOUNG SOCRATES: It is evident.

STRANGER: Then we must posit two types and two standards of greatness and smallness. We must not assert as we did just now that the only standard possible is that of relative comparison. We have just seen how we must amend the statement. The standard of relative comparison will remain, but we must acknowledge a second standard, which is a standard of comparison with the due measure. Do we want to know why this must be admitted?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Why is it needed?

STRANGER: If a man refuses to admit the possibility of a 'greater' except in relation to a 'lesser' he will rule out all possibility of relating it to a due measure, will he not?

YOUNG SOCRATES: He will.

STRANGER: Are we really prepared for the consequences of this refusal? Are we going to abolish the arts and all their products? In particular, shall we deprive statecraft, which we are trying to define, and weaving, which we have just defined, of their very existence? For it seems clear to me that all such arts guard against exceeding the due measure or falling short of it. Certainly they do not treat such excess or defect as meaningless—on the contrary, they shun it as a very real peril. In fact it is precisely by this effort they make to maintain the due measure that they achieve effectiveness and beauty in all that they produce.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is very true.

STRANGER: But you must admit that if we dismiss statecraft as unreal, we shall have blocked all means of approach to any subsequent study of the science of kingly rule.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Obviously.

STRANGER: Must we not do now what we had to do when discussing the Sophist? We had to insist then on the admission of an additional postulate, that 'what is “not x” nevertheless exists.' We had to introduce this postulate because the only alternative to asserting it which our argument left us was to allow the Sophist to escape definition altogether. In our present discussion too there is an additional postulate on which we must insist, and it is this. 'Excess and deficiency are measurable not only in relative terms but also in respect of attainment of a norm or due measure.' For if we cannot first gain assent to this postulate, we are bound to fail if we advance the claim that a man possesses statecraft, or indeed that a man possesses any other of the special forms of knowledge that function in human society.

YOUNG SOCRATES: In that case we must certainly follow the precedent and admit the additional postulate in our present discussion too.
visible embodiment, the existents which are of highest value and chief
importance, are demonstrable only by reason and are not to be apprehended by any other means. All our present discussions have the aim
of training us to apprehend this highest class of existents. For purposes of practice, however, it is easier in every case to work on lesser
objects rather than on greater ones.

YOUNG SOCRATES: You are quite right.
STRANGER: Let us then recall what led us to this long digression on these matters.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What was it?

STRANGER: Was it not mainly due to the impatience we felt and expressed at the long-windedness, as we presumed to call it, of our definition of the art of weaving? We felt a like impatience with the long account of reversal of rotation in the universe and with our inquiry into the Sophist when we had to discuss the existence of not-being. We conceived the notion that these discussions had been too lengthy, and we blamed ourselves for this because we feared that they had been irrelevant too. Please realize, therefore, that the principles we have just worked out together apply to all discussions of this kind and not just to this one, and that they are intended to prevent any like apprehensions in future.

YOUNG SOCRATES: It shall be so, sir, but, pray, proceed.

STRANGER: I say then, that it is your duty and mine to observe the principles we have just laid down whenever we have to accord praise or blame to an argument on the score of its length or its brevity. The length of one discourse is not to be compared simply with the length of another. We said just now that we must never forget the second section of the art of measuring, and it is this standard we must always apply in judgments like these—the standard of suitability I mean.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Quite so.

STRANGER: Yes, but even 'suitability' is not in every case an adequate criterion. For instance, we shall not look for such length in an argument as is 'suitable' for giving pleasure, except as a very incidental consideration. Again, ease and speed in reaching the answer to the problem propounded are most commendable, but our principle requires that this be only a secondary, not a primary reason for commending an argument. What we must value first and foremost, above all else, is the philosophical method itself, and this consists in ability to divide according to real forms. If, therefore, either a full-length statement of an argument or an unusually brief one leaves the hearer more able to find real forms, it is this presentation of it which must be diligently carried through; there must be no expression of annoyance at its length or at its brevity as the case may be. Furthermore, if we find a man who criticizes the length of an argu-
ment while a discussion like the present one is in progress and refuses to wait for the proper rounding-off of the process of reasoning, he is not to be permitted to escape thus with a mere grumble that 'these discussions are long drawn out'; he must be required to support his grumble with a proof that a briefer statement of the case would have left him and his fellow disputants better philosophers, more able to demonstrate real truth by reasoned argument. Blame and praise on other grounds, aimed at other merely incidental traits in our discourse, we must simply ignore and act as though we had not heard them at all. Now we may leave this topic, if I carry you with me in this judgment. Let us go back to the statesman, our real subject, and set beside him for comparison the art of weaving as we have just defined it.

**Young Socrates:** Excellent. Let us do as you say.

**Stranger:** Well then, the kingly art has been set apart from most of those occupying the same region—from all, that is to say, which have to do with control of herds. But in the actual community of citizens there are other arts not yet distinguished from statesmanship. They comprise both contributory and directive productive arts, and these must first be distinguished.

**Young Socrates:** Very well.

**Stranger:** Do you realize that in this case they resist division into two? I think that the reason will become evident to us as we go on to enumerate them.

**Young Socrates:** Let us do so then.

**Stranger:** Seeing that we cannot bisect them, let us divide them according to their natural divisions as we would carve a sacrificial victim. For we must in every case divide into the minimum number of divisions that the structure permits.

**Young Socrates:** How shall we do it then, in the present instance?

**Stranger:** As we did before. All the arts which provide tools for weaving we distinguished then as 'contributory.'

**Young Socrates:** We did.

**Stranger:** We must do the same now as then, but with even greater care. Every art which fashions any object, large or small, which ministers to the needs of an organized human community must be classed as 'contributory.' For without the things provided by these arts there could be no community and so no art of rule, and yet we can hardly regard it as the duty of the kingly art to produce any of these things.

**Young Socrates:** No.

**Stranger:** We are attempting a difficult thing when we try to distinguish this instrumental class of arts from the others. For anything whatever can be shown with some plausibility to be an
instrumental means to something or other. However, there is a class of things a community must acquire to which we must proceed to give a different name.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** In what way different?

**STRANGER:** In that its function differs from that of instruments. It is not made, as an instrument is, with a view to the production of something but in order to preserve a thing once it has been produced.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What kind of thing do you mean?

**STRANGER:** A class of objects wrought in the greatest variety of shapes and used for holding liquids or solids, some made for standing on the fire, some not able to do so. As a general name we term such an object a ‘container.’ It is a ubiquitous class of objects, and again, I think, the arts manufacturing it have nothing whatever to do with the art of the ruler which we are now seeking.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Nothing at all.

**STRANGER:** We must now recognize a third class of things to be acquired, also a very large one. Some things belonging to it are on land, others on water; some move from place to place, others do not; some are of high honor, others are not so distinguished. All share one name and form a class because each is made to support something or serve as a base for something.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What common name have they?

**STRANGER:** ‘Carriage,’ I should say—and the production of such things is the work of the carpenter, the potter, or the chariot builder, not of the statesman.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** I understand.

**STRANGER:** What is our fourth class? Must we not distinguish from all these three a further class to which most of the things mentioned in our definition of weaving belong—the whole class of clothing, most armor, all walls, all earth or stonework defenses erected around a city, and many other such things. All exist for defensive protection and so the whole class can best be called ‘defenses.’ To provide these is in most cases the work of the builder or weaver, and never that of the statesman.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Of course.

**STRANGER:** Might we agree to name a fifth class including all arts concerned in decoration and portraiture and every art which produces artistic representations whether in these visual arts or for the ear in poetry and music? The works all these arts produce are wrought simply to give pleasure, and all may properly be included under one description.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What is that?

**STRANGER:** We use the expression ‘diversion,’ do we not?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, what of it?

**STRANGER:** Then this is the name we can apply to the products
of this whole group of arts. None of them has a serious purpose; all are performed for pure amusement.

**YOUNG Socrates:** I think I understand this too.

**Stranger:** Consider now those arts which provide the stuffs which are wrought by the arts we have been talking about. This is a most various class of arts. Often such an art is itself working on the products of several yet more primitive arts. Shall we not name this the sixth kind?

**YOUNG Socrates:** Of what are you thinking?

**Stranger:** Gold and silver and all mined metals, all the pioneer work done by the woodman and the sawmill to provide material for carpentry and wickerwork, the currier’s art which removes the skins of animals, the art of stripping bark which has the same function in the plant realm, and all arts kindred to these, the arts of making cork, papyrus, and rope. All these arts produce the main types of raw material for working up into the more complex kinds of objects which we use. Let us call this class of object by the general description, ‘basic material at the stage of its first working when it is not yet wrought into particular objects,’ and the production of this is obviously no concern of the kingly science.

**YOUNG Socrates:** True.

**Stranger:** We come lastly to the getting of food and of all the substances the parts of which are capable of combining with the parts of the body to promote its health. This we will make a seventh class and call it ‘nourishment’ unless we can find some better name for it. Provision of it is rightly to be assigned to the arts of farming, hunting, gymnastics, medicine, or butchering rather than to political science.

**YOUNG Socrates:** Of course.

**Stranger:** I think that possessions of practically every kind that we find belonging to men have been enumerated in these seven classes, with the single exception of tame living creatures. Listen while I run through the list. First place in it should really have been taken by ‘basic material at its first working’; after that come instruments, then vessels, carriages, defenses, diversions, and nourishments. We may neglect any class of merely slight importance which may have escaped us, for it can be made to fit in one or other of these main classes. For example, consider the class consisting of coins, seals, and every other kind of engraved dies. These have not, as a class, one of the great classes with which all coincide. Some have to be subsumed under ‘diversions,’ some under ‘instruments’; it is a forced classification, but they can be made to fit into one or other of these classes somehow or other. As for tame animals other than slaves, all these clearly come under the art of nourishing herds which we have previously analyzed.

**YOUNG Socrates:** Yes, they do.
STRANGER: The class that remains, then, is that of slaves and personal servants of all kinds. It is just here that I strongly suspect that those will be discovered who really dispute the fashioning of the web of state with the king in the way that we found spinners, carders, and the rest disputing the fashioning of clothes with the weavers. All the others, since they pursue what we have described as 'contributory' arts, have been disposed of along with their occupations which we have enumerated just now, and thus they have all been severed from any share in the kingly art of ruling the state.

YOUNG SOCRADES: So at any rate it would seem.

STRANGER: Come then, let us examine the rest and approach them more closely to scrutinize them more effectively.

YOUNG SOCRADES: Let us do so.

STRANGER: The most extensive class of servants, as seen from our new vantage point, we find to be engaged in pursuits and sunk in a condition of life quite contrary to those we had suspected we might discover.

YOUNG SOCRADES: To whom do you refer?

STRANGER: To those who are bought and sold and so become their master’s property. No one would think of challenging our description of these as slaves or our contention that they cannot possibly claim any share in the practice of the art of ruling.

YOUNG SOCRADES: That goes without saying.

STRANGER: But what of servants who are personally free? What of those among them who of their own volition place themselves and their services at the disposal of the various craftsmen we have named and effect a systematic distribution of agricultural and manufactured products maintaining an economic balance between them? Some of these do their work at home in the market square, but others are travelers from city to city, either overland or by sea routes. They exchange money for goods or one currency for another. Our names for them are money-changers, merchants, venturers, retailers. They cannot be said to dispute the province of the ruler, can they?

YOUNG SOCRADES: I wonder if they might—in the realm of commerce, that is to say.

STRANGER: Certainly not. You can be sure that such men who can be hired for pay, who work for a daily wage and who are always ready to work for any employer, will never be found daring to claim any share in the art of ruling.

YOUNG SOCRADES: No, of course not.

STRANGER: But there are those who render other kinds of service.

YOUNG SOCRADES: What kinds of service? Whom do you mean?

STRANGER: Heralds and clerks, who often develop great facility from long performance of their form of service, and certain other very
able minor civil servants who do all manner of administrative work for the elected officials. What shall we call these?

**Young Socrates:** What you just called them—civil servants, but not rulers exercising an independent authority in the state.

**Stranger:** I was not cheated by a mere dream, I think, when I said that it was here that the king's serious challengers in the art of rule would reveal themselves. But how strange to have to look for them in a servant class!

**Young Socrates:** Very strange.

**Stranger:** Now let us tackle those we have not yet put under examination. First come the soothsayers, practicing their particular form of expert ministration. For do we not recognize them as serving as interpreters of the gods to men?

**Young Socrates:** Yes.

**Stranger:** Next come the priestly tribe. According to the orthodox view they understand how to offer our gifts to the gods in sacrifices in a manner pleasing to them, and they know, too, the right forms of prayer for petitioning the gods to bestow blessings on us. Both of these expert activities are parts of the art of ministration, are they not?

**Young Socrates:** Well, it would seem that they are.

**Stranger:** In that case I think that we are coming at last upon the tracks of our quarry, so to speak. For the priest and the diviner have great social standing and a keen sense of their own importance. They win veneration and respect because of the high tasks they undertake. This is shown in the fact that in Egypt none can be king unless he belongs to the priestly caste, and if a man of some other caste succeeds in forcing his way to the throne, he must then be made a priest by special ordination. In many of the Greek cities also one finds that the duty of making the chief sacrifice on the state's behalf is laid upon the chief officers of state. You have a very striking example of it here in Athens, for I am led to understand that the most solemn ancestral sacrifices of this nation are the responsibility of the archon whom the lot designates as King-Archon.

**Young Socrates:** That is so.

**Stranger:** Very well, we must study these kings chosen by lot and these priests with their ministerial assistants, very closely. But we must also look at another group—quite a large mob, in fact, which is coming clearly into view now that all these particular groups have been distinguished.

**Young Socrates:** And who are these you speak of?

**Stranger:** A very queer crowd.

**Young Socrates:** What do you mean?

**Stranger:** A race of many tribes—or so they seem to be at first sight. Some are like lions, some like centaurs, or similar monsters. A great many are satyrs or chameleons, beasts that are masters
of quick change in order to conceal their weakness. Indeed they take each other's shapes and characters with bewildering rapidity. Yes, Socrates, and I think I have now identified these gentlemen.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Tell me about them. You seem to look upon a strange sight.

**STRANGER:** Yes, strange until recognized! I was actually impressed by them myself at first sight. Coming suddenly on this strange cry of players acting their part in public life I did not know what to make of them.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What players can these be?

**STRANGER:** The chief wizards among all the Sophists, the chief pundits of the deceiver's art. Such impersonators are hard to distinguish from the real statesmen and kings; yet we must distinguish them and thrust them aside if we are to see clearly the king we are seeking.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Well, we must not abandon the search.

**STRANGER:** No, I agree. Tell me this now.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Well?

**STRANGER:** Is not monarchy one of the possible forms of government as we know it?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes.

**STRANGER:** Next to monarchy one would naturally mention the constitution in which it is the few who wield power.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes.

**STRANGER:** Then the third type must be the rule of the many—democracy as it is called.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Of course.

**STRANGER:** These are the three main constitutions, but do not the three in a sense become five by evolving two further types out of themselves?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What are these?

**STRANGER:** If we consider the violence or consent, the poverty or riches, the law-abidingness or disregard of law which they exhibit we shall find that two of the three forms of government are really twofold and can therefore be divided. Monarchy then yields us two forms, called tyranny and constitutional monarchy, respectively.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes.

**STRANGER:** Constitutions where the few wield power can always be similarly divided; the subdivisions are aristocracy and oligarchy.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Quite so.

**STRANGER:** In the case of democracy we do not usually alter the name. Democracy is always 'democracy' whether the masses control the wealthy by force or by consent and whether or not it abides strictly by the laws.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** That is true.
STRANGER: What then? Do we imagine that any of these constitutions can be declared a 'true' constitution so long as the only criteria for judging it are whether one, few, or many rule, whether it be rich or poor, whether it rule by violence or consent, whether it have or lack a code of laws?

YOUNG SOCRATES: But what prevents our judging it to be a true constitution by such criteria?

STRANGER: Try to follow what I am going to say and you will be bound to see more clearly.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What line are you going to take?

STRANGER: Shall we abide by our original argument or are we now going against it?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Which argument do you mean?

STRANGER: We decided, did we not, that the art of rule is one of the sciences?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Furthermore we agreed that it is a particular kind of science. Out of the whole class of sciences we selected the judging class and more particularly the directive class.

YOUNG SOCRATES: We did.

STRANGER: We divided the directive into direction of lifeless things and direction of living beings, and by this process of subdivision we arrived by regular stages where we are now, never losing sight of the fact that statesmanship is a form of knowledge but unable as yet to say precisely what form of knowledge it is.

YOUNG SOCRATES: You are quite right.

STRANGER: Do we realize, then, that the real criterion in judging constitutions must not be whether few or many rule, whether rule is by violence or consent, or whether the rulers are poor or rich? If we are going to abide by our previous conclusions, the criterion must be the presence or absence of an art directing the ruling.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, for we simply must abide by those conclusions.

STRANGER: Then we are forced to look at the issue in this light. In which, if any, of these constitutions do we find the art of ruling being practiced in the actual government of men? What art is more difficult to learn? But what art is more important to us? We must see it for what it is so as to be able to decide which are the other public figures we must remove from the true king's company, those persons who claim to be statesmen, who win over the mass of men to believe them to be statesmen, but are in actual fact nothing of the kind.

YOUNG SOCRATES: We must indeed, for this was the task set for our discussion.

STRANGER: Do you think that any considerable number of men in a particular city will be capable of acquiring the art of statesmanship?
Young Socrates: That is quite out of the question.

Stranger: In a city with a population of a thousand, could a hundred, say, acquire it satisfactorily—or could fifty, perhaps?

Young Socrates: Statesmanship would be the easiest of the arts if so many could acquire it. We know quite well that there would never be fifty first-class draughts players among a thousand inhabitants—that is, not if they were judged by proper inter-Hellenic standards. How much less can you expect to find fifty kings! For according to our former argument it is only the man possessed of the art of kingship who must be called a king, though he is just as much a king when he is not in power as when he is.

Stranger: You have very rightly recalled that point. I think it follows that if the art of government is to be found in this world at all in its pure form, it will be found in the possession of one or two, or, at most, of a select few.

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: On this principle it is the men who possess the art of ruling and these only, whom we are to regard as rulers, whatever constitutional form their rule may take. It makes no difference whether their subjects be willing or unwilling; they may rule with or without a code of laws; they may be poor or wealthy. It is the same with doctors. We do not assess the medical qualification of a doctor by the degree of willingness on our part to submit to his knife or cautery or other painful treatment. Doctors are still doctors whether they work according to fixed prescriptions or without them and whether they be poor or wealthy. So long as they control our health on a scientific basis, they may purge and reduce us or they may build us up, but they still remain doctors. The one essential condition is that they act for the good of our bodies to make them better instead of worse, and treat men's ailments in every case as healers acting to preserve life. We must insist that in this disinterested scientific ability we see the distinguishing mark of true authority in medicine—and of true authority everywhere else as well.

Young Socrates: Quite so.

Stranger: Then the constitution par excellence, the only constitution worthy of the name, must be the one in which the rulers are not men making a show of political cleverness but men really possessed of scientific understanding of the art of government. Then we must not take into consideration on any sound principle of judgment whether their rule be by laws or without them over willing or unwilling subjects or whether they themselves be rich men or poor men.

Young Socrates: No.

Stranger: They may purge the city for its better health by putting some of the citizens to death or banishing others. They may lessen the citizen body by sending off colonies like bees swarming off
from a hive, or they may bring people in from other cities and naturalize them so as to increase the number of citizens. So long as they work on a reasoned scientific principle following essential justice and act to preserve and improve the life of the state so far as may be, we must call them real statesmen according to our standards of judgment and say that the state they rule alone enjoys good government and has a real constitution. We must go on to say that all the other state fabrics called constitutions are not genuine, but counterfeit; they imitate the true constitution. Those which we call law-abiding copy it fairly closely, but the rest are more or less shocking caricatures of it. **Young Socrates:** All the rest, sir, I believe to have been spoken in due measure—but the saying about ruling without laws is a hard saying for us to hear. **Stranger:** You are a little too quick for me, Socrates! I was just going to cross-examine you to see if you really accepted all I have said or felt some objection. I realize, however, from what you say that the point we are anxious to discuss in detail is this question whether a good governor can govern without laws. **Young Socrates:** Yes, it is. **Stranger:** In one sense it is evident that the art of kingship does include the art of lawmaking. But the political ideal is not full authority for laws but rather full authority for a man who understands the art of kingship and has kingly ability. Do you understand why? **Young Socrates:** No, please tell me why. **Stranger:** Law can never issue an injunction binding on all which really embodies what is best for each; it cannot prescribe with perfect accuracy what is good and right for each member of the community at any one time. The differences of human personality, the variety of men’s activities, and the inevitable unsettlement attending all human experience make it impossible for any art whatsoever to issue unqualified rules holding good on all questions at all times. I suppose that so far we are agreed. **Young Socrates:** Most emphatically. **Stranger:** But we find practically always that the law tends to issue just this invariable kind of rule. It is like a self-willed, ignorant man who lets no one do anything but what he has ordered and forbids all subsequent questioning of his orders even if the situation has shown some marked improvement on the one for which he originally legislated. **Young Socrates:** Yes, that is just how the law treats us all. **Stranger:** It is impossible, then, for something invariable and unqualified to deal satisfactorily with what is never uniform and constant. **Young Socrates:** I am afraid it is impossible. **Stranger:** But why then must there be a system of laws,
seeing that law is not the ideal form of control? We must find out why a legal system is necessary.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** We must.

**STRANGER:** You have courses of training here in Athens, have you not, just as they have in other cities—courses in which pupils are trained in a group to fit themselves for athletic contests in running or in other sports?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Of course. We have quite a number of them.

**STRANGER:** Let us call to mind the commands which professional trainers give to the athletes under their regimen in these courses.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** In what particular?

**STRANGER:** The view such trainers take is that they cannot do their work in detail and issue special commands adapted to the condition of each member of the group. When they lay down rules for physical welfare they find it necessary to give bulk instructions having regard to the general benefit of the average pupil.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Quite so.

**STRANGER:** That is why we find them giving the same exercises to whole groups of pupils, starting or stopping all of them at the same time in their running, wrestling, or whatever it may be.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes.

**STRANGER:** Similarly we must expect that the legislator who has to give orders to whole communities of human creatures in matters of right and of mutual contractual obligation will never be able in the laws he prescribes for the whole group to give every individual his due with absolute accuracy.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Very probably not.

**STRANGER:** But we shall find him making the law for the generality of his subjects under average circumstances. Thus he will legislate for all individual citizens, but it will be by what may be called a 'bulk' method rather than an individual treatment, and this method of 'bulk' prescription will be followed by him whether he makes a written code of law or refrains from issuing such a code, preferring to legislate by using unwritten ancestral customs.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, and quite rightly so.

**STRANGER:** Of course he is right, Socrates. How could any law-giver be capable of prescribing every act of a particular individual and sit at his side, so to speak, all through his life and tell him just what to do? And if among the few who have really attained this true statesmanship there arose one who was free to give this detailed guidance to an individual, he would hardly put obstacles in his own way by deliberately framing legal codes of the kind we are criticizing.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** That certainly follows, sir, from what has been said.
STRANGER: I would rather say, Socrates, that it follows from what is going to be said.

YOUNG Socrates: And what is that?

STRANGER: Let us put this case to ourselves. A doctor or trainer plans to travel abroad and expects to be away from his charges for quite a long time. The doctor might well think that his patients would forget any verbal instructions he gave and the trainer might think likewise. In these circumstances each might want to leave written reminders of his orders—do you not think so yourself, Socrates?

YOUNG Socrates: Exactly, sir.

STRANGER: Well now, suppose our doctor did not stay abroad as long as he had expected and so came back the sooner to his patients. Would he hesitate to substitute different prescriptions for the original ones if his patients’ condition happened to be better than anticipated because of a climatic improvement or some other unusual and unexpected development of that kind? Would the doctor feel it his duty to maintain stubbornly that there must be no transgression of the strict letter of those original prescriptions of his? Would he refuse to issue new prescriptions or conditions, or condemn a patient who was venturing to act contrary to the prescriptions he had written out for him? Would the doctor declare all such action must be wrong because those former prescriptions were the true canons of medicine and of health and therefore that all contravention of them must lead to disease and be contrary to medical science? Surely any such claims, in circumstances where a science is involved and a real art is at work, would only make the man who made the claim and his precious prescriptions supremely ridiculous.

YOUNG Socrates: Yes, it would indeed.

STRANGER: Imagine then the case of a scientific legislator. Suppose that by a written code or by support given to unwritten customs he has laid down what is just and honorable and what is not, and what benefits society and what hurts it. Suppose him to do this service for the several communities of the human flock who live in their cities as their appointed pasture shepherded by the codes their legislators have provided. If this man, who drew up his code by the art of statesmanship, wishes to amend it, or if another scientific legislator of this kind appears on the scene, will these be forbidden to enact new laws differing from the earlier ones? Surely such a prohibition would appear as ridiculous in the case of the legislator as it was in the case of the doctor, would it not?

YOUNG Socrates: Of course.

STRANGER: But are you familiar with the argument one usually hears advanced when an issue like this is raised?

YOUNG Socrates: No, I cannot remember it at the moment, at any rate.
STRANGER: It is quite a plausible argument, I grant that. They contend that if a man discovers better laws than those already enacted he is entitled to get them brought into effect, but only if in every instance he has first persuaded his own city to accept them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: But what of this? Surely this is a sound contention.

STRANGER: It may be, but answer this question. Suppose a man fails to persuade his city and forces his better laws upon it, what name are we to apply to force so used? But no, do not answer me that question yet, for there are others to be answered first.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What can they be?

STRANGER: Consider once more the case of the patient under the doctor’s treatment. Suppose that the doctor fails to persuade the patient but has a mastery of medical knowledge, and suppose that he forces a particular course of treatment which goes against written prescription but is actually more salutary on a child patient, maybe, or on a man or a woman. What are we to call force of this kind? Whatever we decide to call it, we shall not call it ‘the sin against true medicine’ or ‘a breach of the laws of health.’ Surely the very last thing a patient who is so constrained is entitled to say is that the doctor’s act in applying the constraint was contrary to good medicine and an aggravation of his disease.

YOUNG SOCRATES: You are quite right.

STRANGER: By what name, then, do we call the sin against the art of statesmanship? Would it not be called dishonor, vice, injustice?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Assuredly.

STRANGER: What, then, shall we say of citizens of a state who have been forced to do things which are contrary to written laws and ancestral customs but are nevertheless juster, more effective, and more noble than the directions of these traditional authorities? How shall we regard censure by these citizens of the force which has applied in these circumstances? Unless they wish to appear ridiculous in the extreme there is one thing they must refrain from saying. They must not assert in any such instance that in being subjected to compulsion they have suffered disgrace, injustice, or evil at the hands of those who compelled them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is quite true.

STRANGER: Can it be the case that acts imposed under compulsion are right if the compeller is rich, but wrong if he is poor? Surely what matters is that with or without persuasion, rich or poor, according to a code or against it, the ruler does what is really beneficial. These are the real issues and all is well if he passes this test, the only genuine test of good government in a community and the only principle by which the understanding and upright ruler will administer the affairs of those whom he rules. The ship’s captain fixes his attention on the real welfare at any given time of his ship and his crew. He lays down no written enactments but supplies a law in action by
practical application of his knowledge of seamanship to the needs of the voyage. It is in this way that he preserves the lives of all in his ship. Would not a true constitution be just like this and work in the same way if the rulers really understood what government is and employed their art as a stronger power for good than any written laws? By rulers with this sound attitude of mind no wrong can possibly be done so long as they keep firmly to the one great principle, that they must always administer impartial justice to their subjects under the guidance of intelligence and the art of government. Then they will not only preserve the lives of their subjects but reform their characters too, so far as human nature permits of this.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** There can be no objection to your last remarks at any rate.

**STRANGER:** No, nor can there be to my earlier ones either.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** To which are you referring?

**STRANGER:** You remember that we said that in no community whatsoever could it happen that a large number of people received this gift of political wisdom and the power to govern by pure intelligence which would accompany it. Only in the hands of the select few or of the enlightened individual can we look for that right exercise of political power which is itself the one true constitution. For we must call all other constitutions mere imitations of this. Some are more perfect copies of it; others are grosser and less adequate imitations.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What do you really mean by this? For I must admit that I did not really understand what you said before about these ‘imitations.’

**STRANGER:** But I must make you understand. It would be a serious failing to start a discussion of this issue and then simply drop it without exposing the error which is rampant today in all that is said about it.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** And what is this error?

**STRANGER:** That is what we must now seek out, though it involves a search over unfamiliar ground and the error is hard to discover. We may say, then, that there is only one constitution in the true sense—the one we have described. For the rest of them owe their very preservation to their following a code of laws enacted for this true state and to a strict adherence to a rule which we admit to be desirable though it falls short of the ideal.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What rule is this?

**STRANGER:** The rule that none of the citizens may venture to do any act contrary to the laws, and that if any of them ventures to do such act, the penalty is to be death or the utmost rigor of punishment. This is the justest and most desirable course as a second best when the ideal we have just described has been set aside. We must now go on to say how this state of affairs we have just called second best is achieved in practice, must we not?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, we must.
STRANGER: Let us go back once again to the parallel cases with which we have constantly to compare the ruler who really is a statesman.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Who are they?

STRANGER: Our good friend the ship's captain and the doctor 'worth a dozen other men.' Let us picture to ourselves a situation in which they might find themselves and see how it all works out in their case.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What situation?

STRANGER: Suppose we all suddenly decided that we are the victims of the worst possible outrages at their hands. Every doctor, you see, can preserve the life of any he will among us, and can hurt any he will by knife or cautery or by demanding fees which are nothing but imposed taxes—for only the tiniest proportion of them is spent on medicaments for the patient and all the rest goes to keep the doctor and his household. Their final enormity is to accept bribes from the patient's relations or from his enemies and put him to death. Ships' captains are guilty of a different set of crimes, but they are just as heinous. They will enter into a conspiracy to put out to sea with you and then leave you stranded, or else they will scuttle the ship and throw the passengers overboard—and these are not all their misdeeds. Suppose we formed this view of doctors and captains and then held a council at which the following decree was passed.

Neither medicine nor seamanship may be trusted in future with absolute control in its particular sphere, either over slaves or over free citizens. We therefore resolve to gather together an assembly of all, or of the wealthy among, the people. It shall be lawful for men of no calling or men of any other calling to advise this assembly on seamanship and medicine—that is to say, on the drugs and surgical instruments appropriate to the treatment of the sick, on ships and their tackle, on the handling of vessels, and on perils of the sea, including risks arising from wind and tide, risks arising from encountering pirates, and risks arising from maneuver of warships against enemy warships in the event of a naval engagement.

So much for the decree on these matters. The executive is to embody this decree of the assembly of the people—based, you remember, on the advice of a few doctors and sailors maybe, but certainly on the advice of many unqualified people too—in laws which they are to inscribe on tablets of wood and of stone, and in the case of some of the rules so resolved upon, they must see that they find their place among the unwritten ancestral customs. Thereafter forever medicine and navigation may only be practiced according to these laws and customs.

YOUNG SOCRATES: A pretty state of affairs this!

STRANGER: But we have not done yet. Suppose that they resolve further to appoint magistrates chosen by lot annually from the
citizen body, whether from the wealthy only or from all citizens. Some of these magistrates, once they are appointed, are to take command of ships and navigate them, others are to cure the sick according to the written code.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** This is getting worse!

**STRANGER:** But we have not done—see what follows. When the year of office of each of these magistrates expires, a court must be established and a jury chosen by lot, perhaps from among wealthier citizens whose names are on a list of previously selected jurors, perhaps from the people as a whole. The magistrates are to be summoned before this court and it is to subject them to audit. It is open to anyone to lay an accusation against them that during their year of office they failed to sail the ships according to the written laws or the ancient custom of our forebears. Similar charges may be brought concerning the healers of the sick. If the verdict goes against any of them, the court must assess the penalty or the fine the convicted parties must pay.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Well then, the man who took office voluntarily in such a society would deserve any punishment and any fine that might be imposed.

**STRANGER:** Then there can be further misdemeanors, and we must enact a law to provide against them. It will be a law against independent research. If a man be found guilty of inquiry into seamanship or medicine in contravention of this law—of inquiry into nautical practice, for instance, or into climatic influences and bodily temperatures, and especially if he be guilty of airing theories of his own on such things, action must be taken to suppress him. First we must deny him the title of 'doctor' or 'captain.' Instead we must call him a man with his head in the clouds, one of these chattering Sophists. Furthermore it will be lawful for any citizen so desiring to indict him before a court of justice—or what passes for such a court—on the charge of corrupting the younger men and influencing them to go in for seamanship and medicine in an illegal manner by setting up as doctors or captains on their own authority. If he is found guilty of influencing young or old against the laws and written enactments, he shall suffer the utmost penalties. For there can be no claim to possess wisdom greater than the wisdom of the laws. No one need be ignorant of seamanship or medicine, of sailing regulations or health regulations. The laws are there written out for our conning; the ancient customs are firmly established in our midst. Any who really desire to learn may learn.

Suppose, Socrates, that all the arts are treated like this. How do you imagine that generalship and hunting in all its forms would be affected? What would happen to painting and other representational arts, or to building and manufacture of all types of implements under such conditions, and how could farming or any cultivation whatever
be carried on? Imagine the rearing of horses and other animals tied down to legal prescription, or divination and similar ministerial functions so controlled. What would legally governed draughts be like or legal mathematics, whether simple arithmetic, plane geometry, stereometry, or kinematics? What would the world be like if everything worked on this principle, organized throughout according to written laws instead of according to the relevant arts?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** It is quite clear that the arts as we know them would be annihilated and that they could never be resurrected because of this law which puts an embargo on all research. The result would be that life, which is hard enough as it is, would be quite impossible then and not to be endured.

**STRANGER:** Yes, but there is a further possible degradation to consider. Suppose we compel each of these arts to function according to a legal code and place a magistrate in charge of this code either by election or by the fall of the lot, and make him rule according to it. Suppose then that he has no regard for the code and acts only from motives of ambition and favoritism. He embarks on a course of action contrary to law but does not act on any basis of scientific knowledge. Evil as the former state was, will not this latter one be still worse?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** It will indeed.

**STRANGER:** The laws which have been laid down represent the fruit of experience—one must admit that. Each of them has been put forward by some advocate who has been fortunate enough to hit on the right method of commending it and who has thus persuaded the public Assembly to enact it. Any man who dares by his action to infringe these laws is guilty of a wrong many times greater than the wrong done by strict laws, for such transgression, if tolerated, would do even more than a rigid code to pervert all ordered activity.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, of course it would.

**STRANGER:** Then so long as men enact laws and written codes governing any department of life, our second-best method of government is to forbid any individual or any group to perform any act in contravention of these laws.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** True.

**STRANGER:** Then laws would seem to be written copies of scientific truth in the various departments of life they cover, copies based as far as possible on the instructions received from those who really possess the scientific truth on these matters.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, of course.

**STRANGER:** And yet we must never lose sight of the truth we stated before. The man with the real knowledge, the true statesman, will in many instances allow his activities to be dictated by his art and pay no regard to written prescriptions. He will do this whenever he is convinced that there are measures which are better than the instruc-
tions he previously wrote and sent to people at a time when he could not be there to control them personally.

**Young Socrates:** Yes, that was what we said.

**Stranger:** So an individual or a group who possess a code of laws but try to introduce some change in them because they consider it an improvement are doing the same thing according to their lights as the true statesman.

**Young Socrates:** Yes.

**Stranger:** But if they acted like this with minds unenlightened by knowledge, they would indeed try to copy the true original, but would copy it very badly. If on the other hand they possessed scientific knowledge, it would no longer be a case of copying at all; it would be the real and original statesmanship we are talking about.

**Young Socrates:** Yes—or so I should say.

**Stranger:** Now it has been argued already and we have agreed that no large group of men is capable of acquiring any art, be it what you will.

**Young Socrates:** That stands as our agreed conclusion.

**Stranger:** Granted then that an art of kingly rule exists, the wealthy group or the whole citizen body would never be able to acquire this scientific art of statesmanship.

**Young Socrates:** How could they?

**Stranger:** It seems to follow that there is an invariable rule which these imitative constitutions must obey if they mean to reproduce as far as they can that one real constitution, which is government by a real statesman using real statecraft. They must all keep strictly to the laws once they have been laid down and never transgress written enactments or established national customs.

**Young Socrates:** Quite right.

**Stranger:** When the wealthy seek to copy the ideal constitution we call the constitution which results ‘aristocracy,’ but when they disregard the laws, the constitution produced is ‘oligarchy.’

**Young Socrates:** I suppose so.

**Stranger:** But when one individual governs according to laws, imitating the truly wise ruler, we call him ‘king.’ We make no difference in name between the individual ruler guided by political science and the individual ruler guided by a right opinion and acting according to the laws.

**Young Socrates:** That seems to be so.

**Stranger:** And so if there really were an example of a truly wise ruler in power his name would undoubtedly be the same—‘the king’—it could not be anything else. So the total of the names of the constitutions now under consideration comes to five only.

**Young Socrates:** So it seems.

**Stranger:** But stay, what of the case where one man rules but does not govern his actions either by laws or by ancient customs,
... but claims falsely what only the truly wise ruler has a right to claim, and says that the 'best' course must be taken in defiance of written codes? If in fact it is only his passion and his ignorance that lead him to attempt to copy the true statesman in this defiance of law, must we not call him and all like him by the name of tyrant?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Unquestionably.

STRANGER: So then we have the tyrant and the king, then oligarchy and aristocracy, then democracy, all of which arise when men turn down the idea of the one true and scientific ruler. Men doubt whether any man will ever be found fit to bear such perfect rule. They despair of finding any one man willing and able to rule with moral and intellectual insight and to render every man his due with strictest fairness. They feel sure that a man with such absolute power will be bound to employ it to the hurt and injury of his personal enemies and to put them out of the way. But it remains true that if the ideal ruler we have described were to appear on earth he would be acclaimed, and he would spend his days guiding in strictest justice and perfect felicity that one and only true commonwealth worthy of the name.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is so of course.

STRANGER: We must take things as they are, however, and kings do not arise in cities in the natural course of things in the way the royal bee is born in a beehive—one individual obviously outstanding in body and mind and capable of taking charge of things at once. And therefore it seems men gather together and work out written codes, chasing as fast as they can the fading vision of the true constitution.

YOUNG SOCRATES: So it would seem.

STRANGER: Is it any wonder that under these makeshift constitutions of ours hosts of ills have arisen and more must be expected in the future? They all rest on the sandy foundation of action according to law and custom without real scientific insight. Another art that worked on such a foundation would obviously ruin all that it sought to build up. But something even more remarkable than these besetting ills is the sheer native strength a city possesses nevertheless. For all our cities, as we know, have been subject to such ills for many generations now, and yet some of them have not come to ruin but still stand firm. However, we see many instances of cities going down like sinking ships to their destruction. There have been such wrecks in the past and there surely will be others in the future, caused by the wickedness of captains and crews alike. For these are guilty men, whose sin is supreme ignorance of what matters most. They are men who know little or nothing of real political truth and yet they consider themselves to know it from end to end and suppose that they are better instructed in this art than in any other.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Very true.
Stranger: All these imperfect constitutions are difficult to live under, but we might ask ourselves which of them is hardest to bear and which is most tolerable. Ought we perhaps to examine this matter, though it is not directly relevant to our appointed theme? After all one must remember that, speaking quite generally, the aim of all the actions of men everywhere is to secure for themselves the most tolerable life they can.

Young Socrates: Then we can hardly help considering the question.

Stranger: There is one of three constitutions which you must regard as being at once the hardest to live under and the easiest.

Young Socrates: How do you mean?

Stranger: I just want to remind you that at the beginning of this supplementary discussion we enumerated three constitutions—the rule of one, the rule of the few, and the rule of the many.

Young Socrates: We did.

Stranger: Dividing each of three into two let us make six, having first separated the true constitution from all, calling it the seventh.

Young Socrates: How shall we divide the three others?

Stranger: Under the rule of one we get kingly rule and tyranny; under the rule of the few, as we said, come the auspicious form of it, aristocracy, and also oligarchy. As for the subdividing of democracy, though we gave both forms of it one name previously, we must now treat it as twofold.

Young Socrates: How is this? How can it be divided?

Stranger: By the same division as the others, even though the word 'democracy' proves to be doing double duty. Rule according to law is as possible under democracy as under the other constitutions.

Young Socrates: Yes, it is.

Stranger: This division of democracy into two kinds was not serviceable previously as we indicated at the time, for we were seeking then to define a perfect constitution. Now, however, we have excluded the perfect constitution from our reckoning and have before us those that have to serve us as constitutions in default of it. In this group we find the principle of obedience to law or contravention of law dividing each type of ruler into two types.

Young Socrates: So it seems from the argument that was put forward just now.

Stranger: The rule of one man, if it has been kept within the traces, so to speak, by the written rules we call laws, is the best of all the six. But when it is lawless it is hard, and the most grievous to have to endure.

Young Socrates: So it would seem.

Stranger: As for the rule of a few, just as the few constitute a middle term between the one and the many, so we must regard the
rule of the few as of middle potency for good or ill. The rule of
the many is weakest in every way; it is not capable of any real good or
of any serious evil as compared with the other two. This is because in
democracy sovereignty has been divided out in small portions
among a large number of rulers. If therefore all three constitutions are
law-abiding, democracy is the worst of the three, but if all three flout
the laws, democracy is the best of them. Thus if all constitutions are
unprincipled the best thing to do is to live in a democracy. But when
constitutions are lawful and ordered, democracy is the least desirable,
and monarchy, the first of the six, is by far the best to live under—unless
of course the seventh is possible, for that must always be exalted,
like a god among mortals, above all other constitutions.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Things do seem to work out in this way, and
so we must take your advice and act as you say.

STRANGER: Therefore all who take part in one of these gov-
cernments—apart from the one based on real knowledge—are to be dis-
tinguished from the true statesman. They are not statesmen; they are
party leaders, leaders of bogus governments and themselves as bogus
as their systems. The supreme imitators and tricksters, they are of all
Sophists the arch-Sophists.

YOUNG SOCRATES: It seems to me that the wheel has come full
circle, now that the title of Sophist goes to those who most deserve
it, to the men who get themselves called political leaders.

STRANGER: So this fantastic pageant that seemed like some
strange masque of centaurs or some band of satyrs stands revealed
for what it is. At much pains we have succeeded at last in distinguis-
hing them and setting them apart, as we must, from all true practice of
statesmanship.

YOUNG SOCRATES: So we see.

STRANGER: There remains another task, and it is even more
difficult because the class to be set apart is closer akin to the kingly
ruler and also in itself harder to discern clearly. It seems to me that
we have reached a point where we have to act like gold refiners.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How so?

STRANGER: We are told that at the first stage of their work they
separate off earth and stones and much else from the ore. When these
are gone there still remain those precious substances akin to gold
which are so combined with it as to be separable only in the furnace;
I mean bronze and silver and sometimes adamant as well. These are
removed only with difficulty as the metal is tried in the refining fire
until at last the process yields the sight of unalloyed gold separated
off by itself.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, they do say that refining is done like
that.

STRANGER: It looks as though we are in a like situation. We
have separated off the elements which are quite different from states-
manship, the elements which are quite foreign and repugnant to it, but there still remain the precious elements which are akin to it. These include the art of generalship, the art of administering justice, and that department of the art of public speaking which is closely allied to the kingly art. This last persuades men to do what is right and therefore takes its share in controlling what goes on in a true community. How can we best separate these arts also from statesmanship and so bring out the nature of the statesman as such, in his essential character? That, after all, is our present object.

Young Socrates: Clearly we must make the attempt by one means or another.

Stranger: If trying will do it, he shall be shown in his true character. Music will provide us with an example which will help us in our task. I will begin by putting a question to you.

Young Socrates: What is it?

Stranger: There is such a thing as learning the principles of music or the principles of any of the crafts, is there not?

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: But are we willing to admit that there exists an art of a higher order also concerned with this process of acquiring special skills? This second art is the one whose province is to decide whether or not we ought to learn any particular art.

Young Socrates: Yes, we will attest the existence of an art of this higher order.

Stranger: We must also agree then, that it is to be distinguished from all arts of the lower order.

Young Socrates: Yes.

Stranger: Ought there to be no priority at all as between these two orders of art? On the other hand, if there is to be priority, must the lower order control the higher or the higher guide and control the lower?

Young Socrates: The higher order should control the lower.

Stranger: Your decision is then, that the art which decides whether we learn a skill or not ought to have control of the art which actually teaches us that skill.

Young Socrates: Yes, certainly.

Stranger: Then in the same way the art which decides whether persuasion should or should not be used ought to control the operation of the art of persuasion itself.

Young Socrates: Undoubtedly.

Stranger: Which is the art to which we must assign the task of persuading the general mass of the population by telling them suitable stories rather than by giving them formal instruction?

Young Socrates: I should say that it is obvious that this is the province to be assigned to rhetoric.

Stranger: But to which art must we assign the function of
deciding whether in any particular situation we must proceed by persuasion, or by coercive measures against a group of men, or whether it is right to take no action at all?

**Young Socrates:** The art which can teach us how to decide that will be the art which controls rhetoric and the art of public speaking.

**Stranger:** This activity can be none other than the work of the statesman, I suggest.

**Young Socrates:** Excellent! That is exactly what it is.

**Stranger:** Oratory, it seems, has been quickly set apart from statesmanship. It is distinct from statesmanship, and yet its auxiliary.

**Young Socrates:** Yes.

**Stranger:** Now we must consider the working of another art.

**Young Socrates:** Which is that?

**Stranger:** Consider the taking of decisions on military strategy once war has been declared by the state on an enemy state. What shall we say about this? Is such decision governed by no art at all, or shall we say that there is most certainly an art involved here?

**Young Socrates:** How could we dream of saying that no art is concerned? Surely generalship and the whole art of warfare operates precisely in this field.

**Stranger:** But which is the art which possesses the knowledge and capacity to form a reasoned decision whether to fight or settle a dispute on friendly terms? Is this the work of generalship or does it belong to another art?

**Young Socrates:** Consistency to our earlier argument requires us to say that it is a different one which is involved.

**Stranger:** So if our views here are to be consistent with our earlier views on the place of rhetoric, we must decide that this second art controls generalship.

**Young Socrates:** I agree.

**Stranger:** What art can we attempt to enthrone as queen over that mighty and dreadful art, the art of war in all its range, except the art of truly royal rule?

**Young Socrates:** None other.

**Stranger:** Then we must not describe the art that generals practice as statesmanship, for it proves to be but a servant of statesmanship.

**Young Socrates:** Apparently that is so.

**Stranger:** Now turn to another art and let us consider the activity of judges who make straight judgments.

**Young Socrates:** By all means.

**Stranger:** Does its province extend beyond the sphere of the mutual contractual obligations of the citizens? It has to act in this sphere by judging what is just or unjust according to the standards set up for it and embodied in the legal rules which it has received from
the kingly lawgiver. It shows its peculiar virtue by coming to an impartial decision on the conflicting claims it examines, by refusing to pervert the lawgiver's ordinance through yielding to bribery or threats or sentimental appeals, and by rising above all considerations of personal friendship or enmity.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, that is so. You have given us, sir, a succinct account of the juryman's function and of his duty.

**STRANGER:** We find, then, that the power of the judges is a lesser thing than the power of the king. The judge guards the law and serves the king.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** So it would seem.

**STRANGER:** If you will view the three arts we have spoken of as a group with a common character you will be bound to see that none of them has turned out to be itself the art of statesmanship. This is because it is not the province of the real kingly art to act for itself but rather to control the work of the arts which instruct us in the methods of action. The kingly art controls them according to its power to perceive the right occasions for undertaking and setting in motion the great enterprises of state. The other arts must do what they are told to do by the kingly art.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Precisely so.

**STRANGER:** The three arts we have just treated in detail may not control one another. They may not even control themselves, in fact. Each has its special field of action and each is entitled to the name which designates its proper sphere.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** So it would seem.

**STRANGER:** There is an art which controls all these arts. It is concerned with the laws and with all that belongs to the life of the community. It weaves all into its unified fabric with perfect skill. It is a universal art and so we call it by a name of universal scope. That name is one which I believe to belong to this art and to this alone, the name of statesmanship.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, I agree absolutely.

**STRANGER:** Now that all the classes of arts active in the government of the state have been distinguished, shall we go on to scrutinize statesmanship and base our scrutiny of it on the art of weaving which provides our example for it?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Most certainly.

**STRANGER:** Then we must describe the kingly weaving process. What is it like? How is it done? What is the fabric that results from its labors?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** These are just the questions we must answer.

**STRANGER:** The task of finding the answers is hard, but we cannot shirk it.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** No, we must find them at all costs.
STRANGER: To say that 'one kind of goodness clashes with another kind of goodness' is to preach a doctrine which is an easy target for the disputatious who appeal to commonly accepted ideas.

YOUNG SOCRATES: I do not follow you.

STRANGER: Then let me put the matter in this way. You regard courage as one part of virtue I suppose.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Surely.

STRANGER: Moderation differs from courage but is a specific kind of goodness just as courage is.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: We have now to be daring and make a startling statement about these two virtues.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What is it?

STRANGER: This pair of virtues are in a certain sense enemies from of old, ranged in opposition to each other in many realms of life.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What do you mean?

STRANGER: The doctrine is not a familiar one by any means. I suppose that the usual statement is that all the several parts of goodness are in mutual accord.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Then we must give our very special attention to the matter. Is the position quite so simple as that? Is there not, on the contrary, something inherent in them which keeps alive a family quarrel among them?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Certainly we must consider this. Please tell us how we are to do so.

STRANGER: We must consider instances drawn from all levels of existence of things which we regard as excellent and yet classify as mutually opposed.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Please explain still more clearly.

STRANGER: Take swiftness and speed as an instance—swiftness of mind and body and rapid vibration of sound in a voice. Such swiftness may be seen in an actual living person or it may be represented in music or painting. Have you ever praised examples of such swiftness or listened with approval when one of your friends praised them?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Do you happen to remember the way in which the approval is expressed in all these instances?

YOUNG SOCRATES: No, I can't say that I remember that in the least.

STRANGER: I wonder if I could really manage to put my thoughts on the subject into words and make them clear to you.

YOUNG SOCRATES: I am sure you could.

STRANGER: You seem to think it a light task! However, let us
see the principle at work wherever those mutually opposite qualities are manifested. We admire speed and intensity and vivacity in many forms of action and under all kinds of circumstances. But whether the swiftness of mind or body or the vibrant power of the voice is being praised, we always find ourselves using one word to praise it—the word ‘vigorous.’

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** How so?

**STRANGER:** ‘That is alert and vigorous,’ we say in the first instance, in another case, ‘That is speedy and vigorous,’ or, in yet another case, ‘That is intense and vigorous.’ In all the instances we use this epithet ‘vigorous,’ as applying in common to the people or things concerned, in order to express our approval of this quality in them.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** True.

**STRANGER:** On the other hand, do we not quite often find ourselves approving gentleness and quietness when it is shown in many kinds of human behavior?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, very decidedly.

**STRANGER:** Do we not describe this behavior by using an epithet which is the exact opposite of ‘vigorous,’ which was the term we applied to the other group of things?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** How do you mean?

**STRANGER:** We constantly admire quietness and moderation, in processes of restrained thinking, in gentle deeds, in a smooth deep voice, in steady balance in movement, or in suitable restraint in artistic representation. Whenever we express such approval do we not use the expression ‘controlled’ to describe all these excellences rather than the word ‘vigorous’?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Very true.

**STRANGER:** But when we find either of these kinds of behavior appearing out of its due time, we have different names for each of them and in that case we express our censure by attributing quite contrary qualities when we mention them.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** How so?

**STRANGER:** If speed and swiftness are excessive and unseasonable and if the voice is harsh to the point of being violent we speak of all these as ‘excessive’ and even ‘maniacal.’ Unseasonable heaviness, slowness, or softness we call ‘cowardly’ or ‘indolent.’ One can generalize further. The very classes ‘energy’ and ‘moderation’ are ranged in mutual exclusiveness and in opposition to each other; it is not simply a case of conflict between these particular manifestations of them. They never meet in the activities of life without causing conflicts, and if we pursue the matter further, by studying people whose characters come to be dominated by either of them, we shall find inevitable conflict between them and people of the opposite type.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** In what sphere do these conflicts occur?

**STRANGER:** In all the things we have just considered, of course,
but in many others too, I think. Men react to situations in one way or another according to the affinities of their own dispositions. They favor some forms of action as being akin to their own character, and they recoil from acts arising from opposite tendencies as being foreign to themselves. Thus men come into violent conflict with one another on many issues.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, they seem to do so.

**STRANGER:** Considered as a conflict of temperaments, this is a mere trifle, but when the conflict arises over matters of high public importance it becomes the most inimical of all the plagues which can threaten the life of a community.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What kind of evils do you mean?

**STRANGER:** Of course I mean all which concern the organization of the community as a whole. Men who are notable for moderation are always ready to support 'peace and tranquillity.' They want to keep themselves to themselves and to mind their own business. They conduct all their dealings with their fellow citizens on this principle and are prone to take the same line in foreign policy and preserve peace at any price with foreign states. Because of their indulgence of this passion for peace at the wrong times, whenever they are able to carry their policy into effect they become unwarlike themselves without being aware of it and render their young men unwarlike as well. Thus they are at the mercy of the chance aggressor. He swoops down on them and the result is that within a very few years they and their children and all the community to which they belong wake up to find that their freedom is gone and that they are reduced to slavery.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** You have described a hard and bitter experience.

**STRANGER:** What then is the history of the party whose bent is rather toward strong action? Do we not find them forever dragging their cities into war and bringing them up against powerful foes on all sides just because they love a military existence too fiercely? And what is the result? Either they destroy their country altogether, or else they bring it into subjection to its enemies just as surely as the peace party did.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Yes, that is true too.

**STRANGER:** Can we deny, then, that in these high matters the two types of character concerned are bound to become hostile to one another and so take up opposing party lines?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** We are bound to admit it.

**STRANGER:** We have discovered, then, the answer to the question into which we set out to inquire when we began this conversation. We find that important parts of goodness are at variance with one another and that they set at variance the men in whom they predominate.
YOUNG SOCRATES: So it seems.

STRANGER: There is a further point to consider.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What is it?

STRANGER: Does any art which works by combining materials deliberately choose to make any of its products, even the least important of them, out of a combination of good material with bad? Does not every art, whatever material it works in, reject bad material as far as possible and use what is good and serviceable? The materials may be alike or dissimilar, but surely it is desirable that they should be sound, so that the art may combine them to form one product and fashion them to a structure proper to their specific function.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Surely then the true and genuine statesmanship which we are concerned with could never choose deliberately to construct the life of any community out of a combination of good characters with bad characters? Obviously it will first put the young children to the test in games. After this first test it will go on to entrust the young to competent educators trained to render this particular service, but it will retain direction and oversight of them all the time. This is exactly like weaving. The art of weaving hands over the materials it intends to use for the fabric to the carders and others concerned with preparatory processes, and yet it watches their work at every stage, retaining the direction and oversight itself and indicating to each auxiliary art such duties as it deems that each can usefully perform to make ready the threads for its own task of fashioning the web.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Precisely.

STRANGER: This is the way I see the true statesman dealing with those who rear and educate children according to the educational laws. He keeps the power of direction to himself. The only form of training he will permit is the one by which the educator produces the type of character fitted for his own task of weaving the web of state. He bids the educator encourage the young in these activities and in no others. Some pupils cannot be taught to be courageous and moderate and to acquire the other virtuous tendencies, but are impelled to godlessness and to vaunting pride and injustice by the drive of an evil nature. These the king expels from the community. He puts them to death or banishes them or else he chastises them by the severest public disgrace.

YOUNG SOCRATES: So one usually hears it stated.

STRANGER: Furthermore, he makes those who prove incapable of rising above ignorance and groveling subservience slaves to the rest of the community.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Quite rightly.

STRANGER: The statesman will then take over all the rest—all those who, under the training process, do in fact achieve sufficient nobility of character to stand up to the royal weaving process and yet to
submit to it while it combines them all scientifically into a unity. Those in whom courage predominates will be treated by the statesman as having the firm warplike character as one might call it. The others will be used by him for what we may likewise call the supple, soft, wooflike strands of the web. He then sets about his task of combining and weaving together these two groups exhibiting their mutually opposed characters.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** How does he do it?

**STRANGER:** He first unites that element in their souls which is supernatural by a divine bond, since this element in them is akin to the divine. After this supernatural link will come the natural bond, human ties to supplement the divine ones.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** What do you mean by this? Once more I do not follow.

**STRANGER:** When there arises in the soul of men a right opinion concerning what is good, just, and profitable, and what is the opposite of these—an opinion based on absolute truth and settled as an unshakable conviction—I declare that such a conviction is a manifestation of the divine occurring in a race which is in truth of supernatural lineage.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** It could not be more suitably described.

**STRANGER:** Do we realize that it is the true statesman, in that he is the good and true lawgiver, who alone is able—for who else should possess the power—to forge by the wondrous inspiration of the kingly art this bond of true conviction uniting the hearts of the young folk of whom we were speaking just now—the young folk who have profited as they should from their education?

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** That is certainly as one would expect.

**STRANGER:** The ruler who cannot weld that bond we will never honor with those glorious titles, 'statesman' and 'king.'

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** Most rightly not.

**STRANGER:** Well then, will it not work out like this? The soul full of vigor and courage will be made gentle by its grasp of this truth and there is nothing as well calculated as this to make it a willing member of a community based on justice. If such a soul refused this gift, it will sink in the scale and become savage like a beast.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** True.

**STRANGER:** What of the moderate soul? Sharing this firm conviction of truth, will it not be truly moderate and prudent, or at any rate prudent enough, to meet its public duties? But if it refuses to share this conviction, it deserves to be called foolish and our reproach of it is entirely proper.

**YOUNG SOCRATES:** It is indeed.

**STRANGER:** Do we agree then that this interweaving, this linking together, can never be lasting and permanent if vicious men are joined with other vicious men or good men with vicious? Surely
no art would seriously try to forge such links where these faults of character exist?

**Young Socrates:** How could it?

**Stranger:** But in those of noble nature from their earliest days whose nurture too has been all it should be, the laws can foster the growth of this common bond of conviction and only in these. This is the talisman appointed for them by the design of pure intelligence. This most godlike bond alone can unite the elements of goodness which are diverse in nature and would else be opposing in tendency.

**Young Socrates:** Most true.

**Stranger:** There remain the other bonds, the human ones. When one sets to work with the divine link already forged it is not very difficult to see what these are and then to set about the forging of them.

**Young Socrates:** But what are these links and how can they be forged?

**Stranger:** They are forged by establishing intermarriage between the two types so that the children of the mixed marriages are so shared between them and by restricting private arrangements for marrying off daughters. Most men make unsuitable matches from the point of view of the begetting of children of the best type of character.

**Young Socrates:** What can you mean?

**Stranger:** Would anyone think it worth while to censure in any respect the prevalent practice of pursuing wealth or influence when making such matches?

**Young Socrates:** No, there is nothing very wrong in it.

**Stranger:** But when we are specially concerned with the very people who make much of being 'well connected,' justice requires that we should be all the more outspoken if we find them acting unsuitably.

**Young Socrates:** That is reasonable.

**Stranger:** They do not act on any sound or self-consistent principle. See how they pursue the immediate satisfaction of their desire by hailing with delight those who are like themselves and by disliking those who are different. Thus they assign far too great an importance to their own likes and dislikes.

**Young Socrates:** In what way?

**Stranger:** The moderate natures look for a partner like themselves, and so far as they can, they choose their wives from women of this quiet type. When they have daughters to bestow in marriage, once again they look for this type of character in the prospective husband. The courageous class does just the same thing and looks for others of the same type. All this goes on, though both types should be doing exactly the opposite.

**Young Socrates:** How can they, and why should they?
STRANGER: Because if a courageous character is reproduced for many generations without any admixture of the moderate type, the natural course of development is that at first it becomes superlatively powerful but in the end it breaks out into sheer fury and madness.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is to be expected.

STRANGER: But the character which is too full of modest reticence and untinted by valor and audacity, if reproduced after its kind for many generations, becomes too dull to respond to the challenges of life and in the end becomes quite incapable of acting at all.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, this is also the result one would expect.

STRANGER: I repeat what I was saying. There is no difficulty in forging these human bonds if the divine bond has been forged first. That bond is a conviction about values and standards shared by both types of character. There is one absorbing preoccupation for the kingly weaver as he makes the web of state. He must never permit the gentle characters to be separated from the brave ones; to avoid this he must make the fabric close and firm by working common convictions in the hearts of each type of citizen and making public honors and triumphs subservie this end, and finally, each must be involved with the other in the solemn pledges of matrimony. When he has woven his web smooth and ‘close-woven,’ as the phrase goes, out of men of these differing types, he must entrust the various offices of state to them to be shared in all cases between them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How can he do this?

STRANGER: When a single magistrate happens to be needed, the statesman must choose a man possessing both characteristics and set him in authority. Where several magistrates are wanted he must bring together some representatives of each type to share the duties. Magistrates of the moderate type are exceedingly cautious, fair, and tenacious of precedent, but they lack pungency and the drive which makes for efficiency.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, that certainly seems to be a fair summing up of the case.

STRANGER: The courageous type for their part have far less of the gifts of fairness and caution than their moderate brethren, but they have in a marked degree the drive that gets things done. A community can never function well either in the personal intercourse of its citizens or in its public activities unless both of these elements of character are present and active.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Of course that is so.

STRANGER: Now we have reached the appointed end of the weaving of the web of state. It is fashioned by the statesman’s weaving; the strands run true, and these strands are the gentle and the brave. Here these strands are woven together into a unified character.

For this unity is won where the kingly art draws the life of both types
into a true fellowship by mutual concord and by ties of friendship. It is the finest and best of all fabrics. It infolds all who dwell in the city, bond or free, in its firm contexture. Its kingly weaver maintains his control and oversight over it, and it lacks nothing that makes for happiness so far as happiness is obtainable in a human community.

SOCRATES: You have done what we requested of you, sir, and you have set beside your definition of the Sophist a picture drawn to perfection of the true king and statesman.
PHILEBUS: What I think, and shall continue to think, is that pleasure is victorious whatever happens. But you must decide for yourself, Protarchus.

PROTARCHUS: Now that you have handed over the argument to us, Philebus, you are no longer in a position to agree with Socrates or to disagree.

PHILEBUS: True, but no matter. I wash my hands of the affair, and hereby call the goddess herself to witness that I do so.

PROTARCHUS: You can have ourselves too as additional witnesses to one point, namely that you have said what you have. And now, Socrates, we must attempt—and Philebus may choose to help us or do as he likes—to come to a conclusion on what comes next.

SOCRATES: Yes, we must make the attempt, and plainly we shall begin with the goddess herself, who, according to our friend, is called Aphrodite, though her truest name, he tells us, is Pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: Excellent.

SOCRATES: For myself, Protarchus, in the matter of naming the gods I am always more fearful than you would think a man could be; nothing indeed makes me so afraid. So in this case I call Aphrodite by any name that is pleasing to her, but as for pleasure, I know that it is a thing of variety and, as I said, it is with pleasure that we must start, turning our thoughts to an examination of its nature. Of course the mere word ‘pleasure’ suggests a unity, but surely the forms it assumes are of all sorts and, in a sense, unlike each other. For example, we say that an immoral man feels pleasure, and that a moral man feels it too just in being moral; again, we say the same of a fool whose mind is a mass of foolish opinions and hopes; or once again an intelligent man, we say, is pleased just by being intelligent. Now if anyone asserts that these several kinds of pleasure are like each other, surely he will deserve to be thought foolish?

PROTARCHUS: They are unlike, because they arise from opposite sources, Socrates; nevertheless in themselves they are not opposites. How could pleasure be opposite to pleasure? Surely nothing in the world could be more completely similar than a thing to itself.

SOCRATES: As, of course, color to color. What a man you are! Certainly, in respect simply of its all being color there will be no difference, but for all that everyone recognizes that black is not merely different from white, but in fact its absolute opposite. Then again the same applies as between figure and figure; taken as a class all figure is one, but of its divisions some are absolutely opposite to each other, while others have countless points of difference, and we can find many other instances of the same thing. So you mustn’t put any faith in this argument that makes all sorts of absolutely opposite things into one thing. I am afraid we are going to find pleasures in some cases opposite to pleasures.
father or mother or anyone else listening to him—a little more, and he would victimize even animals, as well as human beings in general, including foreigners, to whom of course he would never show mercy provided he could get hold of an interpreter.

PROTARCHUS: Let me call your attention, Socrates, to the fact that there are plenty of us here, all young people. Aren’t you afraid that we shall join with Philebus in an assault on you, if you keep abusing us? Well, well, we realize what you mean. Perhaps there is some way, some device for getting this bothersome business to oblige us by removing itself from our discussion, and we might discover some more attractive method of approach to the subject; if so, pray do your best about it, and we will keep you company—to the best of our power, that is, for we have a big subject in front of us, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Big indeed, my boys, if I may adopt Philebus’ style of addressing you. Nevertheless there is not, and cannot be, a more attractive method than that to which I have always been devoted, though often in the past it has eluded me so that I was left desolate and helpless.

PROTARCHUS: Do tell us what it is.

SOCRATES: It is a method quite easy to indicate, but very far from easy to employ. It is indeed the instrument through which every discovery ever made in the sphere of the arts and sciences has been brought to light. Let me describe it for your consideration.

PROTARCHUS: Please do.

SOCRATES: There is a gift of the gods—so at least it seems evident to me—which they let fall from their abode, and it was through Prometheus, or one like him, that it reached mankind, together with a fire exceeding bright. The men of old, who were better than ourselves and dwelt nearer the gods, passed on this gift in the form of a saying. All things, so it ran, that are ever said to be consist of a one and a many, and have in their nature a conjunction of limit and unlimitedness. This then being the ordering of things we ought, they said, whatever it be that we are dealing with, to assume a single form and search for it, for we shall find it there contained; then, if we have laid hold of that, we must go on from one form to look for two, if the case admits of there being two, otherwise for three or some other number of forms. And we must do the same again with each of the ‘ones’ thus reached, until we come to see not merely that the one that we started with is a one and an unlimited many, but also just how many it is. But we are not to apply the character of unlimitedness to our plurality until we have discerned the total number of forms the thing in question has intermediate between its one and its unlimited number. It is only then, when we have done that, that we may let each one of all these intermediate forms pass away into the unlimited and cease bothering about them. There then, that is how the gods, as I told you, have committed to us the task of inquiry, of learning, and of teaching
one another, but your clever modern man, while making his one—or his many, as the case may be—more quickly or more slowly than is proper, when he has got his one proceeds to his unlimited number straightaway, allowing the intermediates to escape him, whereas it is the recognition of those intermediates that makes all the difference between a philosophical and a contentious discussion.

Protarchus: I think I understand, more or less, part of what you say, Socrates, but there are some points I want to get further cleared up.

Socrates: My meaning, Protarchus, is surely clear in the case of the alphabet; so take the letters of your school days as illustrating it.

Protarchus: How do you mean?

Socrates: The sound that proceeds through our mouths, yours and mine and everybody’s, is one, isn’t it, and also an unlimited variety?

Protarchus: To be sure.

Socrates: And we have no real understanding if we stop short at knowing it either simply as an unlimited variety, or simply as one. What makes a man ‘lettered’ is knowing the number and the kinds of sounds.

Protarchus: Very true.

Socrates: Then again, it is just the same sort of thing that makes a man musical.

Protarchus: How so?

Socrates: If you take the art of music, don’t you get, as before, a sound that is one?

Protarchus: Of course.

Socrates: But you wouldn’t be a person of real understanding in music if you knew no more than these three terms, though indeed if you didn’t know them you’d be of practically no account in musical matters.

Protarchus: I should indeed.

Socrates: But when you have grasped, my dear friend, the number and nature of the intervals formed by high pitch and low pitch in sound, and the notes that bound those intervals, and all the systems of notes that result from them, the systems which we have learned, conformably to the teaching of the men of old days who discerned them, to call ‘scales,’ and when, further, you have grasped certain corresponding features of the performer’s bodily movements, features that must, so we are told, be numerically determined and be called ‘figures’ and ‘measures,’ bearing in mind all the time that this is always the right way to deal with the one-and-many problem—only
and that it is these, not pleasure and so on, that we ought to acquire. Now when these two views had been put forward, one maintained against the other, we threatened you by way of a joke that we would not let you go home until the discussion had been worked out and brought to a satisfactory termination, upon which you agreed to the demand, and allowed us to keep you for that purpose. What we tell you now is, as children say, that you can't take back a present once you have duly given it. So stop your present method of dealing with the questions before us.

SOCRATES: What method do you mean?

PROTARCHUS: That of plunging us into difficulties, and putting questions that it is impossible for us to answer satisfactorily here and now. We ought not to imagine that the object of our present endeavors is to get ourselves all into difficulties; no, if we are incapable of doing the job, it's for you to do it, since you gave your promise. And that being so, please make up your mind for yourself whether you must classify the kinds of pleasure and of knowledge or may pass them over—supposing, that is, that you are able and willing to follow another method and clear up our points of dispute in some other way.

SOCRATES: Well, as you put it like that, there's no need for your poor victim to expect any further terrors; that 'if you are willing' banishes all my fears on every score. And what's more, I fancy some god has recalled to my mind something that will help us.

PROTARCHUS: Really? What is it?

SOCRATES: I remember a theory that I heard long ago—I may have dreamed it—about pleasure and intelligence, to the effect that neither of them is the good, but that it is something else, different from either and better than both. Now, you know, if we could get a clear sight of this third thing now, then a victory for pleasure is out of the question; it couldn't continue to be identical with the good, could it?

PROTARCHUS: No.

SOCRATES: No, and as to methods for classifying the kinds of pleasure, we shan't need them any longer, I imagine. However, we shall see better as we go on.

PROTARCHUS: That's good, and may your conclusion be so too.

SOCRATES: Well, I should be glad if we could settle a few small points first.

PROTARCHUS: What are they?

SOCRATES: Must that which ranks as the good be perfect or imperfect?

PROTARCHUS: The most perfect of all things, Socrates, of course.

SOCRATES: And must the good be adequate also?

PROTARCHUS: Yes indeed. In fact it must surpass everything in that respect.

SOCRATES: And surely there is one more feature of it that
needs stressing, namely that every creature that recognizes it goes in pursuit of it, and makes quest of it, desiring to capture it and secure it for its very own, and caring for nothing save such things as involve this or that good in the course of their realization.

PROTARCHUS: I cannot but agree with that.

SOCRATES: Now if we're going to have a critical inspection of the life of pleasure and the life of intelligence, let us see them separately.

PROTARCHUS: How do you mean?

SOCRATES: Let us have no intelligence in the life of pleasure, and no pleasure in the life of intelligence. For if either of them is the good it must have no need of anything else to be added to it, and if we find that either has such a need, presumably it ceases to be possible for it to be our true good.

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Then shall we take you as the subject on which to try our experiment?

PROTARCHUS: By all means.

SOCRATES: Then here's a question for you.

PROTARCHUS: Yes?

SOCRATES: Would you care, Protarchus, to live your whole life in the enjoyment of the greatest pleasures?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then you wouldn't think you needed anything else, if you had that in the fullest measure?

PROTARCHUS: I'm sure I shouldn't.

SOCRATES: Now be careful, are you sure you wouldn't need anything in the way of thought, intelligence, calculating what is fitting, and so on?

PROTARCHUS: Why should I? If I had my enjoyment what more could I want?

SOCRATES: Then if you lived your whole life long like that you would be enjoying the greatest pleasures, would you?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: But if you were without reason, memory, knowledge, and true judgment, you would necessarily, I imagine, in the first place be unaware even whether you were, or were not, enjoying yourself, as you would be destitute of all intelligence.

PROTARCHUS: Necessarily.

SOCRATES: And surely again, if you had no memory you would necessarily, I imagine, not even remember that you had been enjoying yourself; of the pleasure you encountered at one moment not a vestige of memory would be left at the next. Once more, if you had no true judgment you couldn't judge that you were enjoying yourself when you were; if you were bereft of the power of calculation you couldn't even calculate that you would enjoy yourself later on. You
would be living the life not of a human being but of some sort of sea lung or one of those creatures of the ocean whose bodies are incased in shells. Am I right, or can we imagine the situation to be otherwise?

**PROTARCHUS:** We cannot.

**SOCRATES:** Then is a life like that one that we can desire?

**PROTARCHUS:** Your argument, Socrates, has reduced me for the moment to complete speechlessness.

**SOCRATES:** Well, don’t let us lose heart yet; let us turn our attention to the life of reason, and have a look at that.

**PROTARCHUS:** What is the ‘life of reason’?

**SOCRATES:** Imagine one of us choosing to live in the possession of intelligence, thought, knowledge, and a complete memory of everything, but without an atom of pleasure, or indeed of pain, in a condition of utter insensibility to such things.

**PROTARCHUS:** Neither of these lives seems desirable to me, Socrates, and unless I’m very much mistaken, nobody else will think them so either.

**SOCRATES:** And what about the combined life, Protarchus, the joint life consisting in a mixture of the two?

**PROTARCHUS:** You mean of pleasure, on the one hand, and reason with intelligence on the other?

**SOCRATES:** Yes, those are the sorts of ingredients I mean.

**PROTARCHUS:** Anybody, I imagine, will prefer this mixed life to either of those others. Indeed I will go further—everybody will.

**SOCRATES:** Then do we realize what result now emerges in our discussion?

**PROTARCHUS:** Yes, to be sure. Three lives were offered us, and of the first two neither is sufficient or desirable for any human being or any animal.

**SOCRATES:** Then surely it is obvious by this time that, if you take these two lives, neither of them proves to contain the good. If it did, it would be sufficient and complete and desirable for all plants and animals that had the capacity of living their lives under such conditions from start to finish, and if any of us preferred something else, he would be mistaking the nature of what is truly desirable, and taking what he never meant to take, as the result of ignorance or some sort of unhappy necessity.

**PROTARCHUS:** It certainly looks as if that were so.

**SOCRATES:** Well then, I think we’ve said all that needs saying to show that Philebus’ goddess must not be conceived of as identical with the good.

**PHILEBUS:** No, and your ‘reason’ isn’t the good either, Socrates; the case against it looks like being just the same.

**SOCRATES:** That may well apply to my reason, Philebus—not, however, to the true, divine reason which, I fancy, is in rather a differ-
PROTARCHUS: That, I think, will be for you to tell me.
Socrates: Or rather for a god to tell us, if one comes to listen to my prayers.
PROTARCHUS: Then offer your prayer, and look to see if he does.
Socrates: I am looking, and I fancy, Protarchus, that one of them has befriended us for some little time.

PROTARCHUS: Really? What makes you believe that?
Socrates: I'll explain, of course. Please follow what I say.

PROTARCHUS: Pray go on.
Socrates: We spoke just now, I believe, of 'hotter' and 'colder,' didn't we?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.
Socrates: Now add to these 'drier and wetter,' 'higher and lower,' 'quicker and slower,' 'greater and smaller,' and everything that we brought together a while ago as belonging to that kind of being which admits of 'the more' and 'the less.'

PROTARCHUS: You mean the kind that is unlimited?
Socrates: Yes. And now, as the next step, combine with it the family of the limit.

PROTARCHUS: What is that?
Socrates: The one we omitted to collect just now; just as we collected the family of the unlimited together, so we ought to have collected that family which shows the character of limit, but we didn't.

Still perhaps it will come to the same thing in spite of that, if in the process of collecting these two kinds the family we have spoken of is going to become plain to view.

Socrates: That of 'equal' and 'double,' and any other that puts an end to the conflict of opposites with one another, making them well proportioned and harmonious by the introduction of number.

PROTARCHUS: I see. By mixing in these you mean, apparently, that we find various products arising as they are respectively mixed.
Socrates: You take my meaning aright.

PROTARCHUS: Then continue.
Socrates: In cases of sickness does not the right association of these factors bring about health?

PROTARCHUS: Unquestionably.
Socrates: And in the case of high and low in pitch, or of swift and slow, which are unlimited, does not the introduction of these same elements at once produce limit and establish the whole art of music in full perfection?

PROTARCHUS: Admirably put.
Socrates: And then again, if they are introduced where there
PHILEBUS 1103

is severe cold and stifling heat they remove all that is excessive and unlimited, and create measure and balance.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then it is here that we find the source of fair weather and all other beautiful things, namely in a mixture of the unlimited with that which has limit?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And indeed there are countless more things which I may omit to enumerate, such as beauty and strength along with health, besides a whole host of fair things found in our souls. For that goddess of ours, fair Philebus, must have observed the lawlessness and utter wickedness of mankind due to an absence of limit in men's pleasures and appetites, and therefore established among them a law and order that are marked by limit. You maintain that she thereby spoiled them. I assert that on the contrary she preserved them. What do you think about it, Protarchus?

PROTARCHUS: I am thoroughly satisfied, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Well, there are the three things I have spoken of, if you follow me.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, I think I see what you mean. You are asserting, I gather, two factors in things—first the unlimited, second the limit. But I can't altogether grasp what you mean by the third thing that you mention.

SOCRATES: The reason for that, my dear good sir, is that you are confused by the multiplicity of that third kind. And yet a plurality of forms was presented by the unlimited too, and in spite of that we stamped on them the distinguishing mark of 'the more' and its opposite, and so saw them as a unity.

PROTARCHUS: True.

SOCRATES: Then again we did not complain about the limit, either that it exhibited a plurality, or that it was not a real unity.

PROTARCHUS: No, there was no reason to do so.

SOCRATES: None whatever. And now as to the third kind, I am reckoning all this progeny of our two factors as a unity, and you may take me to mean a coming-into-being, resulting from those measures that are achieved with the aid of the limit.

PROTARCHUS: I understand.

SOCRATES: And now to continue. We said that besides the three kinds there is a fourth kind to be considered, and it is for our joint consideration. Now I expect you regard it as necessary that all things that come to be should come to be because of some cause.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, I do. Without that how could they come to be?

SOCRATES: Well, is there anything more than a verbal difference between a cause and a maker? Wouldn't it be proper to call that
which makes things and that which causes them one and the same?

PROTARCHUS: Quite proper.

SOCRATES: And further, shall we find that between that which is made and that which comes to be there is, once again, a mere verbal difference?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And isn’t it natural that that which makes should have the leading position, while that which is made follows in its train when coming into being?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Hence a cause and that which, as a condition of coming to be, is subservient to a cause are not the same but different?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Now our three kinds gave us all things that come to be, and the constituents from which they come to be, did they not?

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: And this fourth kind that we are speaking of, which fashions all these things, this cause, is pretty clearly different from them?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, different certainly.

SOCRATES: But now that the four kinds have been discriminated it will do no harm to enumerate them in order, so that we may remember each by itself.

PROTARCHUS: I agree.

SOCRATES: The first, then, I call the unlimited, the second the limit, and the third the being that has come to be by the mixture of these two; as to the fourth, I hope I shall not be at fault in calling it the cause of the mixture and of the coming-to-be?

PROTARCHUS: No indeed.

SOCRATES: Come along now, what is our next point, and what was our purpose in getting where we have got? Wasn’t it that we were trying to find out whether the second prize would go to pleasure or to intelligence? Was not that it?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, it was.

SOCRATES: Then shall we perhaps be in a better position, now that we have discriminated these kinds as we have, to achieve our decision about the first place and the second? For that of course was what we started to dispute about.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: Come on then. We laid it down, I think, that victory went to the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence. Was that so?

PROTARCHUS: It was.

SOCRATES: Then of course we can see what kind of life this is and to which kind it belongs?

PROTARCHUS: Undoubtedly.

SOCRATES: In fact we shall assert, I suppose, that it is a part
of our third kind. For that kind does not consist of just two things, but of all unlimited things bound fast by the limit; hence it is correct to make our victorious life a part of it.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, perfectly correct.

SOCRATES: Very well. And what about your pleasant unmixed life, Philebus? Under which of the kinds that we have mentioned should we be correct in saying that that falls? But before you express your view let us have your answer to a question I will put.

PHILEBUS: Please put it.

SOCRATES: Do pleasure and pain contain a limit, or are they among the things that admit of 'the more' and 'the less'?

PHILEBUS: They are, Socrates; they admit of 'the more.' Pleasure would not be supremely good, if it were not of its very nature unlimited both in quantity and degree.

SOCRATES: And similarly, Philebus, pain would not be supremely bad; hence we must look for something other than the characteristic of being unlimited to explain how an element of good attaches to pleasures. Well, we may leave that topic, if you please, as one of unlimited speculation. But I will ask both of you, in which of our above-mentioned kinds may we now reckon intelligence, knowledge, and reason, without sinning against the light? I fancy a great deal turns on our present inquiry, according as we give the right answer or the wrong.

PHILEBUS: You are glorifying your own god, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And you your own goddess, my friend; still we ought to give an answer to our question.

PROTARCHUS: Socrates is right, you know, Philebus; we must do as he tells us.

PHILEBUS: Well, you have volunteered to speak on my behalf, have you not, Protarchus?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly, but at the moment I am rather at a loss, and beg you, Socrates, to state the case to us yourself; otherwise you may find us striking a false note and making mistakes about your candidate.

SOCRATES: I must do as you say, Protarchus; as a matter of fact it is no difficult task you impose on me. But did I really cause you alarm by my playful glorification, as Philebus has called it, when I asked you to which kind reason and knowledge belong?

PROTARCHUS: Very much so, Socrates.

SOCRATES: But really it's an easy question. For all the wise agree, thereby glorifying themselves in earnest, that in reason we have the king of heaven and earth. And I fancy they are right. But I should like us, if you don't mind, to make a fuller investigation of the kind in question itself.

PROTARCHUS: Proceed as you like, Socrates, and please feel no concern about being lengthy; we shan't quarrel with you.
PROTARCHUS: No, to suppose that would be utterly unreasonable.

SOCRATES: Discarding that, then, we should do better to follow the other view and say, as we have said many times already, that there exist in the universe much 'unlimited' and abundance of 'limit,' and a presiding cause of no mean power, which orders and regulates the years, the seasons, and the months, and has every claim to the names of wisdom and reason.

PROTARCHUS: Every claim indeed.

SOCRATES: But wisdom and reason cannot come into existence without soul.

PROTARCHUS: They cannot.

SOCRATES: Hence you will say that in the nature of Zeus a royal soul and a royal reason come to dwell by virtue of the power of the cause, while in other gods other perfections dwell, according to the names by which they are pleased to be called.

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Now don't suppose, Protarchus, that we have spoken of this matter purposelessly; on the contrary it supports those ancient thinkers that we mentioned, who declared that reason always rules all things.

PROTARCHUS: Yes indeed it does.

SOCRATES: And, what's more, it has provided an answer to my inquiry, to the effect that mind belongs to the family of what we called the cause of all things. By this time, I imagine, you grasp what our answer is.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, I grasp it completely, though indeed I hadn't realized you had given it.

SOCRATES: Well, Protarchus, playfulness is sometimes a relief from seriousness.

PROTARCHUS: You are right.

SOCRATES: I think, my friend, that we have now arrived at a fairly satisfactory demonstration of what kind reason belongs to, and what function it possesses.

PROTARCHUS: I am sure of it.

SOCRATES: And as for pleasure's kind, that we found some time ago.

PROTARCHUS: Exactly.

SOCRATES: Then let us have these points in mind about the pair of them, namely that reason was found akin to cause and belonging, we may say, to that kind, whereas pleasure is itself unlimited and belongs to the kind that does not and never will contain within itself and derived from itself either beginning, or middle, or end.

PROTARCHUS: We shall bear that in mind, naturally.

SOCRATES: And now what we must do next is to see in what each of them is found, and what happens to bring it about that they
occur whenever they do. Take pleasure first; we took it first when
examining its kind, and we will do the same in the present case. How-
ever, we shall never be able properly to examine pleasure apart
from pain.

Protarchus: Well, if that ought to be our line of approach, let
us take it.

Socrates: Now I wonder if you share my view as regards
their occurrence?

Protarchus: What is your view?

Socrates: That both pleasure and pain are natural experiences
that occur in the 'combined' class.

Protarchus: Will you remind us, my dear Socrates, which of
our previously mentioned classes you allude to by the term 'com-
bined'?

Socrates: Really, Protarchus! Well, I'll do my best.

Protarchus: Thank you.

Socrates: Let us understand 'combined' as the third of our
four classes.

Protarchus: The one you spoke of after the unlimited and
the limit, and in which you put health and harmony, I think, also.

Socrates: Perfectly right. Now please give me your most care-
ful attention.

Protarchus: Continue, please.

Socrates: I maintain that, when we find a disturbance of the
harmony in a living creature, that is the time at which its natural
condition is disturbed and distress therewith occurs.

Protarchus: That sounds very probable.

Socrates: Conversely, when the harmony is being restored
and a return is made to its natural condition, we may say that plea-
ure occurs. I am permitting myself a very brief and rapid statement of
a most important fact.

Protarchus: I think you are right, Socrates, but let us try to
express this same truth even more clearly.

Socrates: Well, I suppose commonplace, obvious instances
will be the easiest to understand.

Protarchus: Such as?

Socrates: Hunger, say, is a form of disturbance, of pain,

Protarchus: Yes.

Socrates: And eating, as the corresponding restoration, is a
form of pleasure?

Protarchus: Yes.

Socrates: Then again, thirst is a form of destruction, of pain,
whereas the restoration effected by a liquid acting on that which has
become dried up is a form of pleasure. Or once again, the unnatural
disruption or dissolution brought about by stifling heat is a pain,
SOCRATES: So this is a third sort of condition that we have, distinct alike from the condition of one who feels pleasure and from that of one who feels pain?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Come along then, and do your best to bear it in mind; it will make a big difference as regards our judgment of pleasure whether you do bear it in mind or do not. Now there is a small point in this connection that we had better settle, if you please.

PROTARCHUS: Tell me what it is.

SOCRATES: You know that for one who has chosen the life of intelligence there is nothing to prevent him living in this fashion.

PROTARCHUS: A life, you mean, of neither pleasure nor pain?

SOCRATES: Yes, for when we were comparing the lives just now we said, I believe, that for one who had chosen the life of reason and intelligence there must be no experiencing of any pleasure, great or small.

PROTARCHUS: That was certainly what we said.

SOCRATES: Then he at all events has it in his power to live after this fashion, and perhaps it is not a wild surmise that this is of all lives the most godlike.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly it is not to be supposed that the gods feel either pleasure or its opposite.

SOCRATES: No, of course it is not; it would be unseemly for either feeling to arise in them. But to that question we will give further consideration later on, if it should be relevant, and we will set down the point to the score of intelligence in the competition for second prize, if we cannot do so in the competition for the first.

PROTARCHUS: Quite right.

SOCRATES: Now to continue, pleasure of this second kind, which belongs, as we said, to the soul alone, always involves memory.

PROTARCHUS: How so?

SOCRATES: I fancy that we must first take up the inquiry what memory is, or perhaps even, before memory, what sensation is, if we mean to get properly clear about these matters.

PROTARCHUS: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: You must take it that among the experiences that are constantly affecting our bodies some are exhausted in the body before passing through to the soul, thus leaving the latter unaffected, while others penetrate both body and soul and set up a sort of disturbance which is both peculiar to each and common to both.

PROTARCHUS: Let us take it to be so.

SOCRATES: Now shall we be right if we say that those which do not penetrate both are undetected by the soul, while those which do penetrate both are not undetected thereby?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: You must not suppose that by ‘being undetected’ I
mean that a process of forgetting is involved; forgetting is the passing away of memory, whereas in the case we are discussing memory has not as yet come to be, and it would be absurd to talk of the loss of what does not exist and never has existed, would it not?

Protarchus: Of course.

Socrates: Then just alter the names.

Protarchus: How?

Socrates: Instead of speaking, as you now do, of ‘forgetting’ what is undetected by the soul when it is unaffected by the disturbances of the body, you must substitute the term ‘nonsensation.’

Protarchus: I understand.

Socrates: And if you apply to that movement, which occurs when soul and body come together in a single affection and are moved both together, the term ‘sensation,’ you will be expressing yourself properly.

Protarchus: Very true.

Socrates: Then we understand already what we mean by sensation.

Protarchus: Certainly.

Socrates: Memory it would, in my opinion, be right to call the preservation of sensation.

Protarchus: Quite so.

Socrates: Then by ‘recollection’ we mean, do we not, something different from memory?

Protarchus: I suppose so.

Socrates: I will suggest the point of difference.

Protarchus: What is it?

Socrates: When that which has been experienced by the soul in common with the body is recaptured, so far as may be, by and in the soul itself apart from the body, then we speak of ‘recollecting’ something. Is that not so?

Protarchus: Undoubtedly.

Socrates: And further, when the soul that has lost the memory of a sensation or what it has learned resumes that memory within itself and goes over the old ground, we regularly speak of these processes as ‘recollections.’

Protarchus: I agree.

Socrates: And now I will tell you the point of all we have been saying.

Protarchus: What is it?

Socrates: To get the clearest notion that we possibly can of the pleasure of soul apart from body, and of desire as well. I think that the procedure we are adopting promises to explain them both.

Protarchus: Let us proceed then, Socrates.

Socrates: Our examination will necessarily, I think, involve saying a good deal about the origin of pleasure and the various shapes
it takes. And in point of fact it seems necessary to preface that with an understanding of the nature of desire and the seat of its occurrence.

**Protarchus:** Then let us examine that; we shan't be the losers.

**Socrates:** Oh yes we shall, Protarchus, and I'll tell you of what; if we find what we are now looking for, we shall be the losers of the very perplexity that now besets us.

**Protarchus:** A good retort! Then let us try to deal with our next point.

**Socrates:** Were we not saying just now that hunger, thirst, and so on and so forth, are desires of some sort?

**Protarchus:** Unquestionably.

**Socrates:** What was the identical feature, then, that we had in view that makes us call such widely different things by one name?

**Protarchus:** Upon my word, Socrates, I'm afraid it is not easy to answer that; still, answer it we must.

**Socrates:** Then let us go back to where we were and start afresh.

**Protarchus:** Go back where?

**Socrates:** We talk commonly, do we not, of a man 'having a thirst'?

**Protarchus:** Certainly.

**Socrates:** Meaning that he is becoming empty?

**Protarchus:** Of course.

**Socrates:** Then is his thirst a desire?

**Protarchus:** Yes, a desire for drink.

**Socrates:** For drink, or for a replenishment by drink?

**Protarchus:** For a replenishment, I should think.

**Socrates:** When one becomes empty then, apparently he desires the opposite of what he is experiencing; being emptied, he longs to be filled.

**Protarchus:** Obviously.

**Socrates:** Well now, is it possible that one who is emptied for the first time could apprehend replenishment whether by means of a perception or a memory, replenishment being something that he is neither experiencing in the present nor has ever experienced in the past?

**Protarchus:** Of course not.

**Socrates:** Nevertheless we must admit that one who desires, desires something.

**Protarchus:** Yes, of course.

**Socrates:** Then it is not what he is experiencing that he desires, for he is thirsty, and thirst is an emptying, whereas what he desires is replenishment.

**Protarchus:** Yes.
PLATO: COLLECTED DIALOGUES

PROTARCHUS: That is so.
SOCRATES: And, as we said just now, pleasure and pain frequently accompany these true and false opinions.
PROTARCHUS: Quite so.
SOCRATES: Now is it not always memory and perception that give rise to opinion and to the attempts we make to reach a judgment?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.
SOCRATES: Let me suggest what we must believe to occur in this connection.
PROTARCHUS: Well?
SOCRATES: If a man sees objects that come into his view from a distance and indistinctly, would you agree that he commonly wants to decide about what he sees?
PROTARCHUS: I should.
SOCRATES: Then the next step will be that he puts a question to himself.

PROTARCHUS: What question?
SOCRATES: 'What is that object which catches my eye there beside the rock under a tree?' Don't you think that is what he would say to himself, if he had caught sight of some appearance of the sort?
PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: And then he would answer his own question and say, if he got it right, 'It is a man.'

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.
SOCRATES: Or again, if he went astray and thought what he was looking at was something made by shepherds, he might very likely call it an image.

PROTARCHUS: He might quite well.
SOCRATES: And if he had someone with him, he would put what he said to himself into actual speech addressed to his companion, audibly uttering those same thoughts, so that what before we called opinion has now become assertion.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: Whereas if he is alone he continues thinking the same thing by himself, going on his way maybe for a considerable time with the thought in his mind.

PROTARCHUS: Undoubtedly.
SOCRATES: Well now, I wonder whether you share my view on these matters.

PROTARCHUS: What is it?
SOCRATES: It seems to me that at such times our soul is like a book.

PROTARCHUS: How so?
SOCRATES: It appears to me that the conjunction of memory with sensations, together with the feelings consequent upon memory
and sensation, may be said as it were to write words in our souls. And when this experience writes what is true, the result is that true opinion and true assertions spring up in us, while when the internal scribe that I have suggested writes what is false we get the opposite sort of opinions and assertions.

**Protarchus:** That certainly seems to me right, and I approve of the way you put it.

**Socrates:** Then please give your approval to the presence of a second artist in our souls at such a time.

**Protarchus:** Who is that?

**Socrates:** A painter, who comes after the writer and paints in the soul pictures of these assertions that we make.

**Protarchus:** How do we make out that he in his turn acts, and when?

**Socrates:** When we have got those opinions and assertions clear of the act of sight, or other sense, and as it were see in ourselves pictures or images of what we previously opined or asserted. That does happen with us, doesn't it?

**Protarchus:** Indeed it does.

**Socrates:** Then are the pictures of true opinions and assertions true, and the pictures of false ones false?

**Protarchus:** Unquestionably.

**Socrates:** Well, if we are right so far, here is one more point in this connection for us to consider.

**Protarchus:** What is that?

**Socrates:** Does all this necessarily befall us in respect of the present and the past, but not in respect of the future?

**Protarchus:** On the contrary, it applies equally to them all.

**Socrates:** We said previously, did we not, that pleasures and pains felt in the soul alone might precede those that come through the body? That must mean that we have anticipatory pleasures and anticipatory pains in regard to the future.

**Protarchus:** Very true.

**Socrates:** Now do those writings and paintings, which a while ago we assumed to occur within ourselves, apply to past and present only, and not to the future?

**Protarchus:** Indeed they do.

**Socrates:** When you say 'indeed they do,' do you mean that the last sort are all expectations concerned with what is to come, and that we are full of expectations all our life long?

**Protarchus:** Undoubtedly.

**Socrates:** Well now, here is a further question for you to answer.

**Protarchus:** Yes?

**Socrates:** Isn't a man who is just, pious, and in every way good dear to the gods?
PROTARCHUS: To be sure.
SOCRATES: And may not the opposite be said of one who is unjust and altogether bad?

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: But every human being, as we said just now, is full of expectations?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: But what we call expectations are in fact assertions that each of us makes to himself.

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: To which must be added the representations produced by our painter. People often have visions of securing great quantities of gold, and pleasure upon pleasure in consequence; indeed they behold themselves in the picture immensely delighted with themselves.

PROTARCHUS: I know.

SOCRATES: Now may we say that what is written in the minds of the good is as a rule a true communication, since they are dear to the gods, while with the evil the opposite as a rule is the case? What do you think?

PROTARCHUS: Certainly we should say so.

SOCRATES: So the evil, no less than the good, have pleasures painted in their minds, but these pleasures, I imagine, are false.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Bad men, then, delight for the most part in false pleasures, good men in true ones.

PROTARCHUS: Inevitably so.

SOCRATES: Hence we reach the result that false pleasures do exist in men's souls, being really a rather ridiculous imitation of true pleasures, and the same applies to pains.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, they do exist.

SOCRATES: Now we found that, though a person holding any opinion at all must hold it in fact, yet it might sometimes have reference to what was not a fact, either of the present, the past, or the future.

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: And there, I think, lay the source of our false opinion, of our holding opinions falsely. Did it not?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Well then, should we not ascribe a corresponding condition, as regards these references, to pains and pleasures?

PROTARCHUS: How do you mean?

SOCRATES: I mean that though anyone who feels pleasure at all, no matter how groundless it be, always really feels that pleasure; yet sometimes it has no reference to any present or past fact, while in many cases, perhaps in most, it has reference to what never will be a fact.
PROTARCHUS: Yes?
Socrates: Great changes cause us pains and pleasures, but moderate and small ones cause no pain or pleasure whatsoever.
PROTARCHUS: You are nearer the truth than you were, Socrates.
Socrates: Then, if that be so, here we are back again at the life we mentioned a while ago.
PROTARCHUS: What life?
Socrates: The one we described as painless, and devoid of joys.
PROTARCHUS: Very true.
Socrates: In view of this, let us recognize three sorts of life, the pleasant, the painful, and that which is neither one nor the other. Or how do you see the matter?
PROTARCHUS: I see it precisely as you put it; the lives are three in number.
Socrates: Then to be without pain will not be the same as to feel pleasure?
PROTARCHUS: Certainly not.
Socrates: So when you hear someone say that the pleasantest of all things is to live one's whole life long without pain, what do you take his meaning to be?
PROTARCHUS: He appears to me to mean that being without pain is pleasant.
Socrates: Well now, let us take any three things you like, and, to give them more attractive names, call the first gold, the second silver, and the third neither gold nor silver.
PROTARCHUS: I accept that.
Socrates: Now can we possibly identify the third with either of the others, with gold or silver?
PROTARCHUS: No, of course not.
Socrates: Similarly then, it cannot be right either to hold the intermediate life to be pleasant or painful, if it is a question of holding an opinion, or, to speak of it so, if it is a question of speaking, unless indeed we desert right reasoning.
PROTARCHUS: It cannot.
Socrates: Still, my friend, we do observe people saying and thinking so.
PROTARCHUS: We do, certainly.
Socrates: Do they then think that at such times as they are not feeling pain they are feeling pleasure?
PROTARCHUS: They say so at all events.
Socrates: Then they do think so; otherwise they would not say so, I imagine.
PROTARCHUS: Maybe.
Socrates: Nevertheless their opinion about their feeling of
If not being pained and feeling pleasure are really two different things.

Protarchus: And different they have certainly proved.

Socrates: Then are we to take the line that these things are three in number, as we said just now, or that they are only two, pain being an evil for mankind, and release from pain being called pleasant as in itself a good?

Protarchus: How can we put that question to ourselves, Socrates, at this stage? I don't understand.

Socrates: The fact is, Protarchus, you don't understand what enemies Philebus here has.

Protarchus: What enemies do you mean?

Socrates: People with a great reputation for natural science, who maintain that pleasures do not exist at all.

Protarchus: Oh, how so?

Socrates: What Philebus and his friends call pleasures are, according to them, never anything but escapes from pains.

Protarchus: And do you recommend that we should believe them, Socrates, or what do you think?

Socrates: Not believe them, but avail ourselves of their gift of divination, which rests not on science but on the dourness, if I may call it so, of a nature far from ignoble. They are men who have come to hate pleasure bitterly, to regard it as thoroughly unsound; its very attractiveness they regard, not as real pleasure, but as trickery. Well, you may avail yourself of their doctrine on this point, having regard at the same time to their other dour characteristics, and next you shall learn what pleasures I regard as true, so that when we have examined the nature of pleasure from both points of view we may have a comparative basis for our decision.

Protarchus: Very good.

Socrates: Then let us follow up the track of these allies of ours, and see where their dour footsteps lead us. I fancy that their basic position is stated something like this. If we want to see the true nature of any form, whatever it may be, for example that of hardness, should we understand it best by fixing our attention on the hardest things there are or on those that have a minimum of hardness? Now, Protarchus, you must answer our dour friends just as you would answer me.

Protarchus: Quite so, and I tell them that our attention must be fixed on what has the maximum amount.

Socrates: Then if the form or kind whose true nature we wanted to see were pleasure, we should have to fix our attention not on minimum pleasures but on such as are said to be the highest and intensest.

Protarchus: Everyone would agree with what you say now.

Socrates: Now are not our obvious pleasures, which are in
PHILEBUS

PROTARCHUS: Unquestionably.
SOCRATES: And to delight in our enemies’ misfortunes is neither wrongful nor malicious?
PROTARCHUS: Of course not.
SOCRATES: Whereas to feel delight, as we sometimes do, instead of pain, when we see friends in misfortune, is wrongful, is it not?
PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: Now we said that ignorance is always an evil?
PROTARCHUS: That is so.
SOCRATES: Then if we find in our friends that imaginary wisdom and imaginary beauty, and the other delusions which we enumerated in our threefold classification just now, delusions that are ridiculous in the weak and hateful in the strong—if we find this disposition in its harmless form in our friends, shall we adhere, or shall we not, to my statement of a moment ago, namely that it is ridiculous?
PROTARCHUS: Certainly we shall.
SOCRATES: And do we not agree that, being ignorance, it is evil?
PROTARCHUS: Undoubtedly.
SOCRATES: And when we laugh at it, are we pleased or pained?
PROTARCHUS: Plainly we are pleased.
SOCRATES: And did we not say that it is malice that makes us feel pleasure in our friends’ misfortunes?
PROTARCHUS: It must be.
SOCRATES: The upshot of our argument then is that when we laugh at what is ridiculous in our friends, we are mixing pleasure this time with malice, mixing, that is, our pleasure with pain, for we have been for some time agreed that malice is a pain in the soul, and that laughter is a pleasure, and both occur simultaneously on the occasions in question.
PROTARCHUS: True.
SOCRATES: Hence our argument now makes it plain that in laments and tragedies and comedies—and not only in those of the stage but in the whole tragicomedy of life—as well as on countless other occasions, pains are mixed with pleasures.
PROTARCHUS: The most determined of opponents could not but agree with what you say, Socrates.
SOCRATES: Moreover we made a list including anger, longing, lamentation, fear, love, malice, and so on, in all of which we said that we should find our oft-repeated mixture, did we not?
PROTARCHUS: Yes.
SOCRATES: Then do we realize that what we have just discussed was all concerned with lamentation, malice, and anger?
PROTARCHUS: I am sure we do.
SOCRATES: That being so, is there still much left to discuss?
proTARCHUS: Yes indeed.
socrates: Now what exactly do you suppose was my purpose
in pointing out the mixture in comedy? Was it not to give you a ground
for believing that it would be easy enough to demonstrate the same
mingling in the case of fear, love, and the rest? I hoped that, having
graped the first example, you would relieve me of the necessity of en-
tering upon a long argument about the others, and would grasp the
general principle, that whether the body be affected apart from the
soul, or the soul apart from the body, or both of them together, we
constantly come upon the mixture of pleasure with pain. So tell me
now, are you going to relieve me or will you keep me up till midnight?
I fancy I shall secure your consent to release me if I just add this, that
I shall be willing to go into the whole question with you tomorrow, but
for the present I want to address myself to the matters which are still
outstanding if we are to settle the problem set us by Philebus.
proTARCHUS: Very good, Socrates, deal with the outstanding
points as you fancy.
socrates: Well, after the mixed pleasures we shall naturally
go on in turn—indeed we can hardly avoid it—to the unmixed.
proTARCHUS: Excellent.
socrates: Then I will start afresh and try to indicate, to you
and to myself, which they are. With those who maintain that all
pleasures are a cessation of pains I am not altogether inclined to agree, but,
as I said, I avail myself of their evidence that some pleasures are
apparent and quite unreal, while others present themselves to us as be-
ing great and numerous, but are in fact jumbled up with pains and
processes of relief from such severe suffering as besets both body and
soul.
proTARCHUS: But which, Socrates, should we be justified in
regarding as true?
socrates: Those that attach to colors that we call beautiful,
to figures, to most odors, to sounds, and to all experiences in which
the want is imperceptible and painless, but its fulfillment is percepti-
ble and pleasant.
proTARCHUS: In what sense, Socrates, does what you say hold
good of these?
socrates: Well, what I mean is not quite obvious immedi-
ately; however, I must try to explain it. The beauty of figures which I
am now trying to indicate is not what most people would understand
as such, not the beauty of a living creature or a picture; what I mean,
what the argument points to, is something straight, or round, and the
surfaces and solids which a lathe, or a carpenter's rule and square,
produces from the straight and the round. I wonder if you understand.
Things like that, I maintain, are beautiful not, like most things, in a
relative sense; they are always beautiful in their very nature, and they
carry pleasures peculiar to themselves which are quite unlike the
pleasures of scratching. And there are colors too which have this d characteristic. Do we grasp this? What do you say?

PROTARCHUS: I am trying to do so, Socrates. Perhaps you too would try to put it still more plainly.

SOCRATES: Very well. Audible sounds which are smooth and clear, and deliver a single series of pure notes, are beautiful not relatively to something else, but in themselves, and they are attended by pleasures implicit in themselves.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly that is so.

SOCRATES: Odors provide pleasures of a less sublime type, but the fact that no necessary pains are mixed with them, as well as the general character and source of the experience, induces me to class them as cognate with those just mentioned. Here then, if you follow me, are two of the types of pleasure we are now concerned with.

PROTARCHUS: I follow you.

SOCRATES: Now let us proceed to add to them the pleasures of learning, if we do in fact think that they involve no hunger, that no initial distress is felt owing to a hunger for learning.

PROTARCHUS: I share that view.

SOCRATES: But suppose one who has been filled with learning loses it afterward by forgetting it, do you find that such loss involves distress?

PROTARCHUS: No, at least not to a man's natural self, but by way of his reflection upon what has happened, when he feels pain because of the usefulness of what he has lost.

SOCRATES: But you know, my dear fellow, we are concerned at present only with the actual experiences of the natural self, apart from any reflections about them.

PROTARCHUS: Then you are right in saying that in cases of forgetting what we have learned we feel no pain.

SOCRATES: So we must assert that these pleasures of learning are unmixed with pains, and that they belong not to the general run of men but only to the very few.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Well, we have reached the point of drawing a satisfactory line between pure pleasures and those that may with fair justification be called impure, and now let us add to our statement that those pleasures that are intense are marked by immoderateness, those that are not by moderation. Pleasures that can go to great lengths or to an intense degree, whether they actually do so often or seldom, let us class as belonging to that 'unlimited' kind of which we spoke, which penetrates body and soul alike in greater or in less degree, but the other sort let us class among things moderate.

PROTARCHUS: You are quite right, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And now there is yet another feature of them which we must look into.
PROTARCHUS: What is that?
SOCRATES: What are we to reckon as making for truth? That which is pure, perfectly clear, and sufficient, or that which is extreme, vast, and huge?

PROTARCHUS: What is the object of your question, Socrates?
SOCRATES: My object, Protarchus, is to do all I can to determine whether some sorts of pleasure, and some sorts of knowledge also, are pure and others not pure, for if, in deciding about them, we can get each in its pure form, that will facilitate the decision which you and I and all of us here have to make.

PROTARCHUS: Quite right.

SOCRATES: Well then, I will suggest a general method for the consideration of anything we call pure—namely, that we should begin by examining one selected example.

PROTARCHUS: And what are we to select?

SOCRATES: First and foremost, if you like, let us contemplate whiteness.

PROTARCHUS: By all means.

SOCRATES: How shall we get a pure white? What will it be? The greatest possible quantity or bulk of it, or the white with the least possible admixture, with no portion of any other color in its composition?

PROTARCHUS: Plainly it will be the most perfectly clear color.

SOCRATES: You are right. Then shall we not reckon that, Protarchus, as the truest of all white things, and the fairest too, rather than a great quantity or bulk of the color?

PROTARCHUS: Quite right.

SOCRATES: Then we shall be absolutely right in saying that a small quantity of pure white is not only whiter, but also fairer and truer, than a large quantity of mixed white.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, perfectly.

SOCRATES: What then? I imagine we shall not need numerous examples of the same sort to make a pronouncement about pleasure, but are now in a position to realize that any and every sort of pleasure that is pure of pain will be pleasanter, truer, and fairer than one that is not, whatever be their comparative bulk or quantity.

PROTARCHUS: Unquestionably so. The example before us is sufficient.

SOCRATES: And now to pass to another point. Are we not told that pleasure is always something that comes to be, that there is no such thing as a pleasure that is? There again you have a theory which certain subtle thinkers endeavor to expound to us, and we should be grateful to them.

PROTARCHUS: Why so?

SOCRATES: That is precisely the point which I shall treat at some length in my questions to you, my dear Protarchus.
PROTARCHUS: Pray continue, and put them.
SOCRATES: There are, as you know, two kinds of things—that which exists independently, and that which is always aiming at something else.

PROTARCHUS: How do you mean? What are they?
SOCRATES: The one has always pride of place, and the other is its inferior.

PROTARCHUS: Will you put it still more plainly?
SOCRATES: We have observed before now, I imagine, manly lovers together with the fair and excellent recipients of their admiration?

PROTARCHUS: How do you mean? What are they?
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PROTARCHUS: Will you put it still more plainly?
SOCRATES: We have observed before now, I imagine, manly lovers together with the fair and excellent recipients of their admiration?
PROTARCHUS: Yes, certainly.

Socrates: Now I hold that while it is with a view to something coming into being that anyone provides himself with medicine, or tools of any kind, or any sort of material, the becoming always takes place with a view to the being of this or that, so that becoming in general takes place with a view to being in general.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, clearly.

Socrates: Then there must be some being with a view to which pleasure comes to be, if it is true that pleasure is becoming.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

Socrates: But where there is this regular relation of means to end, the end falls under the heading of good, while the means, my excellent friend, must find a place under another heading.

PROTARCHUS: Most decidedly.

Socrates: Hence if pleasure is becoming, we shall be right in setting it under some other heading than that of good?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, perfectly right.

Socrates: And so, as I said at the beginning of our present argument, we ought to be grateful to the author of the doctrine that pleasure is something that comes to be, but in no case ever is, for plainly he laughs to scorn those who assert that pleasure is good.

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

Socrates: And what's more, this same thinker will not fail to include in his scorn those who find their satisfaction in these becomeings.

PROTARCHUS: How do you mean? To whom are you referring?

Socrates: To people who, when they find relief for their hunger or thirst or such other troubles as becoming relieves, are delighted on account of the becoming, which they regard as a pleasure, saying that they would not care to live without hungering and thirsting and having all the rest of the experiences that might be enumerated as going with hunger and thirst.

PROTARCHUS: Your description fits them, certainly.

Socrates: Well now, we should all admit that the opposite of becoming is passing away.

PROTARCHUS: Necessarily.

Socrates: Hence it is an alternation of passing away and becoming that will be chosen by those who choose a life like that in preference to the third life we spoke of, the life which included neither pleasure nor pain, but the purest possible activity of thought.

PROTARCHUS: It appears, Socrates, that a number of untenable consequences follow from the proposal to make pleasure our good.

Socrates: Yes, and for that matter we might reinforce the argument.

PROTARCHUS: How?
Protarchus: On the strength of what has been said I should give my vote for there being two.

Socrates: Right. Now do you realize our purpose in bringing these matters onto the board?

Protarchus: Possibly, but I should like you to pronounce on the point.

Socrates: Well, it seems to me that our discussion, now no less than when we embarked upon it, has propounded a question here analogous to the question about pleasures. It is inquiring whether one kind of knowledge is purer than another, just as one pleasure is purer than another.

Protarchus: Yes, it is quite clear that that has been its reason for attacking this matter.

Socrates: Well now, in what preceded had it not discovered that different arts, dealing with different things, possessed different degrees of precision?

Protarchus: Certainly.

Socrates: And in what followed did it not first mention a certain art under one single name, making us think it really was one art, and then treat it as two, putting questions about the precision and purity of those two to find out whether the art as practiced by the philosopher or by the nonphilosopher was the more exact?

Protarchus: I certainly think that is the question which it puts.

Socrates: Then, Protarchus, what answer do we give it?

Protarchus: We have got far enough, Socrates, to discern an astonishingly big difference between one kind of knowledge and another in respect of precision.

Socrates: Well, will that make it easier for us to answer?

Protarchus: Of course, and let our statement be that the arts which we have had before us are superior to all others, and that those among them which involve the effort of the true philosopher are, in their use of measure and number, immensely superior in point of exactness and truth.

Socrates: Let it be as you put it; then relying on you we shall confidently answer the clever twisters of argument . . .

Protarchus: Answer what?

Socrates: That there are two arts of numbering and two arts of measuring, and plenty of other kindred arts which are similarly pairs of twins, though they share a single name.

Protarchus: Let us give that answer, Socrates, with our blessing to those clever folk, as you style them.

Socrates: Then these are the kinds of knowledge which we maintain to be pre-eminently exact?

Protarchus: Certainly.

Socrates: But we, Protarchus, are likely to be repudiated by the art of dialectic, if we prefer any other to her.
PROTARCHUS: Then how ought we to describe her, in her turn?
SOCRATES: Plainly everyone will recognize her whom we now speak of. The cognition of that which is, that which exists in reality, ever unchanged, is held, I cannot doubt, by all people who have the smallest endowment of reason to be far and away truer than any other. What is your view? How would you, Protarchus, decide about this question?

PROTARCHUS: On the many occasions when I used to listen to Gorgias, he regularly said, Socrates, that the art of persuasion was greatly superior to all others, for it subdued all things not by violence but by willing submission, and was far and away the best of all arts, but on this occasion I should not care to take up a position against either you or him.

SOCRATES: 'Take up arms,' I fancy you meant to say, but you dropped them out of modesty.

PROTARCHUS: Well, have it as you choose.

SOCRATES: I wonder if I am to blame for your misconception.

PROTARCHUS: What is it?

SOCRATES: What I wanted to discover at present, my dear Protarchus, was not which art or which form of knowledge is superior to all others in respect of being the greatest or the best or the most serviceable, but which devotes its attention to precision, exactness, and the fullest truth, though it may be small and of small profit—that is what we are looking for at this moment. What you must consider—and you won't give offense to Gorgias, if you allow his art the property of doing paramount service to mankind, while assigning to the procedure to which I have just referred just that property of possessing paramount truth which I illustrated by showing that a small quantity of pure white color was superior to a large quantity of impure in that respect—what you must consider is, whether the art we have in mind may reasonably be said to possess in fullest measure reason and intelligence in their purity, or whether we ought to look for some other art with a better claim. The question calls for great thought and ample reflection, and we must have no regard for any benefits a science may confer or any repute it may enjoy. But if there is a certain faculty in our souls naturally directed to loving truth and doing all for the sake of truth, let us make diligent search and say what it is, and when we have done so you must consider the question I have put to you.

PROTARCHUS: Well, I have been thinking it over, and in my opinion it would be difficult to concede that any other science or art has more of a hold on truth than this one.

SOCRATES: Now does it occur to you, in saying what you have just said, that the majority of arts, as also those who are busied therewith, are in the first place concerned with opinions and pursue their energetic studies in the realm of opinion? And are you aware that those of them who do consider themselves students of reality spend a
whole lifetime in studying the universe around us, how it came to be, how it does things, and how things happen to it? May we say that is so? What do you think?

PROTARCHUS: We may.

SOCRATES: Then the task which such students among us have taken upon themselves has nothing to do with that which always is, but only with what is coming into being, or will come, or has come.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: And can we say that any precise and exact truth attaches to things, none of which are at this present, or ever were, or ever will be free from change?

PROTARCHUS: Of course not.

SOCRATES: And how can we ever get a permanent grasp on anything that is entirely devoid of permanence?

PROTARCHUS: Nohow, I imagine.

SOCRATES: It follows then that reason too, and knowledge that gives perfect truth, are foreign to them.

PROTARCHUS: So it would seem.

SOCRATES: Then we should have done for good and all with your illustrious self, and mine, and with Gorgias and Philebus, and make the following reasoned declaration.

PROTARCHUS: Let us have it.

SOCRATES: That we find fixity, purity, truth, and what we have called perfect clarity, either in those things that are always, unaltered, and free of all admixture, or in what is most akin to them; everything else must be called inferior and of secondary importance.

PROTARCHUS: What you say is very true.

SOCRATES: Then as regards names for what we have been discussing, will it not be fittest to assign the fairest names to the fairest things?

PROTARCHUS: I suppose so.

SOCRATES: And are not reason and intelligence the names that command the greatest respect?

PROTARCHUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then these names can be properly established in usage as precisely appropriate to thought whose object is true being.

PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: But I may point out that it was just these names about which I originally suggested that we had to make our decision.

PROTARCHUS: To be sure, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Very well. Then here, one may say, we have at hand the ingredients, intelligence and pleasure, ready to be mixed, the materials in which, or out of which, we as builders are to build our structure—that would not be a bad metaphor.

PROTARCHUS: Quite a good one.
SOCRATES: Next then, I suppose, we must set to work to mix them.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: I suggest that there are points which we might do well to remind ourselves of first.

PROTARCHUS: What are they?

SOCRATES: Points we mentioned before, but I think there is a lot in the proverb about the need for repeating a good thing 'once and twice and once again.'

PROTARCHUS: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Come along, then, I beg and beseech you. I think I can give you the gist of what we said.

PROTARCHUS: Yes?

SOCRATES: Philebus maintains that pleasure is the proper quest of all living creatures, and that all ought to aim at it; in fact he says that the good for all is pleasure and nothing else, these two terms, pleasure and good, being properly applied to one thing, one single existent. Socrates on the other hand maintains that they are not one thing, but two, in fact as in name; 'good' and 'pleasant' are different from one another, and intelligence has more claim to be ranked as good than pleasure. Are not those the assertions, Protarchus, now as before?

PROTARCHUS: Exactly.

SOCRATES: And is there not a further point on which we should agree, now as then?

PROTARCHUS: What is that?

SOCRATES: That the good differs from everything else in a certain respect.

PROTARCHUS: In what respect?

SOCRATES: A creature that possesses it permanently, completely, and absolutely, has never any need of anything else; its satisfaction is perfect. Is that right?

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is right.

SOCRATES: And we went on, by way of experiment, to imagine the individual lives corresponding to them when each was isolated from the other—that of pleasure unmixed with intelligence, and that of intelligence similarly devoid of any particle of pleasure.

PROTARCHUS: We did.

SOCRATES: And did we find that either of them was satisfactory to anybody?

PROTARCHUS: No indeed.

SOCRATES: But if we made any slip before, now is the time for anyone who likes to take the matter up and restate it more correctly. Let him class together memory, intelligence, knowledge, and true opinion, and ask himself whether there is anything whatever that he
would choose to have, or to get, without these—anything, let alone a
pleasure which, for all its magnitude or extreme intensity, he felt
without any true opinion that he felt it, without any recognition what-
ever of the character of his experience, without even a momentary
memory of it. And then let him put the same question about intel-
ligence, whether anyone would choose to have intelligence unac-
panied by any pleasure, even of the most fleeting character, in
preference to its accompaniment by some, [or to have every pleasure
without any intelligence in preference to its accompaniment by
some].

PROTARCHUS: Impossible, Socrates. There is no need to put
that question more than once.

SOCRATES: Then neither of the two can be the perfect thing 61
that everyone desires, the absolute good.

PROTARCHUS: No.

SOCRATES: Then we shall have to grasp the good, either pre-
cisely or at least in rough outline, if we are to know to what we must
give, as we put it, the second prize.

PROTARCHUS: You are quite right.

SOCRATES: And haven’t we in a sense found a way toward the
good?

PROTARCHUS: How?

SOCRATES: If you were looking for somebody and began by as-
certaining correctly where he lived, I imagine that would be a big b
step toward discovering the man you looked for.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Well, so it is here. Our discussion has made it plain
to us, now as at the outset, that we must not look for the good in the
unmixed life, but in the mixed.

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: But there is more hope of what we are looking for
coming to light in what is well mixed than in what is badly mixed?

PROTARCHUS: Much more.

SOCRATES: Then let us mingle our ingredients, Protarchus,
with a prayer to the gods, to Dionysus or Hephaestus or whichever god
c has been assigned this function of mingling.

PROTARCHUS: By all means.

SOCRATES: Why, it’s just as if we were supplying drinks, with
two fountains at our disposal; one would be of honey, standing for
pleasure, the other standing for intelligence, a sobering, unintoxicat-
ing fountain of plain, salubrious water. We must get to work and
make a really good mixture.

PROTARCHUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Come then. To begin with, are we most likely to at-
tain a good result by mixing all pleasure with all intelligence?
PLATO: COLLECTED Dialogues

PROTARCHUS: Possibly.
SOCRATES: No, it's not safe. I think I can show you what seems a less dangerous method of mixture.
PROTARCHUS: Tell me, please.
SOCRATES: One pleasure, so we thought, had a truer being than another, and again this art was more exact than that?
PROTARCHUS: Of course.
SOCRATES: And knowledge differed from knowledge—one having regard to the things that come into being and perish, the other to those that do not come into being nor perish, but are always, unchanged and unaltered. Reviewing them on the score of truth, we concluded that the latter was truer than the former.
PROTARCHUS: Perfectly right.
SOCRATES: Then if we were to see which were the truest portions of each before we made our mixture, would the fusion of these portions suffice to constitute and provide us with the fully acceptable life, or should we still need something different?
PROTARCHUS: My own opinion is that we should act as you say.
SOCRATES: Now let us imagine a man who understands what justice itself is, and can give an account of it conformable to his knowledge, and who moreover has a like understanding of all else that is.
PROTARCHUS: Very well.
SOCRATES: Will such a man be adequately possessed of knowledge, if he can give his account of the divine circle and the divine sphere themselves, but knows nothing of these human spheres and circles of ours, so that, when he is building a house, the rules that he uses, no less than the circles, are of the other sort?
PROTARCHUS: I am moved to mirth, Socrates, by this description we are giving of ourselves confined to divine knowledge.
SOCRATES: What's that? Are we to throw in alongside of our other ingredients the art of the false rule and false circle, with all the lack of fixity and purity it involves?
PROTARCHUS: We must, if we are going to find the way home when we want it.
SOCRATES: And music too, which we said a while ago was so completely dependent on lucky shots and imitation, and so deficient in purity?
PROTARCHUS: I think we are bound to do so, if our life is ever to be a life at all.
SOCRATES: Do you want me, may I ask, to give way like a porter jostled and knocked about by the crowd, to fling open the doors and allow every sort of knowledge to stream in, the inferior mingling with the pure?
PROTARCHUS: I don't really see, Socrates, what harm one
PROTARCHUS: 'An excellent answer that,' we shall tell them.
SOCRATES: So we should. Then next we must put a question to intelligence and reason. 'Do you require any pleasures to be added to the mixture?' And when we ask that of reason and intelligence, they may possibly rejoin, 'What sort of pleasures?'

PROTARCHUS: I dare say.

SOCRATES: To which our rejoinder is this. 'Over and above the true pleasures that you know of, do you further require the greatest and intensest pleasures for your associates?' And they may well reply, 'Is that likely, Socrates, seeing that they put countless obstacles in our way, disturbing with frenzy the souls in which we dwell, and prevent us from ever coming into existence, while as to our offspring, they utterly ruin them in most cases, so careless and forgetful do they make us. No, the pleasures you have spoken of as true and pure you may regard as more or less related to us, and besides them you may add to the mixture those that consort with health and temperance, and in fact all that attend upon virtue in general, following her everywhere as their divinity. But to mix with reason the pleasures that always go with folly and all other manner of evil would surely be the most senseless act for one who desired to see a mixture and fusion as fair and peaceable as might be, so that he might try to learn from it what the good is, in man and in the universe, and what form he should divine it to possess.'

Shall we not say that in the words that reason has here used it has answered wisely and reasonably on behalf of itself and memory and right opinion?

PROTARCHUS: Completely so.

SOCRATES: But there is still a certain thing we must have, and nothing in the world could come into being without it.

PROTARCHUS: What is that?

SOCRATES: Reality, for a thing with which we don't mean to mix reality will never really come into being, and if it ever did it wouldn't continue in being.

PROTARCHUS: No, of course not.

SOCRATES: No indeed. And now do you and Philebus tell me if there are any additional ingredients required. To me it appears that in our present discussion we have created what might be called an incorporeal ordered system for the rightful control of a corporeal subject in which dwells a soul.

PROTARCHUS: You may assure yourself, Socrates, that my own conclusion is the same.

SOCRATES: Then perhaps we should be more or less right in saying that we now stand upon the threshold of the good and of that habitation where all that is like thereto resides?

PROTARCHUS: I at least think so.

SOCRATES: And what, may I ask, shall we regard as the most
valuable thing in our mixture, that which makes an arrangement of this sort commend itself to us all? If we discover that, we can go on to consider whether this factor in the whole scheme of things is closer and more akin to pleasure, or to reason.

PROTARCHUS: Very good, what you propose will do much to help us toward our decision.

SOCRATES: As a matter of fact, it is easy enough to see the cause that makes any mixture, be it what it may, possess high value or no value whatever.

PROTARCHUS: How so?

SOCRATES: Surely anyone in the world can recognize that.

PROTARCHUS: Recognize what?

SOCRATES: That any compound, whatever it be, that does not by some means or other exhibit measure and proportion, is the ruin both of its ingredients and, first and foremost, of itself; what you are bound to get in such cases is no real mixture, but literally a miserable mass of unmixed messiness.

PROTARCHUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: So now we find that the good has taken refuge in the character of the beautiful, for the qualities of measure and proportion invariably, I imagine, constitute beauty and excellence.

PROTARCHUS: Yes indeed.

SOCRATES: And of course we said that truth was included along with these qualities in the mixture.

PROTARCHUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Then if we cannot hunt down the good under a single form, let us secure it by the conjunction of three, beauty, proportion, and truth, and then, regarding these three as one, let us assert that that may most properly be held to determine the qualities of the mixture, and that because that is good the mixture itself has become so.

PROTARCHUS: Yes, that is quite proper.

SOCRATES: Well, Protarchus, by this time anyone would be competent to decide whether it is pleasure or intelligence that is more akin to the highest good, and more valuable with men and gods alike.

PROTARCHUS: The answer is clear, but for all that it would be as well to formulate it explicitly.

SOCRATES: Then let us examine each of our three forms separately in relation to pleasure and reason, for we must see to which of the two we shall assign each of them on the ground of closer kinship.

PROTARCHUS: By 'each of them' you mean beauty, truth, and measuredness?

SOCRATES: Yes, and in the first place, Protarchus, take hold of truth, and having done so, have a look at the three things, reason, truth, and pleasure, and then, taking your time, answer your own question whether pleasure or reason is the more akin to truth.
PROTARCHUS: What need for time? I think they differ widely. Pleasure is the worst of all impostors, and according to the accounts, when it is a question of the pleasures of love, which are commonly reckoned as the greatest, even perjury is forgiven by the gods—pleasures being presumably, like children, completely destitute of reason. Reason, on the other hand, if not identical with truth, is of all things the most like it, the truest thing in the world.

SOCRATES: Next then give a similar consideration to measuredness. Has pleasure more of it than intelligence, or is the reverse the case?

PROTARCHUS: There you set me another easy problem to consider. I don't think you could discover anything whatsoever more unmeasured in its character than pleasure and intense enjoyment, nor anything more measured than reason and knowledge.

SOCRATES: Well said. However, there is still a third thing I want you to tell me. Has reason more part in beauty than pleasure, that is to say is reason more beautiful than pleasure, or is the opposite the case?

PROTARCHUS: Well, of course, Socrates, no one whether in his waking hours or in his dreams has had a vision of intelligence and reason as ugly; no one can ever possibly have conceived them as being or becoming ugly, or ever going to be so.

SOCRATES: Right.

PROTARCHUS: But I fancy that when we see someone, no matter whom, experiencing pleasures—and I think this is true especially of the greatest pleasures—we detect in them an element either of the ridiculous or of extreme ugliness, so that we ourselves feel ashamed, and do our best to cover it up and hide it away, and we leave that sort of thing to the hours of darkness, feeling that it should not be exposed to the light of day.

SOCRATES: Then your message, Protarchus, to be sent out to the world at large and announced to your immediate listeners, will be this. Pleasure is not the first of all possessions, nor yet the second; rather, the first has been secured for everlasting tenure somewhere in the region of measure—of what is measured or appropriate, or whatever term may be deemed to denote the quality in question.

PROTARCHUS: So at least it appears on our present showing.

SOCRATES: And the second lies in the region of what is proportioned and beautiful, and what is perfect and satisfying and so forth—whatever terms denote that kind of quality.

PROTARCHUS: That seems right.

SOCRATES: And if you accept what I divine, and put reason and intelligence third, you won't be very wide of the truth.

PROTARCHUS: Perhaps not.

SOCRATES: Nor again, if beside these three you put as fourth
PROTARCHUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then according to the decision now pronounced by our argument, pleasure will take fifth place.

PROTARCHUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: And not first place, no, not even if all the oxen and horses and every other animal that exists tell us so by their pursuit of pleasure. It is the animals on which the multitude rely, just as diviners rely on birds, when they decide that pleasures are of the first importance to our living a good life, and suppose that animals' desires are authoritative evidence, rather than those desires that are known to reasoned argument, divining the truth of this and that by the power of the Muse of philosophy.

PROTARCHUS: The point has been reached, Socrates, at which we all agree that your conclusions are completely true.

SOCRATES: Then will you let me go?

PROTARCHUS: There is only a little still left to be done, Socrates. I am sure you won't give up sooner than we do; so I will remind you of the tasks that remain.
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
   Driven by the spheres
Like a vast shadow moved . . .

That came straight out of the Timaeus.

We must read the dialogue with such thoughts in mind because
most of it is no longer to us what it was to Plato and through him to
the men for centuries after, up to and into the Middle Ages, a statement
of scientific truth combined with mythical truth in which great spiritual
truths could be found. Inevitably we read it, at least to begin with,
as an account of the incredibilities antiquity believed. God creates the
universe from innumerable triangles, described and compared with
careful accuracy. When man is created the way breath is put into him
is of an astounding complexity, also described in accurate and be-
wildering detail. No doubt, as Plato said, he had relaxed just then and
was amusing himself by this kind of writing, but he was also feeling,
as we no longer can, how reasonable it all was and quite possibly
the very truth itself.

It is certain, however, that Plato would have taken with complete
tranquillity our modern skepticism. He would have pointed out that
science cannot be accurately true since it deals with the temporal, the
finite, the forever changing, never with the eternal. But yet the visible
world is a copy, an image, of what is eternal and true. It is a changing
reflection of that which is changeless and therefore, imperfect though
it is, in it can be found the truth, God the Creator, the all-good. That
is the matter of importance, not scientific accuracy, but to catch a
glimpse of “the beyond, which ever thereafter the soul will strive to
reach.”

Toward the close of the Timaeus Plato says that death when it
comes in old age is accompanied with pleasure, not pain. He was very
old when he wrote that; he was near the end. The innumerable host of
those who have learned from him and have loved him, who through
the ages have found in him inspiration and guidance for life, vision to
see “the beyond” and that the ultimate truth is God, our Creator and
Father—all those whom he has taught so greatly have rejoiced that as
death approached him he declared that he felt his soul “loosened from
bonds and able to fly away with joy.” Aristotle, who was best able to
understand him, wrote that he had proved that the good man was the
happy man. That is an aspect of Platonism which has been too little
emphasized.
myself to a person who, on beholding beautiful animals either created
by the painter’s art, or, better still, alive but at rest, is seized with a de-
sire of seeing them in motion or engaged in some struggle or conflict to
which their forms appear suited—this is my feeling about the state
which we have been describing. There are conflicts which all cities
undergo, and I should like to hear someone tell of our own city carry-
ning on a struggle against her neighbors, and how she went out to war
in a becoming manner, and when at war showed by the greatness of
her actions and the magnanimity of her words in dealing with other
cities a result worthy of her training and education. Now I, Critias
and Hermocrates, am conscious that I myself should never be able to
celebrate the city and her citizens in a befitting manner, and I am not
surprised at my own incapacity; to me the wonder is rather that the
poets present as well as past are no better—not that I mean to depre-
ciate them, but everyone can see that they are a tribe of imitators, and
will imitate best and most easily the life in which they have been
brought up, while that which is beyond the range of a man’s education
he finds hard to carry out in action, and still harder adequately to
represent in language. I am aware that the Sophists have plenty of
brave words and fair conceits, but I am afraid that being only wander-
ers from one city to another, and having never had habitations of
their own, they may fail in their conception of philosophers and
statesmen and may not know what they do and say in time of war,
when they are fighting or holding parley with their enemies. And thus
people of your class are the only ones remaining who are fitted by
nature and education to take part at once both in politics and phi-
losophy. Here is Timaeus, of Locri in Italy, a city which has admira-
able laws, who is himself in wealth and rank the equal of any of his
fellow citizens; he has held the most important and honorable offices in
his own state, and, as I believe, has scaled the heights of all phi-
losophy. And here is Critias, whom every Athenian knows to be no
novice in the matters of which we are speaking, and as to Her-
mocrates, I am assured by many witnesses that his genius and edu-
cation qualify him to take part in any speculation of the kind. And
therefore yesterday when I saw that you wanted me to describe the
formation of the state, I readily assented, being very well aware that,
if you only would, none was better qualified to carry the discussion fur-
ther, and that when you had engaged our city in a suitable war, you of
all men living could best exhibit her playing a fitting part. When I had
completed my task, I in return imposed this other task upon you. You
conferred together and agreed to entertain me today, as I had enter-
tained you, with a feast of discourse. Here am I in festive array, and
c no man can be more ready for the promised banquet.

HERMOCRATES: And we too, Socrates, as Timaeus says, will
not be wanting in enthusiasm, and there is no excuse for not com-
plying with your request. As soon as we arrived yesterday at the guest-
chamber of Critias, with whom we are staying, or rather on our way thither, we talked the matter over, and he told us an ancient tradition d which I wish, Critias, that you would repeat to Socrates, so that he may help us to judge whether it will satisfy his requirements or not.

Critias: I will, if Timaeus, who is our other partner, approves.

Timaeus: I quite approve.

Critias: Then listen, Socrates, to a tale which, though strange, is certainly true, having been attested by Solon, who was the wisest of the seven sages. He was a relative and a dear friend of my great-grandfather, Dropides, as he himself says in many passages of his poems, and he told the story to Critias, my grandfather, who remembered and repeated it to us. There were of old, he said, great and marvelous actions of the Athenian city, which have passed into oblivion through lapse of time and the destruction of mankind, and one in particular, greater than all the rest. This we will now rehearse. It will be a fitting monument of our gratitude to you, and a hymn of praise true and worthy of the goddess, on this her day of festival.

Socrates: Very good. And what is this ancient famous action of the Athenians, which Critias declared, on the authority of Solon, to be not a mere legend but an actual fact?

Critias: I will tell an old-world story which I heard from an aged man, for Critias, at the time of telling it, was, as he said, nearly ninety years of age, and I was about ten. Now the day was that day of the Apaturia which is called the Registration of Youth, at which, according to custom, our parents gave prizes for recitations, and the poems of several poets were recited by us boys, and many of us sang the poems of Solon, which at that time had not gone out of fashion. One of our tribe, either because he thought so or to please Critias, said that in his judgment Solon was not only the wisest of men, but also the noblest of poets.

The old man, as I very well remember, brightened up at hearing this and said, smiling, Yes, Amynander, if Solon had only, like other poets, made poetry the business of his life and had completed the tale which he brought with him from Egypt, and had not been compelled, by reason of the factions and troubles which he found stirring in his own country when he came home, to attend to other matters, in my opinion he would have been as famous as Homer or Hesiod, or any poet.

And what was the tale about, Critias? said Amynander.

About the greatest action which the Athenians ever did, and which ought to have been the most famous, but, through the lapse of time and the destruction of the actors, it has not come down to us.

Tell us, said the other, the whole story, and how and from whom Solon heard this veritable tradition.

He replied, In the Egyptian Delta, at the head of which the river Nile divides, there is a certain district which is called the district of
Sais, and the great city of the district is also called Sais, and is the city from which King Amasis came. The citizens have a deity for their foundress; she is called in the Egyptian tongue Neith, and is asserted by them to be the same whom the Hellenes call Athena. They are great lovers of the Athenians and say that they are in some way related to them. To this city came Solon and was received there with great honor; he asked the priests, who were most skilful in such matters, about antiquity, and made the discovery that neither he nor any other Hellen knew anything worth mentioning about the times of old. On one occasion, wishing to draw them on to speak of antiquity, he began to tell about the most ancient things in our part of the world—about Phoroneus, who is called 'the first man,' and about Niobe, and after the Deluge, of the survival of Deucalion and Pyrrha, and he traced the genealogy of their descendants and, reckoning up the dates, tried to compute how many years ago the events of which he was speaking happened.

Thereupon one of the priests, who was of a very great age, said, O Solon, Solon, you Hellenes are never anything but children, and there is not an old man among you.

Solon in return asked him what he meant.

I mean to say, he replied, that in mind you are all young; there is no old opinion handed down among you by ancient tradition, nor any science which is hoary with age. And I will tell you why. There have been, and will be again, many destructions of mankind arising out of many causes; the greatest have been brought about by the agencies of fire and water, and other lesser ones by innumerable other causes. There is a story which even you have preserved, that once upon a time Phaethon, the son of Helios, having yoked the steeds in his father's chariot, because he was not able to drive them in the path of his father, burned up all that was upon the earth, and was himself destroyed by a thunderbolt. Now this has the form of a myth, but really signifies a declination of the bodies moving in the heavens around the earth, and a great conflagration of things upon the earth which recurs after long intervals; at such times those who live upon the mountains and in dry and lofty places are more liable to destruction than those who dwell by rivers or on the seashore. And from this calamity we are preserved by the liberation of the Nile, who is our never-failing savior. When, on the other hand, the gods purge the earth with a deluge of water, the survivors in your country are herdmen and shepherds who dwell on the mountains, but those who, like you, live in cities are carried by the rivers into the sea. Whereas in this land, neither then nor at any other time, does the water come down from above on the fields, having always a tendency to come up from below, for which reason the traditions preserved here are the most ancient. The fact is that wherever the extremity of winter frost or of summer sun does not prevent, mankind exist, sometimes in greater, sometimes in
lesser numbers. And whatever happened either in your country or in ours, or in any other region of which we are informed—if there were any actions noble or great or in any other way remarkable, they have all been written down by us of old and are preserved in our temples. Whereas just when you and other nations are beginning to be provided with letters and the other requisites of civilized life, after the usual interval, the stream from heaven, like a pestilence, comes pouring down and leaves only those of you who are destitute of letters and education, and so you have to begin all over again like children, and know nothing of what happened in ancient times, either among us or among yourselves.

As for those genealogies of yours which you just now recounted to us, Solon, they are no better than the tales of children. In the first place you remember a single deluge only, but there were many previous ones; in the next place, you do not know that there formerly dwelt in your land the fairest and noblest race of men which ever lived, and that you and your whole city are descended from a small seed or remnant of them which survived. And this was unknown to you, because, for many generations, the survivors of that destruction died, leaving no written word. For there was a time, Solon, before the great deluge of all, when the city which now is Athens was first in war and in every way the best-governed of all cities, and is said to have performed the noblest deeds and to have had the fairest constitution of any of which tradition tells, under the face of heaven.

Solon marveled at his words, and earnestly requested the priests to inform him exactly and in order about these former citizens.

You are welcome to hear about them, Solon, said the priest, both for your own sake and for that of your city, and above all, for the sake of the goddess who is the common patron and parent and educator of both our cities. She founded your city a thousand years before ours, receiving from the Earth and Hephaestus the seed of your race, and afterward she founded ours, of which the constitution is recorded in our sacred registers to be eight thousand years old. As touching your citizens of nine thousand years ago, I will briefly inform you of their laws and of their most famous action; the exact particulars of the whole we will hereafter go through at our leisure in the sacred registers themselves. If you compare these very laws with ours you will find that many of ours are the counterpart of yours as they were in the olden time. In the first place, there is the caste of priests, which is separated from all the others; next, there are the artificers, who ply their several crafts by themselves and do not intermix, and also there is the class of shepherds and of hunters, as well as that of husbandmen. And you will observe, too, that the warriors in Egypt are distinct from all the other classes, and are commanded by the law to devote themselves solely to military pursuits; moreover, the weapons which they carry are shields and spears—a style of equipment which the
Then as to wisdom, do you observe how our law from the very first made a study of the whole order of things, extending even to prophecy and medicine which gives health, out of these divine elements deriving what was needful for human life, and adding every sort of knowledge which was akin to them. All this order and arrangement the goddess first imparted to you when establishing your city, and she chose the spot of earth in which you were born, because she saw that the happy temperament of the seasons in that land would produce the wisest of men. Wherefore the goddess, who was a lover both of war and of wisdom, selected and first of all settled that spot which was the most likely to produce men likest herself. And there you dwelt, having such laws as these and still better ones, and excelled all mankind in all virtue, as became the children and disciples of the gods.

Many great and wonderful deeds are recorded of your state in our histories. But one of them exceeds all the rest in greatness and valor. For these histories tell of a mighty power which unprovoked made an expedition against the whole of Europe and Asia, and to which your city put an end. This power came forth out of the Atlantic Ocean, for in those days the Atlantic was navigable, and there was an island situated in front of the straits which are by you called the Pillars of Heracles. The island was larger than Libya and Asia put together, and was the way to other islands, and from these you might pass to the whole of the opposite continent which surrounded the true ocean, for this sea which is within the Straits of Heracles is only a harbor, having a narrow entrance, but that other is a real sea, and the land surrounding it on every side may be most truly called a boundless continent. Now in this island of Atlantis there was a great and wonderful empire which had rule over the whole island and several others, and over parts of the continent, and, furthermore, the men of Atlantis had subjected the parts of Libya within the columns of Heracles as far as Egypt, and of Europe as far as Tyrrhenia. This vast power, gathered into one, endeavored to subdue at a blow our country and yours and the whole of the region within the straits, and then, Solon, your country shone forth, in the excellence of her virtue and strength, among all mankind. She was pre-eminent in courage and military skill, and was the leader of the Hellenes. And when the rest fell off from her, being compelled to stand alone, after having undergone the very extremity of danger, she defeated and triumphed over the invaders, and preserved from slavery those who were not yet subdued, and generously liberated all the rest of us who dwell within the Pillars. But afterward there occurred violent earthquakes and floods, and in a single day and night of misfortune all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like
manner disappeared in the depths of the sea. For which reason the sea in those parts is impassable and impenetrable, because there is a shoal of mud in the way, and this was caused by the subsidence of the island.

I have told you briefly, Socrates, what the aged Critias heard from Solon and related to us. And when you were speaking yesterday about your city and citizens, the tale which I have just been repeating to you came into my mind, and I remarked with astonishment how, by some mysterious coincidence, you agreed in almost every particular with the narrative of Solon, but I did not like to speak at the moment. For a long time had elapsed, and I had forgotten too much; I thought that I must first of all run over the narrative in my own mind, and then I would speak. And so I readily assented to your request yesterday, considering that in all such cases the chief difficulty is to find a tale suitable to our purpose, and that with such a tale we should be fairly well provided.

And therefore, as Hermocrates has told you, on my way home yesterday I at once communicated the tale to my companions as I remembered it, and after I left them, during the night by thinking I recovered nearly the whole of it. Truly, as is often said, the lessons of our childhood make a wonderful impression on our memories, for I am not sure that I could remember all the discourse of yesterday, but I should be much surprised if I forgot any of these things which I have heard very long ago. I listened at the time with childlike interest to the old man’s narrative; he was very ready to teach me, and I asked him again and again to repeat his words, so that, like an indelible picture, they were branded into my mind. As soon as the day broke, I rehearsed them as he spoke them to my companions, that they, as well as myself, might have something to say. And now, Socrates, to make an end of my preface, I am ready to tell you the whole tale. I will give you not only the general heads, but the particulars, as they were told to me. The city and citizens, which you yesterday described to us in fiction, we will now transfer to the world of reality. It shall be the ancient city of Athens, and we will suppose that the citizens whom you imagined were our veritable ancestors of whom the priest spoke; they will perfectly harmonize, and there will be no inconsistency in saying that the citizens of your republic are these ancient Athenians. Let us divide the subject among us, and all endeavor according to our ability gracefully to execute the task which you have imposed upon us.

Consider then, Socrates, if this narrative is suited to the purpose, or whether we should seek for some other instead.

SOCRATES: And what other, Critias, can we find that will be better than this which is natural and suitable to the festival of the goddess, and has the very great advantage of being a fact and not a fiction? How or where shall we find another if we abandon this? We cannot, and therefore you must tell the tale, and good luck to you, and I in return for my yesterday’s discourse will now rest and be a listener.
maker of all this universe is past finding out, and even if we found him, to tell of him to all men would be impossible. This question, however, we must ask about the world. Which of the patterns had the artificer in view when he made it—the pattern of the unchangeable or of that which is created? If the world be indeed fair and the artificer good, it is manifest that he must have looked to that which is eternal, but if what cannot be said without blasphemy is true, then to the created pattern. Everyone will see that he must have looked to the eternal, for the world is the fairest of creations and he is the best of causes. And having been created in this way, the world has been framed in the likeness of that which is apprehended by reason and mind and is unchangeable, and must therefore of necessity, if this is admitted, be a copy of something. Now it is all-important that the beginning of everything should be according to nature. And in speaking of the copy and the original we may assume that words are akin to the matter which they describe; when they relate to the lasting and permanent and intelligible, they ought to be lasting and unalterable, and, as far as their nature allows, irrefutable and invincible—nothing less. But when they express only the copy or likeness and not the eternal things themselves, they need only be likely and analogous to the former words. As being is to becoming, so is truth to belief. If then, Socrates, amidst the many opinions about the gods and the generation of the universe, we are not able to give notions which are altogether and in every respect exact and consistent with one another, do not be surprised. Enough if we adduce probabilities as likely as any others, for we must remember that I who am the speaker and you who are the judges are only mortal men, and we ought to accept the tale which is probable and inquire no further.

SOCRATES: Excellent, Timaeus, and we will do precisely as you bid us. The prelude is charming and is already accepted by us—may we beg of you to proceed to the strain?

TIMAEUS: Let me tell you then why the creator made this world of generation. He was good, and the good can never have any jealousy of anything. And being free from jealousy, he desired that all things should be as like himself as they could be. This is in the truest sense the origin of creation and of the world, as we shall do well in believing on the testimony of wise men. God desired that all things should be good and nothing bad, so far as this was attainable. Wherefore also finding the whole visible sphere not at rest, but moving in an irregular and disorderly fashion, out of disorder he brought order, considering that this was in every way better than the other. Now the deeds of the best could never be or have been other than the fairest, and the creator, reflecting on the things which are by nature visible, found that no unintelligent creature taken as a whole could ever be fairer than the intelligent taken as a whole, and again that intelligence could not be present in anything which was devoid of soul. For which
reason, when he was framing the universe, he put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, that he might be the creator of a work which was by nature fairest and best. On this wise, using the language of probability, we may say that the world came into being—a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God. This being supposed, let us proceed to the next stage. In the likeness of what animal did the creator make the world? It would be an unworthy thing to liken it to any nature which exists as a part only, for nothing can be beautiful which is like any imperfect thing. But let us suppose the world to be the very image of that whole of which all other animals both individually and in their tribes are portions. For the original of the universe contains in itself all intelligible beings, just as this world comprehends us and all other visible creatures. For the deity, intending to make this world like the fairest and most perfect of intelligible beings, framed one visible animal comprehending within itself all other animals of a kindred nature. Are we right in saying that there is one world, or that they are many and infinite? There must be one only if the created copy is to accord with the original. For that which includes all other intelligible creatures cannot have a second or companion; in that case there would be need of another living being which would include both, and of which they would be parts, and the likeness would be more truly said to resemble not them, but that other which included them. In order then that the world might be solitary, like the perfect animal, the creator made not two worlds or an infinite number of them, but there is and ever will be one only—begotten and created heaven.

Now that which is created is of necessity corporeal, and also visible and tangible. And nothing is visible where there is no fire, or tangible which has no solidity, and nothing is solid without earth. Wherefore also God in the beginning of creation made the body of the universe to consist of fire and earth. But two things cannot be rightly put together without a third; there must be some bond of union between them. And the fairest bond is that which makes the most complete fusion of itself and the things which it combines, and proportion is best adapted to effect such a union. For whenever in any three numbers, whether cube or square, there is a mean, which is to the last term what the first term is to it, and again, when the mean is to the first term as the last term is to the mean—then the mean becoming first and last, and the first and last both becoming means, they will all of them of necessity come to be the same, and having become the same with one another will be all one. If the universal frame had been created a surface only and having no depth, a single mean would have sufficed to bind together itself and the other terms, but now, as the world must be solid, and solid bodies are always compacted not by one mean but by two, God placed water and air in the mean between fire and earth, and made them to have the same proportion so far as was
possible—as fire is to air so is air to water, and as air is to water so is water to earth—and thus he bound and put together a visible and tangible heaven. And for these reasons, and out of such elements which are in number four, the body of the world was created, and it was harmonized by proportion, and therefore has the spirit of friendship, and having been reconciled to itself, it was indissoluble by the hand of any other than the framer.

Now the creation took up the whole of each of the four elements, for the creator compounded the world out of all the fire and all the water and all the air and all the earth, leaving no part of any of them nor any power of them outside. His intention was, in the first place, that the animal should be as far as possible a perfect whole and of perfect parts, secondly, that it should be one, leaving no remnants out of which another such world might be created, and also that it should be free from old age and unaffected by disease. Considering that if heat and cold and other powerful forces surround composite bodies and attack them from without, they decompose them before their time, and by bringing diseases and old age upon them make them waste away—for this cause and on these grounds he made the world one whole, having every part entire, and being therefore perfect and not liable to old age and disease. And he gave to the world the figure which was suitable and also natural. Now to the animal which was to comprehend all animals, that figure would be suitable which comprehends within itself all other figures. Wherefore he made the world in the form of a globe, round as from a lathe, having its extremes in every direction equidistant from the center, the most perfect and the most like itself of all figures, for he considered that the like is infinitely fairer than the unlike. This he finished off, making the surface smooth all around for many reasons—in the first place, because the living being had no need of eyes when there was nothing remaining outside him to be seen, nor of ears when there was nothing to be heard, and there was no surrounding atmosphere to be breathed, nor would there have been any use of organs by the help of which he might receive his food or get rid of what he had already digested, since there was nothing which went from him or came into him, for there was nothing besides him. Of design he was created thus—his own waste providing his own food, and all that he did or suffered taking place in and by himself. For the creator conceived that a being which was self-sufficient would be far more excellent than one which lacked anything, and, as he had no need to take anything or defend himself against anyone, the creator did not think it necessary to bestow upon him hands, nor had he any need of feet, nor of the whole apparatus of walking. But the movement suited to his spherical form was assigned to him, being of all the seven that which is most appropriate to mind and intelligence, and he was made to move in the same manner and on the same spot, within his own limits revolving in a circle. All the
other six motions were taken away from him, and he was made not to partake of their deviations. And as this circular movement required no feet, the universe was created without legs and without feet.

Such was the whole plan of the eternal God about the god that was to be; he made it smooth and even, having a surface in every direction equidistant from the center, a body entire and perfect, and formed out of perfect bodies. And in the center he put the soul, which he diffused throughout the body, making it also to be the exterior environment of it, and he made the universe a circle moving in a circle, one and solitary, yet by reason of its excellence able to converse with itself, and needing no other friendship or acquaintance. Having these purposes in view he created the world a blessed god.

Now God did not make the soul after the body, although we are speaking of them in this order, for when he put them together he would never have allowed that the elder should be ruled by the younger, but this is a random manner of speaking which we have, because somehow we ourselves too are very much under the dominion of chance. Whereas he made the soul in origin and excellence prior to and older than the body, to be the ruler and mistress, of whom the body was to be the subject. And he made her out of the following elements and on this wise. From the being which is indivisible and unchangeable, and from that kind of being which is distributed among bodies, he compounded a third and intermediate kind of being. He did likewise with the same and the different, blending together the indivisible kind of each with that which is portioned out in bodies. Then, taking the three new elements, he mingled them all into one form, compressing by force the reluctant and unsociable nature of the different into the same. When he had mingled them with the intermediate kind of being and out of three made one, he again divided this whole into as many portions as was fitting, each portion being a compound of the same, the different, and being. And he proceeded to divide after this manner. First of all, he took away one part of the whole [1], and then he separated a second part which was double the first [2], and then he took away a third part which was half as much again as the second and three times as much as the first [3], and then he took a fourth part which was twice as much as the second [4], and a fifth part which was three times the third [9], and a sixth part which was eight times the first [8], and a seventh part which was twenty-seven times the first [27]. After this he filled up the double intervals [that is, between 1, 2, 4, 8] and the triple [that is, between 1, 3, 9, 27], cutting off yet other portions from the mixture and placing them in the intervals, so that in each interval there were two kinds of means, the one exceeding and exceeded by equal parts of its extremes [as for example, 1, \(\frac{3}{2}\), 2, in which the mean \(\frac{3}{2}\) is one third of 1 more than 1, and one third of 2 less than 2], the other being that kind of mean which exceeds and is exceeded by an equal number. Where
declares it, then intelligence and knowledge are necessarily achieved. And if anyone affirms that in which these two are found to be other than the soul, he will say the very opposite of the truth.

When the father and creator saw the creature which he had made moving and living, the created image of the eternal gods, he rejoiced, and in his joy determined to make the copy still more like the original, and as this was an eternal living being, he sought to make the universe eternal, so far as might be. Now the nature of the ideal being was everlasting, but to bestow this attribute in its fullness upon a creature was impossible. Wherefore he resolved to have a moving image of eternity, and when he set in order the heaven, he made this image eternal but moving according to number, while eternity itself rests in unity, and this image we call time. For there were no days and months and years before the heaven was created, but when he constructed the heaven he created them also. They are all parts of time, and the past and future are created species of time, which we unconsciously but wrongly transfer to eternal being, for we say that it 'was,' or 'is,' or 'will be,' but the truth is that 'is' alone is properly attributed to it, and that 'was' and 'will be' are only to be spoken of becoming in time, for they are motions, but that which is immoveably the same forever cannot become older or younger by time, nor can it be said that it came into being in the past, or has come into being now, or will come into being in the future, nor is it subject at all to any of those states which affect moving and sensible things and of which generation is the cause. These are the forms of time, which imitates eternity and revolves according to a law of number. Moreover, when we say that what has become is become and what becomes is becoming, and that what will become is about to become and that the nonexistent is nonexistent—all these are inaccurate modes of expression. But perhaps this whole subject will be more suitably discussed on some other occasion.

Time, then, and the heaven came into being at the same instant in order that, having been created together, if ever there was to be a dissolution of them, they might be dissolved together. It was framed after the pattern of the eternal nature—that it might resemble this as far as was possible, for the pattern exists from eternity, and the created heaven has been and is and will be in all time. Such was the mind and thought of God in the creation of time. The sun and moon and five other stars, which are called the planets, were created by him in order to distinguish and preserve the numbers of time, and when he had made their several bodies, he placed them in the orbits in which the circle of the other was revolving—in seven orbits seven stars. First, there was the moon in the orbit nearest the earth, and the next the sun, in the second orbit above the earth; then came the morning star and the star said to be sacred to Hermes, moving in orbits which have an equal swiftness with the sun, but in an opposite direction, and this
yet comprehended therein, it was still unlike. Therefore, the creator proceeded to fashion it after the nature of the pattern in this remaining point. Now as in the ideal animal the mind perceives ideas or species of a certain nature and number, he thought that this created animal ought to have species of a like nature and number. There are four such. One of them is the heavenly race of the gods; another, the race of birds whose way is in the air; the third, the watery species; and the fourth, the pedestrian and land creatures. Of the heavenly and divine, he created the greater part out of fire, that they might be the brightest of all things and fairest to behold, and he fashioned them after the likeness of the universe in the figure of a circle, and made them follow the intelligent motion of the supreme, distributing them over the whole circumference of heaven, which was to be a true cosmos or glorious world spangled with them all over. And he gave to each of them two movements—the first, a movement on the same spot after the same manner, whereby they ever continue to think consistently the same thoughts about the same things, in the same respect; the second, a forward movement, in which they are controlled by the revolution of the same and the like—but by the other five motions they were unaffected, in order that each of them might attain the highest perfection. And for this reason the fixed stars were created, to be divine and eternal animals, ever abiding and revolving after the same manner and on the same spot, and the other stars which reverse their motion and are subject to deviations of this kind were created in the manner already described. The earth, which is our nurse, clinging around the pole which is extended through the universe, he framed to be the guardian and artificer of night and day, first and eldest of gods that are in the interior of heaven. Vain would be the attempt to tell all the figures of them circling as in dance, and their juxtapositions, and the return of them in their revolutions upon themselves, and their approximations, and to say which of these deities in their conjunctions meet, and which of them are in opposition, and in what order they get behind and before one another, and when they are severally eclipsed to our sight and again reappear, sending terrors and intimations of the future to those who cannot calculate their movements—to attempt to tell of all this without a visible representation of the heavenly system would be labor in vain. Enough on this head, and now let what we have said about the nature of the created and visible gods have an end. To know or tell the origin of the other divinities is beyond us, and we must accept the traditions of the men of old time who affirm themselves to be the offspring of the gods—that is what they say—and they must surely have known their own ancestors. How can we doubt the word of the children of the gods? Although they give no probable or certain proofs, still, as they declare that they are speaking
of what took place in their own family, we must conform to custom and believe them. In this manner, then, according to them, the genealogy of these gods is to be received and set forth.

Oceanus and Tethys were the children of Earth and Heaven, and from these sprang Phorcys and Cronus and Rhea, and all that generation, and from Cronus and Rhea sprang Zeus and Hera, and all those who are said to be their brethren, and others who were the children of these.

Now, when all of them, both those who visibly appear in their revolutions as well as those other gods who are of a more retiring nature, had come into being, the creator of the universe addressed them in these words. Gods, children of gods, who are my works and of whom I am the artificer and father, my creations are indissoluble, if so I will. All that is bound may be undone, but only an evil being would wish to undo that which is harmonious and happy. Wherefore, since ye are but creatures, ye are not altogether immortal and indissoluble, but ye shall certainly not be dissolved, nor be liable to the fate of death, having in my will a greater and mightier bond than those with which ye were bound at the time of your birth. And now listen to my instructions. Three tribes of mortal beings remain to be created—without them the universe will be incomplete, for it will not contain every kind of animal which it ought to contain, if it is to be perfect.

On the other hand, if they were created by me and received life at my hands, they would be on an equality with the gods. In order then that they may be mortal, and that this universe may be truly universal, do ye, according to your natures, betake yourselves to the formation of animals, imitating the power which was shown by me in creating you.

The part of them worthy of the name immortal, which is called divine and is the guiding principle of those who are willing to follow justice and you—of that divine part I will myself sow the seed, and having made a beginning, I will hand the work over to you. And do ye then interweave the mortal with the immortal and make and beget living creatures, and give them food and make them to grow, and receive them again in death.

Thus he spoke, and once more into the cup in which he had previously mingled the soul of the universe he poured the remains of the elements, and mingled them in much the same manner; they were not, however, pure as before, but diluted to the second and third degree. And having made it he divided the whole mixture into souls equal in number to the stars and assigned each soul to a star, and having there placed them as in a chariot he showed them the nature of the universe and declared to them the laws of destiny, according to which their first birth would be one and the same for all—no one should suffer a disadvantage at his hands. They were to be sown in the instruments of time severally adapted to them, and to come forth the most religious of animals, and as human nature was of two kinds, the superior race
was of such and such a character, and would hereafter be called man. Now, when they should be implanted in bodies by necessity and be always gaining or losing some part of their bodily substance, then, in the first place, it would be necessary that they should all have in them one and the same faculty of sensation, arising out of irresistible impressions; in the second place, they must have love, in which pleasure and pain mingle—also fear and anger, and the feelings which are akin or opposite to them. If they conquered these they would live righteously, and if they were conquered by them, unrighteously. He who lived well during his appointed time was to return and dwell in his native star, and there he would have a blessed and congenial existence. But if he failed in attaining this, at the second birth he would pass into a woman, and if, when in that state of being, he did not desist from evil, he would continually be changed into some brute who resembled him in the evil nature which he had acquired, and would not cease from his toils and transformations until he helped the revolution of the same and the like within him to draw in its train the turbulent mob of later accretions made up of fire and air and water and earth, and by this victory of reason over the irrational returned to the form of his first and better state. Having given all these laws to his creatures, that he might be guiltless of future evil in any of them, the creator sowed some of them in the earth, and some in the moon, and some in the other instruments of time. And when he had sown them he committed to the younger gods the fashioning of their mortal bodies, and desired them to furnish what was still lacking to the human soul, and having made all the suitable additions, to rule over them, and to pilot the mortal animal in the best and wisest manner which they could and avert from him all but self-inflicted evils.

When the creator had made all these ordinances he remained in his own accustomed nature, and his children heard and were obedient to their father's word, and receiving from him the immortal principle of a mortal creature, in imitation of their own creator they borrowed portions of fire and earth and water and air from the world, which were hereafter to be restored—these they took and welded them together, not with the indissoluble chains by which they were themselves bound, but with little pegs too small to be visible, making up out of all the four elements each separate body, and fastening the courses of the immortal soul in a body which was in a state of perpetual influx and efflux. Now these courses, detained as in a vast river, neither overcame nor were overcome, but were hurrying and hurried to and fro, so that the whole animal was moved and progressed, irregularly however and irrationally and anyhow, in all the six directions of motion, wandering backward and forward, and right and left, and up and down, and in all the six directions. For great as was the advancing and retiring flood which provided nourishment, the affections produced by external contact caused still greater tumult—when the
source we have derived philosophy, than which no greater good ever b was or will be given by the gods to mortal man. This is the greatest boon of sight, and of the lesser benefits why should I speak? Even the ordinary man if he were deprived of them would bewail his loss, but in vain. Thus much let me say however. God invented and gave us sight to the end that we might behold the courses of intelligence in the heaven, and apply them to the courses of our own intelligence which are akin to them, the unperturbed to the perturbed, and that we, learning them and partaking of the natural truth of reason, might imitate the absolutely unerring courses of God and regulate our own vagaries. The same may be affirmed of speech and hearing. They have been given by the gods to the same end and for a like reason. For this is the principal end of speech, whereto it most contributes. Moreover, so much of music as is adapted to the sound of the voice and to the sense of hearing is granted to us for the sake of harmony. And harmony, which has motions akin to the revolutions of our souls, is not regarded by the intelligent votary of the Muses as given by them with a view to irrational pleasure, which is deemed to be the purpose of it in our day, but as meant to correct any discord which may have arisen in the courses of the soul, and to be our ally in bringing her into harmony and agreement with herself, and rhythm too was given by them for the same reason, on account of the irregular and graceless ways which prevail among mankind generally, and to help us against them.

Thus far in what we have been saying, with small exceptions, the works of intelligence have been set forth, and now we must place by the side of them in our discourse the things which come into being through necessity—for the creation of this world is the combined work of necessity and mind. Mind, the ruling power, persuaded necessity to bring the greater part of created things to perfection, and thus and after this manner in the beginning, through necessity made subject to reason, this universe was created. But if a person will truly tell of the way in which the work was accomplished, he must include the variable cause as well, and explain its influence. Wherefore, we must return again and find another suitable beginning—as about the former matters, so also about these. To which end we must consider the nature of fire and water and air and earth, such as they were prior to the creation of the heaven, and what was happening to them in this previous state, for no one has as yet explained the manner of their generation, but we speak of fire and the rest of them, as though men knew their natures, and we maintain them to be the first principles and letters or elements of the whole, when they cannot reasonably be compared by a man of any sense even to syllables or first compounds. And let me say thus much. I will not now speak of the first principle or principles of all things, or by whatever name they are to be called, for this reason—because it is difficult to set forth my opinion according to the method of discussion which we are at present employing. Do not
imagine, any more than I can bring myself to imagine, that I should be right in undertaking so great and difficult a task. Remembering what I said at first about probability, I will do my best to give as probable an explanation as any other—or rather, more probable—and I will first go back to the beginning and try to speak of each thing and of all. Once more, then, at the commencement of my discourse, I call upon God and beg him to be our savior out of a strange and unwonted inquiry, and to bring us to the haven of probability. So now let us begin again.

This new beginning of our discussion of the universe requires a fuller division than the former, for then we made two classes; now a third must be revealed. The two sufficed for the former discussion. One, which we assumed, was a pattern intelligible and always the same, and the second was only the imitation of the pattern, generated and visible. There is also a third kind which we did not distinguish at the time, conceiving that the two would be enough. But now the argument seems to require that we should set forth in words another kind, which is difficult of explanation and dimly seen. What nature are we to attribute to this new kind of being? We reply that it is the receptacle, and in a manner the nurse, of all generation. I have spoken the truth, but I must express myself in clearer language, and this will be an arduous task for many reasons, and in particular because I must first raise questions concerning fire and the other elements, and determine what each of them is, for to say, with any probability or certainty, which of them should be called water rather than fire, and which should be called any of them rather than all or some one of them, is a difficult matter. How, then, shall we settle this point, and what questions about the elements may be fairly raised?

In the first place, we see that what we just now called water, by condensation, I suppose, becomes stone and earth, and this same element, when melted and dispersed, passes into vapor and air. Air, again, when inflamed, becomes fire, and, again, fire, when condensed and extinguished, passes once more into the form of air, and once more, air, when collected and condensed, produces cloud and mist—and from these, when still more compressed, comes flowing water, and from water comes earth and stones once more—and thus generation appears to be transmitted from one to the other in a circle. Thus, then, as the several elements never present themselves in the same form, how can anyone have the assurance to assert positively that any of them, whatever it may be, is one thing rather than another? No one can. But much the safest plan is to speak of them as follows. Anything which we see to be continually changing, as, for example, fire, we must not call 'this' or 'that,' but rather say that it is 'of such a nature,' nor let us speak of water as 'this,' but always as 'such,' nor must we imply that there is any stability in any of those things which we indicate by the use of the words 'this' and 'that,' supposing ourselves
spare the time, and not provoke a disagreeable enemy by medicines.

Enough of the composite animal and of the body which is a part of him, and of the manner in which a man may train and be trained by himself so as to live most according to reason, and we must above and before all provide that the element which is to train him shall be the fairest and best-adapted to that purpose. A minute discussion of this subject would be a serious task, but if, as before, I am to give only an outline, the subject may not unfitly be summed up as follows.

I have often remarked that there are three kinds of soul located within us, having each of them motions, and I must now repeat, in the fewest words possible, that one part, if remaining inactive and ceasing from its natural motion, must necessarily become very weak, but that which is trained and exercised, very strong. Wherefore we should take care that the movements of the different parts of the soul should be in due proportion.

And we should consider that God gave the sovereign part of the human soul to be the divinity of each one, being that part which, as we say, dwells at the top of the body, and inasmuch as we are a plant not of an earthly but of a heavenly growth, raises us from earth to our kindred who are in heaven. And in this we say truly, for the divine power suspends the head and root of us from that place where the generation of the soul first began, and thus makes the whole body upright. When a man is always occupied with the cravings of desire and ambition, and is eagerly striving to satisfy them, all his thoughts must be mortal, and, as far as it is possible altogether to become such, he must be mortal every whit because he has cherished his mortal part. But he who has been earnest in the love of knowledge and of true wisdom, and has exercised his intellect more than any other part of him, must have thoughts immortal and divine, if he attain truth, and so far as human nature is capable of sharing in immortality, he must altogether be immortal, and since he is ever cherishing the divine power and has the divinity within him in perfect order, he will be singularly happy. Now there is only one way of taking care of things, and this is to give to each the food and motion which are natural to it. And the motions which are naturally akin to the divine principle within us are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe. These each man should follow, and by learning the harmonies and revolutions of the universe, should correct the courses of the head which were corrupted at our birth, and should assimilate the thinking being to the thought, renewing his original nature, so that having assimilated them he may attain to that best life which the gods have set before mankind, both for the present and the future.

Thus our original design of discoursing about the universe down to the creation of man is nearly completed. A brief mention may be made of the generation of other animals, so far as the subject admits of brevity; in this manner our argument will best attain a due
The Laws was written a few years before Plato's death and is the last thing he ever wrote. It is unlike all the other dialogues and the difference is emphasized by the fact that in it alone Socrates is absent. He plays little or no part in the Sophist, Statesman, and Timaeus, but he is there and the conversation is directed toward him. In the Laws he is never mentioned.

Three elderly men, a Cretan, a Spartan, and an Athenian, meet while walking in Crete and fall to talking about good and bad laws. Finally the other two ask the Athenian, who has shown himself their superior in knowledge, to say what laws there should be in a good constitution. They agree that this will not be the ideal state, which should have no laws at all because where the law governs there will always be injustices. Nevertheless the rule of law is the second best. It is the expression of the true opinion of the community and, if carried out, will lead to an increasing understanding of the ideal, by which the actual laws can be improved.

Plato is old. Death cannot be far away. The world he is about to leave wears a different look from what it did. It has become of pressing importance. He does not want to look farther and farther into "the beyond," but to come down to earth and realize some of the truth he has seen. He drops poetical thought and storytelling; he holds up now as the chief business of the state to mold character rather than to forward knowledge, although it is true that nowhere does he even imply anything against that basic conviction of his that only he who knows what justice is can be just.

In the Republic he had said that human affairs were not worth taking very seriously. He repeats the statement in the Laws, but adds that it is yet necessary to take them seriously, and he proceeds to do so through many pages of laws that regulate life in great detail. One law begins, "As to pears and apples and pomegranates and similar fruits." That sort of thing makes heavy reading, but whoever persists will find Plato again and again treading the sunlit heights. He cannot keep long on the level of the commonplace.

The Golden Rule is here: "May I do to others as I would that they should do to me." Four hundred years later Christ said it. The essence of the parable of the good Samaritan is in the words,
"Offenses by alien against alien, compared with sins against fellow citizens, more directly draw down the vengeance of God. For the alien, being without friends or kinsmen, has the greater claim on pity, human and divine." The Old Testament declares that the sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children. Plato says, "But children and family, if they forsake their father's ways, shall have an honorable name and good report, as those that have done well and manfully in leaving evil for good." He probes more deeply than the Old Testament into the nature of sin when he writes, "The sorest judgment on evil-doing is that a man grows like those who already are evil," and "Violent attachment to self is the constant source of misdeeds in every one of us." He stands with the Old Testament when he says, "It is God who is, for you and me, the measure of all things."

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BOOK I

624 ATHENIAN: To whom is the merit of instituting your laws ascribed, gentlemen? To a god, or to some man?

CLINIAS: Why, to a god, sir, indubitably to a god—in our case to Zeus, in the case of Lacedaemon, to which our friend here belongs, I believe, according to their own story, to Apollo. That is so, is it not?

MEGILLUS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: You mean that Minos, just as Homer relates, used to repair to a conference with his father every ninth year, and that his legislation for your Cretan cities was based on his father's oracles?

CLINIAS: So our local story has it. It adds the further detail that Rhadamanthus, the brother of Minos—the name will, of course, be familiar to you—was conspicuous for his justice. Well, as we Cretans insist, it was his ancient administration of our judicial business which earned him this deserved reputation.

ATHENIAN: An honorable distinction indeed, and most appropriate to a son of Zeus. But as you and our friend Megillus have both been brought up under such venerable legal institutions, I trust you will not find it disagreeable to spend the time, as we walk this morning, in conversation on questions of politics and jurisprudence. The distance from Cnossus to the cave and chapel of Zeus is, I understand, quite considerable, and there are presumably shady resting places, such as the sultry season demands, on the way, among the

From The Laws of Plato, translated by A. E. Taylor (London and New York, 1934; subsequently pub. in Everyman's Library).
lofty trees, where it will be a comfort, at our age of life, to make frequent halts and entertain one another with discourse. Thus we may reach the end of our long journey without fatigue.

CLINIAS: To be sure, sir, there are groves of prodigiously fine, tall cypresses farther on, as well as meadows, where we can take a rest.

ATHENIAN: I am glad to hear it.

CLINIAS: No doubt you are, but we shall all be gladder still when we come to them. Well, let us make our start, and good luck go with us!

ATHENIAN: With all my heart! Come now, tell me, what is the purpose of your laws in prescribing your system of common meals and physical training, and your distinctive accouterments?

CLINIAS: Why, in the case of my own countrymen, sir, I take the purpose to be very obvious. As you can both see for yourselves, Crete, as a whole, unlike Thessaly, has not a level surface. This is, of course, why the Thessalians rely by preference on cavalry, but we on rapid infantry movements, since with us the ground is uneven and better adapted for training in these maneuvers. On such a terrain a soldier must naturally be lightly accoutered, and not carry a load as he runs; consequently, bow and arrows are felt to be recommended by their light weight. These arrangements, then, have all been made with a military purpose, and it is warfare, if I am to speak my own conviction, which our lawgiver kept in view in all his dispositions. For instance, his reason for establishing the common meals was presumably that he saw that when the whole population are in the field, that very circumstance compels them to take their meals together, through the campaign, for self-protection. He meant, I believe, to reprove the folly of mankind, who refuse to understand that they are all engaged in a continuous lifelong warfare against all cities whatsoever. Hence, if a force must take its meals together in wartime, for the sake of self-defense, and post relays of officers and men to act as its guards, the same thing should equally be done in time of peace. In fact, the peace of which most men talk—so he held—is no more than a name; in real fact, the normal attitude of a city to all other cities is one of undeclared warfare. By reflection on these lines you will discover that our Cretan legislator constructed the universal scheme of all our institutions, public and private, with a view to war, and transmitted his laws to us for observance in precisely the same spirit. It was his conviction that there is no benefit to be got from any other possessions or associations, where there is a failure to maintain supremacy in the field; all the advantages of the vanquished pass to the victors.

ATHENIAN: Your training, sir, would appear to have given you an admirable insight into the institutions of Crete. But you might be a little more definite on one point. As to your test of a well-constituted
city, I understand you to be saying that such a city must be so equipped as to be victorious over its rivals in warfare. Am I right?

CLINIAS: Most decidedly, and I fancy our friend here will be of the same mind, too.

MEGILLUS: Why, my good man, what other answer would you expect from any Lacedaemonian?

ATHENIAN: Well, possibly this is the right test in comparing cities with cities, but there may be a different test for the comparison of village with village?

CLINIAS: Not at all.

ATHENIAN: The same test holds good?

CLINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: Well, and when we compare one household in our village with another, and one man with one other man? The same test still holds?

CLINIAS: The very same.

ATHENIAN: And the individual man? Must we think of him as related to himself as foeman to foeman, or what are we to say in this case?

CLINIAS: Ah, my Athenian friend! I would rather not say Attic for I think you deserve to take your appellation by preference from the goddess. You have made the position all the more incontestable by this reduction of it to first principles. The more readily, then, can you satisfy yourself of the truth of what has just been said. Humanity is in a condition of public war of every man against every man, and private war of each man with himself.

ATHENIAN: And pray, how are we to understand that?

CLINIAS: Why, here, sir, is the field in which a man may win the primal and subtlest victory, victory over self, and where defeat, defeat by self, is most discreditable as well as most ruinous. There lies the proof that every one of us is in a state of internal warfare with himself.

ATHENIAN: Then suppose we invert the argument, thus. If each individual man is master of himself, or, alternatively, mastered by himself, may we, or may we not, say that a family, a village, a city, exhibit this same feature?

CLINIAS: You mean that they may be masters of, or again mastered by, themselves?

ATHENIAN: Exactly.

CLINIAS: Again a very proper question. The facts are beyond doubt, particularly in the case of cities. Any city where the better sort are victorious over the masses and inferior classes may properly be said to be mistress of herself and be rightly congratulated on the victory; where the reverse happens, we must speak in the opposite sense.

ATHENIAN: The question whether worse is ever really master of better is one we shall do well not to raise, since it calls for fuller
these corruptions may be charged, in the first instance, on your two cities and such others as are most devoted to physical exercises. Whether these matters are to be regarded as sport, or as earnest, we must not forget that this pleasure is held to have been granted by nature to male and female when conjoined for the work of procreation; the crime of male with male, or female with female, is an outrage on nature and a capital surrender to lust of pleasure. And you know it is our universal accusation against the Cretans that they were the inventors of the tale of Ganymede; they were convinced, we say, that their legislation came from Zeus, so they went on to tell this story against him that they might, if you please, plead his example for their indulgence in this pleasure too. With the tale we have no further concern, but the pleasures and pains of communities and of private lives are as good as the whole subject of a study of jurisprudence. For pain and pleasure are, as it were, nature’s twin fountainheads; whoso draws from the right fount, at due times, and in due measure, be it city, or person, or any living creature, is happy, but he that draws without science, and out of due season, has the completely contrary lot.

MEGILLUS: Sure, sir, this is finely said, and I would not deny that we are dumfounded for an answer to it. Yet, for myself, I hold that our Lacedaemonian lawgiver is right to command avoidance of pleasures. As to the law of Cnossus, its defense shall be made by our friend, if he will accept the task. In Sparta, to my mind, this matter of pleasure is ordered better than in any place on earth. That which, by its keen delightsomeness, most easily entangles men in outrage and all manner of follies is, by our law, banished entirely from our territory. Neither in our country districts, nor in towns which are controlled by Spartans, can you find drinking parties, with the strong incentives to various pleasures that attend them. There is not a man of us who would not forthwith lay the heaviest penalty on a tipsy reveler, if he fell in with him; the very festival of Dionysus would not serve as an excuse for the offender’s discharge. I have seen such reveling before now in your Attica on the ‘wagons,’ and at Tarentum, a settlement of our own, I beheld the whole city in its cups at the feast of Dionysus, but there is no such practice among us.

ATHENIAN: Friend from Sparta, any recreation of this kind is commendable, when the power of resistance persists, though mere foolishness when it is relaxed. A countryman of my own might well defend himself by retorting on you the license of your Spartan women. To be sure, there is a rejoinder which is commonly held to be a sufficient vindication in all such cases at Tarentum, or in my own country, no less than in yours. A native will always meet the stranger’s astonishment at an unfamiliar practice with the words, ‘There is no call for surprise; this is our established custom in the matter, though yours may perhaps be different.’

What you and I are now discussing is not the practice of mankind
at large, but the merits or demerits of the legislators who create the customs. So we must take the whole subject of convivial drinking into fuller consideration; it is a practice of grave importance, and calls for the judgment of no mean legislator. The question is not that of the mere drinking of wine or its complete prohibition, but of the convivial drinking of it. Should we follow the fashion of Scythians and Persians—to say nothing of Carthaginians, Celts, Iberians, and Thracians, who are all of them warlike peoples—or that of your own countrymen? They, as you remind me, absolutely reject the practice, whereas the Scythians and Thracians, men and women alike, take their wine neat, and let it run down over their garments, and count this a laudable and glorious practice. The Persians, again, indulge freely in this, as in other luxurious habits which you Spartans prohibit, though with less disorder than the nations I have mentioned.

MECILUS: Yes, my dear sir, but do not forget that we make them all run when we have weapons in our hands.

ATHENIAN: Nay, sir, you must not urge that plea. A flight or pursuit has so often gone unrecorded, and will in the future; this shows that we cannot regard victory or defeat in the field as more than a very dubious test of the laudability of a practice. For the matter of that, the more populous city may defeat the less populous and reduce it to subjection, as Syracuse has done with Locri, which, you know, has the reputation of enjoying the best laws to be found in that part of the world, or Athens with Ceos, and no doubt many similar instances could be produced. No, we must leave victories and defeats out of court for the present, and discuss the various practices on their own merits, in the hope of convincing ourselves that some are laudable and others the reverse. But first let me make an observation as to the right method of investigating the worth of such practices.

MECILUS: And what is it you would say?

ATHENIAN: When such a practice is under consideration, I hold that it is always highly improper to undertake to condemn or approve it out of hand, on the bare mention of its name. This is as though one who had heard wheat, for instance, commended as a wholesome article of diet should denounce it out of hand, without any inquiry into its effects, or the manner of its administration—I mean, how it is to be administered, and to whom, or with what accompaniments, in what form it is to be served, and to persons in what state of health. Well, that is exactly how I think we all argue our present question. As soon as we hear the mere word 'drinking,' one party condemns the practice and another commends it, and both in a very odd fashion. Both sides rest their case on producing evidence to fact or character—the one thinking it decisive that its witnesses are so numerous, the other that we see the abstainers victorious in the field of battle—though there even the fact is open to dispute. Now if we are to go on to deal with established customs in general on these lines, I, for one, shall be left
Athenian: Well then, to our task. You will have to make an effort to follow, and I to elucidate the argument, with such powers as I have. But first let me make one observation. The universal belief of Hellas is that whereas my own city delights in discourse and is copious in it, Lacedaemon is inclined to taciturnity, and Crete to versatility of mind rather than fluency of utterance. So I fear you may get the impression that I am expending too many words on a minor matter, if I deliver myself of a long discourse on so inconsiderable a topic as drinking. But the truth is that a really sound theory on the point cannot be surely and adequately expounded apart from a true theory of music, nor that, again, apart from a theory of education at large, and these are subjects for protracted discussion. How would it be, then, I ask you, if we should drop them for the present, and divert the conversation to some other department of jurisprudence?

Megillus: Sir, you may perhaps be unaware that my own family hold the position of proxeni for Athens. Now it may well be the universal experience of boys anywhere that when they are told they are proxeni for a city, an early kindness for that city promptly finds its way into the boys' hearts—we feel that it is a second fatherland, only next to our own. This is certainly what has happened in my own particular case. From the first, if Lacedaemon felt herself aggrieved by Athens, or obliged by her, the boys used to tell me, Megillus, your city has done the shabby—or the handsome—thing by us. Well, by listening to these speeches and constantly replying in your defense against persons who brought reproaches against your city, I contracted a strong affection for her. To this day, I love the sound of your dialect, and am persuaded of the truth of the current saying that when an Athenian is a good man, he is exceptionally good. It is only at Athens that goodness is an unconstrained, spontaneous growth, a genuine 'gift of God' in the full sense of the words. So, as far as I am concerned, you need feel no misgiving in discoursing at any length you please.

Clinias: I, too, sir, have a statement to make which will relieve you from diffidence in speaking your full mind. You have presumably heard of Epimenides, an inspired person born in this city and connected with my own family, who visited Athens ten years before the Persian Wars at the bidding of the oracle, and offered certain sacrifices enjoined by the god, besides telling the citizens, who were alarmed by the Persian preparations, that the enemy would not come within ten years, and when they did, would depart again with their purpose uneffect, after receiving more damage than they inflicted. That was when my family contracted their friendship with your countrymen, and my ancestors and myself have had a kindness for them ever since.

Athenian: I take it, then, that there is full readiness to hear on your part. On mine, there is readiness enough of intention, but per-
formance is none too easy; still I must do my endeavor. As the first step in the argument, then, let us define education and its effect, since we hold that the discussion on which we have adventured must follow that route to its destination, the wine god.

CLINIAS: By all means, since that is your pleasure.

ATHENIAN: Good. Then I will attempt an account of what true education is; you must consider whether the account is acceptable.

CLINIAS: Pray proceed.

ATHENIAN: Well, I proceed at once to say that he who is to be good at anything as a man must practice that thing from early childhood, in play as well as in earnest, with all the attendant circumstances of the action. Thus, if a boy is to be a good farmer, or again, a good builder, he should play, in the one case at building toy houses, in the other at farming, and both should be provided by their tutors with miniature tools on the pattern of real ones. In particular, all necessary preliminary instruction should be acquired in this way. Thus, the carpenter should be taught by his play to use the rule and plumb line, and the soldier to sit a horse, and the like. We should seek to use games as a means of directing children’s tastes and inclinations toward the station they are themselves to fill when adult. So we may say, in fact, the sum and substance of education is the right training which effectually leads the soul of the child at play on to the love of the calling in which he will have to be perfect, after its kind, when he is a man. But, as I said, you must consider whether what has been said has your approval so far.

CLINIAS: Indeed, it has.

ATHENIAN: Then let us further guard against leaving our account of what education is too indeterminate. When we are to express approval or censure of a man’s training, we correctly speak of one of ourselves as educated and another as uneducated—and the reference is sometimes to the business of a huckster or a supercargo—and of other such fellows of mighty fine education. But our present discourse is in place only on the lips of one who holds that education is none of these things, but rather that schooling from boyhood in goodness which inspires the recipient with passionate and ardent desire to become a perfect citizen, knowing both how to wield and how to submit to righteous rule. Our argument, I take it, would isolate this training from others and confine the name education exclusively to it; any training which has as its end wealth, or perhaps bodily strength, or some other accomplishment unattended by intelligence and righteousness, it counts vulgar, illiberal, and wholly unworthy to be called education. So we must not wrangle over a word, but abide by the proposition on which we have just agreed, that the rightly educated prove what we mean by good, and that no aspect of education is to be disparaged; it is the highest blessing bestowed on mankind, and it is b
the best of them on whom it is most fully bestowed. When it takes a
false turn which permits of correction, we should, one and all, devote
the energy of a lifetime to its amendment.

CLINIAS: True indeed. We admit the point.

ATHENIAN: We also agreed some time ago that those who can
command themselves are good, and those who cannot, bad.

CLINIAS: Precisely.

ATHENIAN: Then let us once more consider rather more ex­
actly just what our words mean. Perhaps you will allow me to make
the point clearer, if I can, by a parable.

CLINIAS: We are all attention.

ATHENIAN: Well then, we may take it that any human being is
one person?

CLINIAS: Of course.

ATHENIAN: But one person who has within himself a pair of
unwise and conflicting counselors, whose names are pleasure and
pain?

CLINIAS: The fact is as you say.

ATHENIAN: He has, besides, anticipations of the future, and
these of two sorts. The common name for both sorts is expectation,
the special name for anticipation of pain being fear, and for anticipa­
tion of its opposite, confidence (δέξια). And on the top of all, there
is judgment, to discern which of these states is better or worse, and
when judgment takes the form of a public decision of a city, it has
the name of law.

CLINIAS: I fear I hardly follow you, yet pray proceed with your
statement as though I did.

MEGILLUS: I, too, find myself in the same condition.

ATHENIAN: Let us look at the whole matter in some such light
as this. We may imagine that each of us living creatures is a puppet
made by gods, possibly as a plaything, or possibly with some more
erserious purpose. That, indeed, is more than we can tell, but one thing
is certain. These interior states are, so to say, the cords, or strings, by
which we are worked; they are opposed to one another, and pull us
with opposite tensions in the direction of opposite actions, and therein
lies the division of virtue from vice. In fact, so says our argument, a
man must always yield to one of these tensions without resistance, but
pull against all the other strings—must yield, that is, to that golden
and hallowed drawing of judgment which goes by the name of the pub­
lic law of the city. The others are hard and ironlike, it soft, as befits
gold, whereas they resemble very various substances. So a man must
always co-operate with the noble drawing of law, for judgment, though
a noble thing, is as gentle and free from violence as noble, whence its
drawing needs supporters, if the gold within us is to prevail over
the other stuff. In this wise our moral fable of the human puppets
will find its fulfillment. It will also become somewhat clearer, first,
what is meant by self-conquest and self-defeat, and next that the individual's duty is to understand the true doctrine of these tensions and live in obedience to it, the city's to accept this doctrine from a god, or from the human discoverer just mentioned, and make it law for her converse with herself and other societies. This will lead us to a more exact articulation both of vice and of virtue, and the elucidation of the subject will presumably throw further light on education and institutions at large, and more particularly on this business of social drinking—a trifling matter, it might be thought, to waste such a long discussion on, and yet it may well prove to deserve the whole.

CLINIAS: Very true. So let us treat it at whatever length our present business demands.

ATHENIAN: Well then, tell me, suppose we ply our puppet with a drink, what effect are we producing on it?

CLINIAS: Now why are you recurring to that? What is the purpose of the question?

ATHENIAN: I have not yet reached the why; what I want to know is generally how this puppet is affected by participating in this practice. Let me try to explain my meaning still more exactly. My question amounts to this. The drinking of wines makes our pleasures and pains, our tempers and passions more intense, does it not?

CLINIAS: Much more intense.

ATHENIAN: And what of our perceptions, memories, beliefs, knowledge? Are they likewise intensified? Or do they desert a man altogether, if he is thoroughly soaked with drinking?

CLINIAS: Why, utterly.

ATHENIAN: And so the man is brought back to the mental condition of his remote infancy?

CLINIAS: To be sure.

ATHENIAN: Now that is the condition in which his self-command is at its lowest.

CLINIAS: It is.

ATHENIAN: Such a man, we may say, is at his worst?

CLINIAS: Decidedly.

ATHENIAN: Thus the phrase 'second childhood' would seem to be as applicable to inebriation as to old age.

CLINIAS: Admirably put, sir.

ATHENIAN: Now can there be an argument daring enough to suggest that we should try the taste of a practice such as this, and not avoid it with all our might?

CLINIAS: It should seem there can—at least you say so, and only just now you offered to produce it.

ATHENIAN: An apposite reminder, and I repeat the offer now, since both of you have professed yourselves eager to give me a hearing.

CLINIAS: Of course you must be heard. There is a reason, if
passionate pleasures, as much as to pains and to fears other than itself.

CLINIAS: Very true.

ATHENIAN: Now does not a lawgiver, or any other man worth his salt, hold this sort of fear in the highest honor? He calls it modesty, and regards the kind of confidence contrary to it, which he calls impudence, as universally one of the gravest evils in private or public life.

CLINIAS: True again.

ATHENIAN: And, to say nothing of the many other great advantages this kind of fear secures for us, when you take one thing with another, nothing contributes more effectually to victory and preservation in war itself. In fact, victory has a double source, fearlessness of the enemy, and fear of disgrace in the eyes of one’s friends.

CLINIAS: True again.

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CLINIAS: True again.
groups will bring along with it its patriarchal ruler and certain private customs of its own—private, I mean, because the groups are isolated from each other, and the several groups have been trained by their different progenitors and fosterers in different habits of conduct toward gods and fellow men, in more orderly habits where the ancestors have been more orderly, in more valiant where they have been valiant. Thus each group comes accordingly, as I say, into the larger settlement with special laws of its own, and prepared to imprint its own preferences upon its children, and their children after them.

**CLINIAS**: Why, inevitably so.

**ATHENIAN**: And of course each group unavoidably gives its approval to its own laws, and only in the second place to those of the others.

**CLINIAS**: Exactly.

**ATHENIAN**: And thus, to all appearances, we find ourselves insensibly embarked on the beginnings of legislation.

**CLINIAS**: Yes, precisely so.

**ATHENIAN**: And thus, to all appearances, we find ourselves insensibly embarked on the beginnings of legislation.

**CLINIAS**: To be sure, this may be presumed to be the next stage in the process.

**ATHENIAN**: Then let us proceed to remark the rise of a third type of polity, under which polities and the societies which exhibit them alike manifest all varieties of form and fortunes.

**CLINIAS**: And what type is that?

**ATHENIAN**: That which Homer, too, has commemorated as succeeding the second, when he says that the third form originated thus. 'He founded Dardania'—those, I believe, are his words—'for holy Ilium had not yet been built in the plain, a city for mortal men, but they still dwelt on the slopes of many-fountained Ida.' The lines, like those which speak of the Cyclopes, are as true to nature as they are inspired. Poets, you know, singing as they do under the divine afflatus, are among the inspired and so, by the help of their Graces and Muses, often enough hit upon true historical fact.

**CLINIAS**: I can fully believe it.

**ATHENIAN**: Well, let us carry the tale which has engaged our
armament of which we are now speaking as a first example. If its creators had understood how to construct it properly, they would fairly have attained their aim—but how? I presume, if they had constituted it securely and assured its permanent continuance in being, with the consequences of freedom for themselves, sovereignty over any desired subjects, and, in a word, ability for themselves and their posterity to deal at their pleasure with all mankind, Greeks and non-Greeks alike. These are the grounds on which they might base their eulogy.

MEGILLUS: Exactly.

ATHENIAN: And, again, when a man’s notice is attracted to a great fortune, or pre-eminent family distinction, or the like, and he expresses the same commendation, he speaks from the same point of view; his thought is that the advantage will enable its possessor to gratify all his desires, or the most numerous and considerable of them?

MEGILLUS: So I should suppose.

ATHENIAN: So it follows that there is a certain desire, that indicated by our argument, which is universal in all men, as the argument itself asserts.

MEGILLUS: And that is?

ATHENIAN: That events shall fall out in accord with the bidding of a man’s own soul, all of them, if possible, but if not, at least those which depend on human agency.

MEGILLUS: Of course.

ATHENIAN: Now if this is what all of us, from boyhood to age, are wishing all the time, it will necessarily also be our standing prayer.

MEGILLUS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: And, again, I suppose, our petition for our dear ones will be that they may receive what they ask for themselves.

MEGILLUS: Of course.

ATHENIAN: Now a son, who is a boy, is dear to his father, a grown man.

MEGILLUS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: And, mark you, there is much a boy prays to befall him, of which his father would beseech heaven that it may never fall out as the son prays.

MEGILLUS: You mean when the petitioner is thoughtless and still young?

ATHENIAN: Yes, and what of the case when the father—old, or only too youthful as you please to consider him—has no sense of good and right, and prays from the heart in a passion akin to that conceived by Theseus against his unfortunate victim, Hippolytus, but the son has such a sense? Will the son, think you, second the father’s prayer in such a case?

MEGILLUS: I see your point. You mean, I apprehend, that the
object of a man’s prayers and endeavors should not be that the universal course of events should conform to his own wishes, unless his wishes further conform to his sober judgment. It is the possession of intelligence that should be the mark of prayer and aspiration for the community and every individual of us alike.

ATHENIAN: Yes, and I am particular to remind myself that it is this which a statesmanlike legislator should always have in view in framing his enactments—as I would also remind you, if we have not forgotten how our conversation began—that whereas you both agreed that a good legislator must devise all his institutions with an eye to war, I, for my part, urged that this is an injunction to legislate with a view to one single virtue out of four. He should keep them all in view, I said, but chiefly and in the first place that virtue which brings all the rest in its train, that is, judgment, intelligence, and right conviction attended by appropriate passionate desire. So our argument has come back again to the old point. I, its mouthpiece, say once more now what I said before, in jest or earnest, as you please to take it. I look on prayer, I say, as a dangerous instrument in the hands of the man without intelligence; it defeats his wishes. If you please to consider me in earnest, pray do so. I have every confidence that if you follow up the story we have just set before ourselves for consideration, you will directly discover that the cause of the ruin of the three kings and their whole design was no cowardice and no military ignorance on the part of commanders or commanded; what ruined them was their abundant vice of other kinds, and, above all, their folly in the supreme concerns of man. That this was the sequence of events on that occasion, is so still today in similar cases, and will be the same in the future—that is what, by your leave, I shall try to establish in the fuller development of our argument, and friendship will lead me to make the point as clear to you as I possibly can.

CLINIAS: Verbal applause, sir, might be in doubtful taste, but our conduct will show our emphatic approval. We shall follow your discourse with the keenest attention; that is the way in which a self-respecting man best shows approbation or the reverse.

MECILLUS: Well said, Clinias—so we will.

CLINIAS: Certainly, with God’s permission. Pray proceed.

ATHENIAN: Well then, to follow up the thread of our argument, we say that what then destroyed that mighty power was the greatest folly, and that it inevitably produces the same results today. This being so, then, a legislator’s aim must be to create all the wisdom he can in a community, and with all his might to eradicate unwisdom.

CLINIAS: Yes, manifestly.

ATHENIAN: Now what type of folly may fairly be called the greatest I should certainly say that I am on the point of describing, but you must consider whether you agree with the observation.

CLINIAS: What type do you mean?
ATHENIAN: That of a man who hates, not loves, what his judgment pronounces to be noble or good, while he loves and enjoys what he judges vile and wicked. It is this dissonance between pleasure and pain and reasoned judgment that I call the worst folly, and also the greatest, since its seat is the commonalty of the soul, for pain and pleasure are in the soul what the populace or commonalty is in a community. Accordingly, when the soul sets itself at variance with knowledge, judgment, discourse, its natural sovereigns, you have what I describe as unwisdom, alike in a community where the commons rebel against magistrates and laws, and in one individual man when fair discourse is present in the soul, but produces no effect, but rather the very contrary. These are the types of folly I would pronounce the gravest dissonances in community or individual citizen, not the follies of professionals—if you take my meaning.

CLINIAS: Indeed we do, sir, and we grant your point.

ATHENIAN: Then let us take it as definitely settled, and proclaim our conviction that no function of government may be entrusted to citizens who are foolish in this sense. They must be reprehended for their folly, though they were the most expert of calculators, and laboriously trained in all curious studies and everything that makes for nimbleness of mind, while those of the contrary sort should be styled wise, even though, as the proverb puts it, they can 'neither read nor swim,' and it is to them, as the men of sense, that our magistracies should be given. How, indeed, my friends, can there be the barest particle of wisdom where there is no concord? 'Tis a flat impossibility, whereas the fairest and greatest of consonances may very properly be called the greatest wisdom. In this wisdom he who lives by rule has his share, while he who is without it will invariably be found to be a waster of his substance and no savior of society but the very reverse, all because of his folly in this respect. Well, as I just said, let this stand as our recorded conviction.

CLINIAS: By every means.

ATHENIAN: Now in a community, I take it, there must be those who govern and those who are governed?

CLINIAS: Of course there must.

ATHENIAN: Very good. Now what recognized titles to government and obedience, and how many, do we find alike in large cities, in small, and in families? Is there not, for one, the claim of father and mother? Or speaking generally, would it not be universally recognized that parents have a title to rule their offspring?

CLINIAS: Most assuredly.

ATHENIAN: And next by consequence that the wellborn have a title to rule the worse-born, and third, by further consequence, that it is for elder men to rule and for younger to submit?

CLINIAS: To be sure.
ATHENIAN: And fourth, that it is for slaves to submit and for their owners to rule them?
CLINIAS: Why, of course.

ATHENIAN: And fifth, I conceive, for the stronger to rule, and for the weaker to submit?
CLINIAS: Aye, there is a title which is not to be disputed.

ATHENIAN: Yes, and one which is prevalent all through the animal kingdom—by nature’s own appointment, as Pindar of Thebes has said. And sixth we may place the supreme claim of all which prescribes that it is for the ignorant to follow and for the wise men to take the lead and rule. And yet it is just this, this unforced rule of law over willing subjects, my all-accomplished Pindar, that I cannot pronounce unnatural. I should call it nature’s own ordinance.

CLINIAS: And you would be quite right.

ATHENIAN: Then there is a seventh kind of rule by the favor of heaven and fortune, as we say. We bring our men to a casting of lots, and call it the most equitable of arrangements that he who has the chance of the lot should rule, and he who misses it retire into the ranks of subjects.

CLINIAS: True, indeed.

ATHENIAN: You see, then, my legislator—so we might playfully address a man who sets lightheartedly about the enactment of laws—how many titles there are in this matter of governing, and how conflicting they are. We have just discovered a whole fountainhead of dissensions; it is yours to provide the remedy for them. But suppose you begin by joining in our inquiry about the kings of Argos and Messene. How did they effect their own ruin and that of the Hellenic power which was so superb in their day? What offense did they commit against these principles? Was not their error that they forgot the solid truth of Hesiod’s saying that ‘the half is often more than the whole’? 6 He meant that when it is baneful to get the whole, but the half is sufficient, then the modestly sufficient, the better, is more than the disproportionate, the worse.

CLINIAS: He was right, too.

ATHENIAN: Now when the ruin sets in, where does it regularly make its first appearance? In kings or in the common people? How say you?

CLINIAS: Probability and common experience suggest that it is the malady of kings whose luxury leads to pomp.

ATHENIAN: Plainly, then, this infection of encroachment on the established laws began, in the old days, with the kings. They did not keep concord with one another, as they were pledged and sworn to do. It was this discord—in our judgment really supreme folly, for all

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6 Works and Days 38 sq.
its semblance of wisdom—which ruined the whole system by its shrill and tuneless dissonance.

CLINIAS: Probably enough.

ATHENIAN: Well and good. Now what precaution should a legislator have taken at the time against the development of this symptom? God knows it is easy enough to give the answer now and takes no great wisdom to perceive it, but a prophet who could have foreseen it at the time would have been a wiser man than ourselves, would he not?

MEGILLUS: And what answer may you mean?

ATHENIAN: Why, Megillus, what should have been done then may be discovered and readily stated today if we will only look at what was done in your own society.

MEGILLUS: You must put it still more plainly.

ATHENIAN: Well, what is absolutely plain is just this.

MEGILLUS: What?

ATHENIAN: If we disregard due proportion by giving anything what is too much for it, too much canvas to a boat, too much nutri­ment to a body, too much authority to a soul, the consequence is always shipwreck; rankness runs in the one case to disease, in the other to presumption, and its issue is crime. What is it we would say, you ask. Why, my friends, surely this. No soul of man, while young or accountable to no control, will ever be able to bear the burden of su­preme social authority without taking the taint of the worst spiritual disease, folly, and so becoming estranged from its dearest intimates. When this happens, that soul very soon suffers ruin and the loss of all its powers. Hence it calls for a great legislator to forestall this danger by his insight into due proportion. The reasonable inference today, then, is that the danger was forestalled, but in very truth it seems there must have been . . .

MEGILLUS: What?

ATHENIAN: Some divinity in charge of you with prevision of the future, who gave you a double line of kings instead of a single, and so contracted their power within more proportionate limits. Even after this a human intelligence, with some divine assistance, observed that your rulers were still in their fever fit, and so blended the tem­perate authority of age with the peremptory self-will of royal lineage by giving the eight-and-twenty elders an equal voice with the kings in affairs of moment. Then a third deliverer remarked that your govern­ing body was still swelling with mettle and introduced the office of the ephorate, an office as good as filled by lot, as a curb. This is how the monarchy of your own Laconian state came to be a mixture of the right ingredients, and acquired due limitation, with the result that it was preserved itself, and has proved the means of our general preservation.

For had things been left to Temenus, Crespontes, and the legislators of that age, whoever they may have been, not even the 'portion of Aristodemus' itself would have survived. In fact, they were mere ama-
teurs in legislative work, or they could hardly have fancied an oath a
promise of moderation in a youthful spirit succeeding to an author-
ity which could be converted into autocracy, but God has shown us by
the event how a government should have been constituted then and
must be constituted now, if it is to have good prospects of permanence.
That you and I should be able to understand this today, as I said be-
fore, is no proof of wisdom—it is always easy to see by the light of ex-
amples from the past—but had there been a man at the time with
such foresight, and with the power to limit the sovereignties and make
one of three, the excellent discoveries of that age would have been
retained in their entirety, and contempt of our slender resources would
never have launched a Persian, nor any other, armada against Hellas.

CLINIAS: Very true.

ATHENIAN: Indeed, Clinias, the repulse of those attacks was d
obviously of no credit to anyone. I do not mean, when I say this, that the victories
of the time, on land and sea alike, were not honorable to the victors;
what I mean by calling the history discreditable is this. Only one of
those three states took up arms for the defense of Hellas on the first
assault; the other two were so badly corrupted that one of them even
tried to hinder the efforts of Lacedaemon by vigorous hostilities
against her, while the second, Argos, which had held the primacy in
the old days of the first division of the Peloponnesus, sent no answer
to the appeal for aid against the foreigner, and did nothing at all. And
if a man were to tell the story of that war at length, it would amount to
an unseemly indictment of Hellas. In fact, Hellas could not truly be
said to have made any defense. Had not the combined resolution of
Athens and Lacedaemon repelled the menace of enslavement, there
would long ago have been a complete confusion of Hellenic stocks with
one another, of barbarian with Hellenic and Hellenic with barbarian,
like the wretched sporadic condition of the present dispersed and con-
fused subjects of the Persian despotism.

This, Clinias and Megillus, is the charge I bring against the so-
called statesmen and legislators of both past and present, and I bring
it in the hope that examination into its causes will disclose the very
different course which ought to have been taken. It was in this spirit b
that I said just now that after all it is wrong to establish overpowerful
or unmixed sovereignties, when we consider that a community should
be at once free, sane, and at amity with itself, and that these are the
ends a legislator must keep in view in his enactments. And I must ask
you not to be surprised that we have already more than once pro-
posed certain ends as those to which the legislator must look, and that
our proposals have not always appeared to be identical. You must re-
flect that when we say he must look to sobriety, or again to wisdom,
or to amity, these ends are not distinct but identical, and if we find our-
theselves using a further variety of expressions to the same effect, we
must not be confused by that.
CLINIAS: We shall do our best to keep it in mind as we review our discussions. For the present, you might explain your remarks about amity, wisdom, and liberty. What is it you were going to say a legislator should aim at?

ATHENIAN: Then let me have your attention. There are two matrices, as we may call them, of constitutions from which all others may truly be said to be derived; the proper name of the one is monarchy, of the other democracy. The first is seen in its perfection among the Persians, the second among my own countrymen. These are the strands, as I have said, of which all other constitutions, generally speaking, are woven. Very well, it is indispensably necessary that there should be both ingredients where there is to be the combination of liberty and amity with wisdom. This is what our argument means to enjoин when it urges that no community which has not those characters can be rightly administered.

CLINIAS: Of course it cannot.

ATHENIAN: Well, one of the societies we have mentioned has shown exclusive and inordinate devotion to the principle of monarchy, the other to that of liberty, and thus neither has effected a proper balance between them, whereas yours of Laconia and Crete have succeeded better. There was a time when this was more or less true of Athens and Persia, but it is less true today. Shall we inquire into the causes of this or not?

CLINIAS: By all means, if we mean to complete our investigations.

ATHENIAN: Then lend me your ears. While the Persians steered a middle course between subjection and liberty, in the time of Cyrus, they began by winning their own freedom and went on to make themselves masters of numerous peoples. As a government they gave these subjects their share of liberty and placed them on equal terms with themselves; their soldiers thus grew attached to their commanders, and showed themselves forward in danger. Again, if a subject was a man of wisdom and a capable adviser, the king showed no jealousy of him, but permitted free speech and bestowed distinctions on such competent counselors, so that the gift of wisdom was freely placed at the disposal of the public service. Hence the combination of liberty with amity and generally diffused intelligence led, for the time, to all-round progress.

CLINIAS: That certainly seems to have been much the course of the history.

ATHENIAN: Then what can have brought about the decay under Cambyses and the general recovery under Darius? Shall we hazard a guess at the reading of the riddle?

CLINIAS: It would at least be a contribution to the study of our original problem.

ATHENIAN: Then my own present reading of Cyrus is this.
equality into the state; he promoted general amity and public spirit among the Persians by fixing, by his legislation, the tribute Cyrus had promised them and thus won the hearts of the common people by his liberality and munificence. Consequently his armies served with loyalty, and won him fresh territory as extensive as that left by Cyrus. But when Darius was gone, Xerxes, who had again received the pampering education of a prince of the blood!... Darius, Darius, so I think we may righteously protest, to think you should never have found out the fault in Cyrus, and should have trained your Xerxes in the same ways as he his Cambyses!... Xerxes, as I say, was a product of the same kind of education, and naturally the consequence was a career of the same sort. From his time to ours, speaking broadly, the Persians have never had a real Great King, who has been more than nominally such. And the cause of this, on my own theory, is not accidental; it is the evil life commonly led by the sons of autocrats and men of extraordinary wealth. Such a training will never, never lead to outstanding goodness in boy, or man, or graybeard. This, I maintain, is a consideration for legislators and equally for ourselves in our present discussion. And I would remark in fairness to you Lacedaemonians as creditable to your community that you assign no special distinction or special upbringing whatsoever to poor man or rich man, private citizen or prince of the royal house, beyond what your original source of inspiration revealed on divine authority. For assuredly special civic honors ought not to be assigned to exceptional wealth, any more than to speed of foot, beauty of form, or strength of limb unaccompanied by goodness, or even to goodness which does not include temperance.

Megillus: How is that remark to be understood, sir?
Athenian: Courage, you will grant, is one part of goodness.
Megillus: To be sure it is.
Athenian: Good. Then listen to my argument and decide the point for yourself. Would you like a man of great courage who should also be intemperate and profligate as an inmate of your house, or a next-door neighbor?

Megillus: Heaven forfend!
Athenian: And what do you say to a man of professional skill, and wise in that sense of the word, but unjust?
Megillus: I have nothing to say to him.
Athenian: And justice, again, does not flourish where temperance is not.
Megillus: No, how should it?
Athenian: Neither does the sort of wisdom we were lately contemplating, that of the man whose pleasures and pains are accordant with and consequent on his right thinking.
Megillus: No, decidedly not.
Athenian: Besides, we have still a further point to consider
curtailment of the liberty of the commons, and improper intensification of autocracy, made an end of their national feeling and public spirit. Since their disappearance, the concern of the authorities is no longer for their subjects, the commonalty, but for their own position; they give over loyal cities and peoples to fire and desolation whenever they think it of the slightest advantage to themselves, and consequently hate and are hated with savage and unrelenting animosity. On the other side, when they need the arms of the common people for their defense, they find no patriotism in them, no loyal readiness to hazard themselves in the field; in theory their forces are reckoned by countless thousands, but all these thousands are worthless for service. Hence they hire mercenaries and aliens, as though they had no troops of their own, and look to them for their salvation. Moreover they are forced to an exhibition of their folly, since their habitual conduct amounts to a proclamation that all that society esteems honorable and of good repute is a toy in comparison with gold and silver.

MEGILLUS: Exactly so.

ATHENIAN: And with this we may close our proof that the present maladministration of Persia is due to an excess of servitude and autocracy.

MEGILLUS: Undoubtedly.

ATHENIAN: Next as to the state of Attica, we are similarly to show that unqualified and absolute freedom from all authority is a far worse thing than submission to a magistrate with limited powers. In the old days of the Persian assault on the Greeks—or perhaps I should say on the denizens of Europe at large—my countrymen enjoyed a venerable constitution with magistracies based on a fourfold system of social classes. Moreover conscience had a sovereignty among us which disposed us to willing subjection to the laws. Besides, the spectacle of the sheer magnitude of the military and naval armament threw us into helpless consternation, and led us to submit to laws and magistrates with a still stricter obedience. All these causes continued to intensify our loyalty to one another. Some ten years before the naval engagement at Salamis, Datis arrived at the head of the Persian armada, with express orders from Darius against the Athenians and Eretrians; he was to capture and deport them, and had been warned that his own life would be the price of failure. Well, Datis speedily effected the complete capture of the Eretrians by force of numbers, and thus originated the alarming report which reached us in Athens. It was said that not a man of the Eretrians escaped; in fact, the troops of Datis joined hands and so swept the whole territory of Eretria as with a net. True or false, whatever its source, this story appalled the Greeks, and more particularly the Athenians; they sent out appeals for help to every quarter, but were refused by all except the Lacedaemonians. Even they, whether under the pressure of their war with Messene, or from some other impediment—I am not acquainted
with any statement on the point—even they, from whatever cause, arrived a day too late for the Battle at Marathon.

After Marathon there were frequent reports of vast preparations, and repeated menaces reached us from the king, and in course of time it was learned that Darius was dead and had been succeeded by his son, who was persisting in the project with all the heat of youth. The Athenians conceived the whole undertaking to be directed against themselves in reprisal for Marathon. When they heard of the canalizing of Athos, the bridging of the Hellespont, and the numbers of the enemy's flotilla, they felt that there was no escape for them by land or by sea. No support could be looked for. They remembered how they had found no supporters or allies in peril before, when the first expedition sailed to deal with Eretria, and naturally supposed that on land events would take the same course again. On the other side, all hope of escape by sea was visibly precluded, since they had a fleet of a thousand vessels and more threatening them. There was just one chance of deliverance conceivable—faint and desperate, indeed, but still their only chance—when they looked at the past and observed how then, too, victory had appeared to emerge from the struggles of desperation. Supported by such hopes, they realized that their only refuge lay in their own right arm, and their gods. These causes combined to inspire them with loyalty to one another—the fear aroused by their present plight, and that other fear instilled by subjection to pre-existing law, which they had learned by subjection to the existing laws—conscience, as we have called it more than once already. This, as we said, is the sovereign to whom we must submit if we are ever to become men of worth; 'tis the dastards who are emancipate from that service and immune to that fear. Had they not been terrified at the time we are speaking of, they could never have rallied for the repulse of the invader and the defense of temples, tombs, country, and all that is nearest and dearest, as in fact they did; we should have been pulverized at such a crisis and scattered severally to all the quarters of heaven.

MEGILLUS: The observation sir, is not only perfectly just, but most becoming to yourself and your countrymen.

ATHENIAN: No doubt, Megillus, and you, who have inherited the character of your ancestors, are the right person to hear the history of those times. But I would have you and Clinias consider the relevance of my narrative to our legislation. I give it, not for the sake of the story, but for the reasons I indicate. For do but mark. Seeing that our fate has, in a way, been the same as that of the Persians—though they reduced the commonalty to utter subjection, whereas we encouraged the multitude toward unqualified liberty—our foregoing conversation has been, in a way, very pertinent to the question what should be said next and how it should be said.

MEGILLUS: Good, but you must try to make the point of the remark a little plainer.
one's betters in the assurance which comes of a reckless excess of liberty is nothing in the world but reprehensible impudence.

Megillus: Very true.

Athenian: So the next stage of the journey toward liberty will be refusal to submit to the magistrates, and on this will follow emancipation from the authority and correction of parents and elders; then, as the goal of the race is approached, comes the effort to escape obedience to the law, and, when that goal is all but reached, contempt for oaths, for the plighted word, and all religion. The spectacle of the Titanic nature of which our old legends speak is re-enacted; man returns to the old condition of a hell of unending misery. Now, once more, why have we said all this? I think we should rein in our argument from time to time. We must not let it run away with us, as though it had no curb in its mouth, and so, as the proverb says, lose our seat in the saddle. No, as I was saying, we must be constantly asking ourselves why we have said what we have.

Megillus: To be sure.

Athenian: Well then, I said it for its relevance to what had gone before.

Megillus: And what was that?

Athenian: Why, I said a legislator should have three aims in his enactments—the society for which he makes them must have freedom, must have amity with itself, must have understanding. That, I believe, was our position.

Megillus: Exactly.

Athenian: This was why we took the examples of the most autocratic of communities and the freest, and are now asking ourselves in which of the two public life is what it should be. We found that when we had a certain due proportionality in either case, in the one of authority, in the other of liberty, there was a maximum of well-being in both societies, whereas when things were pushed to an extreme in either case, an extreme of subjection in the one, and of its opposite in the other, the consequences were unsatisfactory in both societies alike.

Megillus: Very true.

Athenian: It was for the same purpose that we reviewed the settlement of the Dorian invaders, the foundation of Dardanus in the foothills, and that of the city on the coast, and even the life of the first survivors of the Deluge. Our earlier conversations about music and drinking, and all that preceded them, were equally to the same end. The purport of the whole discourse has been to learn how a society is best administered and how a man will best conduct his personal life. But have we achieved any result? I would ask you both, Megillus and Clinias, what test we can propose to ourselves.

Clinias: Why, sir, I believe I can find one. I fancy there has been something providential in the whole course of our argument; in
Athenian: What about plainland, mountain, and forest? Pray, how is it furnished in all these respects?

Clarias: Much like the rest of Crete in general.

Athenian: You mean it is rugged rather than level?

Clarias: Decidedly so.

Athenian: Then its case, from the point of view of the acquisition of goodness, is not desperate. Had it to be on the coast, well furnished with harbors and ill off for many of its necessaries, not productive of all, we should need a mighty protector and lawgivers who were more than men to prevent the development of much refined vice in consequence of such a situation. As it is, there is comfort in those eighty stadia. Even so, the site is nearer to the sea than it should be, all the more as you say it is well provided with a harbor. Still, we ought to be thankful for even so much. It is agreeable enough to have the sea at one's door in daily life, but, for all that, it is, in very truth, a briny and bitter neighbor. It fills a city with wholesale traffic and retail huckstering, breeds shifty and distrustful habits of soul, and so makes a society distrustful and unfriendly within itself as well as toward mankind at large. In view of this situation, there is further comfort, however, in the universal productiveness of our site. Clearly, since it is so rugged, it cannot at once produce everything and yield much of anything. Were that the case, there would be the opportunity for exportation on a large scale, and, once more, our city would abound with currency in gold and silver. Now, all things considered, nothing is a more serious impediment to the development of noble and righteous character in a society, as you may recollect that we have already said.

Clarias: We well recollect the remark and agree with you now, as we did before, about its truth.

Athenian: Then, as to a further point, how is our territory supplied with materials for shipbuilding?

Clarias: It has neither fir nor pine to speak of, and not much in the way of cypress. As for the kinds of wood which, as you know, builders regularly require for the interior of boats, larch and plane, there is a little of them to be found.

Athenian: That again is not a bad feature in the topography.

Clarias: How so?

Athenian: It is just as well that a society should have a difficulty in copying the practice of its antagonists to its own undoing. Now which of our results have you in view when you say that?

Athenian: Why, my dear sir, I would have you watch my procedure in the light of our opening observations about the single object of your Cretan institutions. You both affirmed more precisely that this object is military, whereas I rejoined that it is right enough that goodness should be the object of such institutions, but could not quite concede that their aim should be some part of goodness short of the whole. It is now the turn of both of you to follow me in my e
pressure of some similar necessity. Sometimes, again, one section of a community may be driven to expatriate itself by the violence of party strife, and there has been the case of a whole society going into exile because it had been utterly crushed by an overwhelming attack. Now in one way the work of settlement and legislation is the easier in all these cases, but in another the harder. The unity of descent, speech, and institutions certainly promotes friendly feeling, since it involves the community in religious ceremonies and the like, but is not readily tolerant of novel laws or a constitution different from that of the homeland, while a group which has, perhaps, been driven into faction by the badness of the laws, yet still clings, from force of habit, to the very practices which had already led to its undoing, proves recalcitrant to the founder and his legislation, and refuses obedience. On the other side, a stock due to a confluence of various elements may perhaps be more willing to submit to novel laws, but it is a difficult business, and takes a long time for it to ‘breathe and blow in unison,’ as the proverbial phrase has it of a pair of horses. No, in very truth to make a legislation or found a society is the perfect consummation of manly excellence.

CLINIAS: No doubt, but you might explain the point of the remark a little more clearly.

ATHENIAN: Why, my dear man, I suspect my reiterated reflections about legislators will lead me to say something which is partly derogatory; still, if the remark is pertinent, no harm will be done. After all, why should I scruple at it; it is much what might be said about all human concerns.

CLINIAS: What is it you have in your mind?

ATHENIAN: I was on the brink of saying that man never legislates at all; our legislation is always the work of chance and infinitely various circumstance. Constitutions are wrecked and laws revolutionized by the violence of war, or the helplessness of sheer destitution. Again, innovations are often forced on us by disease, in the case of the visitations of pestilence, or of protracted and recurrent periods of insalubrious weather. In view of such facts one might be moved to say, as I have just done, that no law is ever made by a man, and that human history is all an affair of chance. Still, the same thing may be said with apparent plausibility of seafaring, navigation, medicine, or strategy, and yet there is something else which may also be said with no less plausibility of them all.

CLINIAS: And what is that?

ATHENIAN: That God is all, while chance and circumstance, under God, set the whole course of life for us, and yet we must allow for the presence of a third and more amenable partner, skill. Thus I should count it no small advantage that the navigator’s skill should cooperate with circumstance in a tempest, would not you?
CLINIAS: Naturally.

ATHENIAN: Now the same thing will hold good for the other cases, and so we should make the same admission in the case of legislation. Granting the concurrence of the local conditions necessary for a fortunate settlement, such a community necessarily supposes the appearance of a true legislator.

CLINIAS: Beyond all doubt.

ATHENIAN: Thus one who has the skill called for by any of the contingencies we have mentioned will also know well enough what form of fortune to pray for, that he may be dependent on nothing further besides his own skill.

CLINIAS: To be sure.

ATHENIAN: And any of the other professionals we have mentioned could, no doubt, tell us, if we asked them, what it is they are praying for?

CLINIAS: Of course.

ATHENIAN: And presumably, then, a legislator could do so, too.

CLINIAS: Presumably.

ATHENIAN: Come, then, legislator—let us so apostrophize him—what must we give you—I mean what social conditions—if their provision is to make you competent to model your society for the rest by your own efforts?

CLINIAS: Now I wonder what is the right reply.

ATHENIAN: You understand we are speaking in the name of the legislator?

CLINIAS: Yes.

ATHENIAN: Then here is the answer. Give me a society, he will say, which is under an autocrat, but let that autocrat be young, of retentive memory, quick to learn, and temperamentally bold and high-souled. Also, if all these advantages are to be of any service, they must be further attended in the autocrat’s soul by something we have already mentioned as an indispensable accompaniment of all the parts of goodness.

CLINIAS: I think, Megillus, what our friend means by this accompaniment is temperance. Am I right, sir?

ATHENIAN: Yes, Clinias, temperance in the popular sense of the word, not in that high and forced sense in which temperance might be said to be the same thing with wisdom. ’Tis a native surface quality which shows in mere children and animals that some of them have no self-restraint in the matter of pleasures, and others have—a quality, as we said, of no great account when divorced from the various other goods. You take me, no doubt?

CLINIAS: Why, certainly.

ATHENIAN: Very well, our autocrat must have that endowment as well as all those we have named, if the society is to achieve the
constitution which will bring felicity into its life with maximum speed and success. I assure you there neither is, nor can be, any better and more rapid way to the settlement of the constitution.

CLAUDIUS: Nay, sir, how or by what argument can a man possibly persuade himself of the truth of such a doctrine?

ATHENIAN: Why, surely, Cladius, it is easy enough to see how natural it is that it should be so.

CLAUDIUS: What is the theory, once more? There is to be an autocrat, you say, and he must be young, temperate, quick to learn, retentive, bold, and high-souled?

ATHENIAN: And, you must add, fortunate—fortunate, that is, in the single point that there is a contemporary legislator of distinction with whom chance has brought him in contact. With that one coincidence, God has done his utmost toward his purpose of heaping blessings on a community. The next-best thing would be that there should be a pair of such potentates; it would be third best, and so on proportionately more difficult, the more of them there were, and vice versa.

CLAUDIUS: The best state, as I understand you, might arise out of an autocracy, provided, that is, there were a consummate legislator and an autocrat of disciplined character, and the transition to it would be particularly easy and rapid in that case, less so from an oligarchy—is not that your meaning—and still less from a democracy?

ATHENIAN: By no means. The readiest starting point would be autocracy, the next-best, constitutional monarchy, the next-best again, democracy of a kind; oligarchy would come fourth, and only admits of such a development with great difficulty, for there the number of persons of influence is greatest. The occasion for it, mark you, is provided, according to us, when nature produces a real legislator who happens to share power of a kind with the most influential persons in society. Where, as in an autocracy, this latter element is numerically fewest but strongest, you have the normal occasion and opportunity for facile and speedy revolution.

CLAUDIUS: What? This is more than we can follow.

ATHENIAN: Yet the point has been made, unless I am mistaken, more than once already. But perhaps you and your friend have never observed a society under an autocrat.

CLAUDIUS: And I must say I have no particular desire to do so, either.

ATHENIAN: If you did, you would certainly remark the presence of the feature I first spoke of.

CLAUDIUS: What feature?

ATHENIAN: An autocrat who desires to make a change in the tone of public life has no laborious or protracted task. He has only to take in his own person the first steps on the road—be it the path to virtue or to vice—into which he would guide the community. He must first set the copy of his own conduct, awarding credit and distinc-
tions to one course, discredit to another, and disgracing the refractory in the various departments of conduct.

CLINIAS: But why should you suppose that the rest of society will be so quick to follow the example of the wielder of this combined persuasion and coercion?

ATHENIAN: O my friends, never let yourselves be persuaded that there is any speedier or easier way to change the laws of a community than the personal guidance of those in authority; there is none today, and will be none hereafter. No, it is not there that we shall find the impossibility or difficulty; the true difficulty lies in the occurrence of something which has been uncommon enough in the whole course of history, but never happens without bringing a whole infinity of blessings to the society in which it occurs.

CLINIAS: Now I wonder what this may be.

ATHENIAN: The awakening of a heaven-sent passion for ways of temperance and justice in persons of the highest station, monarchs, for example, or men of exceptionally outstanding wealth or family, or, it may be, in one who recalls the qualities of Nestor who is said to have towered above all his contemporaries even more by his temperance than by his eloquence. That happened, we are told, in Trojan times, though it has never been known in our own. Be that as it may, if such a man there has been, or should be hereafter, or is now among us, how blessed is his own life, and how blessed they who hearken to the words which proceed from those virtuous lips! We may say the same of power in all its forms. When supreme power is combined in one person with wisdom and temperance, then, and on no other conditions conceivable, nature gives birth to the best of constitutions with the best of laws. So you may take these oracular remarks as a parable embodying the proof that though in one way it is hard for a society to get good laws, in another, if things only fall out as I say, it would be the quickest and easiest of all developments.

CLINIAS: But why so?

ATHENIAN: Suppose we apply the parable to your city and try to model its laws in imagination, like elderly men playing a boys' game.

CLINIAS: En avant, then, and a truce to all delays!

ATHENIAN: Of course we must invoke God's presence at our foundation. So may he hear us and come, gracious and debonair, to our help as we construct our city and its laws.

CLINIAS: Amen to that!

ATHENIAN: And pray what type of constitution are we proposing to impose on our society?

CLINIAS: But what do you mean by that question? You should put it a little more plainly. You mean, is it to be a democracy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or a monarchy? You surely cannot be thinking of an autocracy, or at least my friend and I can hardly credit it.
Athenian: Come now, which of those names describes your own constitution? I wonder which of you will be the readier with his answer.

Megillus: As I am the elder man, perhaps it would be fairer that I should speak first?

Clinias: Yes, I think so.

Megillus: Why, sir, when I consider our Lacedaemonian constitution, I really cannot tell you offhand which would be the proper name for it. It actually seems to have its resemblances to an autocracy—in fact, the power of our ephors is astonishingly autocratic—and yet at times I think it looks like the most democratic of all societies.

Clinias: I find myself in the same perplexity as you, Megillus. I am quite at a loss to identify our Cnossian constitution confidently with any of them.

Athenian: That, my friends, is because you enjoy real constitutions, whereas the types we have specified are not constitutions, but settlements enslaved to the domination of some component section, each taking its designation from the dominant factor. But if a society must take its name from such a quarter, the proper course is to call it by the name of the god who is the master of rational men.

Clinias: And what god is that?

Athenian: Perhaps we may need to employ parable a little longer, if I am to answer the question to your full satisfaction.

Clinias: Oh, so that is the way we must proceed, is it?

Athenian: Certainly. Why, long before the time of the societies whose foundation we have discussed, in the age of Cronus—so they say—there was a much earlier form of settled government, and a very happy one, which is reflected in the best of our present-day communities.

Clinias: Then, I should say, we must very decidedly be told about it.

Athenian: Certainly, in my own judgment, and that is the very reason why I have brought it into the argument.

Clinias: Very properly, too, and, seeing how relevant it is, you will do right to tell the whole story.

Athenian: I must do as you propose. Well, according to the received tradition, in that age of bliss, all life needs was provided in abundance and unsought, and the reason, we are told, was this. Cronus was of course aware that, as we have explained, no human being is competent to wield an irresponsible control over mankind without becoming swollen with pride and unrighteousness. Being alive to this
he gave our communities as their kings and magistrates, not men but spirits, beings of diviner and superior kind, just as we still do the same with our flocks of sheep and herds of other domesticated animals. We do not set oxen to manage oxen, or goats to manage goats; we, their betters in kind, act as their masters ourselves. Well, the god, in his kindness to man, did the same; he set over us this superior race of spirits who took charge of us with no less ease to themselves than convenience to us, providing us with peace and mercy, sound law and unscantled justice, and endowing the families of mankind with internal concord and happiness. So the story teaches us today, and teaches us truly, that when a community is ruled not by God but by man, its members have no refuge from evil and misery. We should do our utmost—this is the moral—to reproduce the life of the age of Cronus, and therefore should order our private households and our public societies alike in obedience to the immortal element within us, giving the name of law to the appointment of understanding. But when a single person, an oligarchy, or a democracy with a soul set on its pleasures and passions and lusting for its satisfaction—a soul that cannot contain itself, and is in the grip of unending and insatiable disease—when such a one tramples law under his feet and takes command of an individual or society, then, as I was just saying, all hope of deliverance is gone. That is my thesis, Clinias, and we have to consider whether it convinces us or not.

**Clinias:** Convinces us? Of course it does.

**Athenian:** Then are you acquainted with a theory that there are as many types of law as of constitution? And we have just seen how many types of constitution there are in the popular view. And pray believe me that the issue now at stake is no trifle, but of paramount moment. We are back again at the question of the standard of right and wrong. The standard of our laws, it is said, should be neither war nor a goodness as a whole. Whatever the existing constitution may be, the law should look to its interest, its permanent security against dissolution, and the best way to define real justice would be to say . . .

**Clinias:** To say what?

**Athenian:** That it is the interest of the sovereign.

**Clinias:** You must explain yourself rather more clearly.

**Athenian:** And so I will. They say, you know, that the laws in a society are always enacted by the dominant section?

**Clinias:** Just so.

**Athenian:** Well then, it is said, can you imagine that when the populace, or some other political party, or an autocrat, if you like, has got the upper hand, the victorious side will, of its own accord, enact laws with any principal aim but its own interest in the permanence of its authority?

**Clinias:** Of course not.
ATHENIAN: And if a man contravenes these enactments, their author will punish him for his violation of justice, meaning by justice these same enactments.

CLINIAS: So I should apprehend.

ATHENIAN: These enactments, then, will in every case be justice, and for these reasons.

CLINIAS: Yes, according to this account of the matter.

ATHENIAN: In fact, this is one of our former principles of sovereignty.

CLINIAS: Principles? What principles?

ATHENIAN: Why, the claims to authority which we passed under review. We found parents claiming authority over their descendants, the older men over the younger, the wellborn over the baseborn, and you may remember that there were several other mutually incompatible claims. This was actually one of the list, and we remarked that Pindar treats the 'high hand of violence'—to use his own phrase—as natural justice.

CLINIAS: Yes, that is certainly what we said before.

ATHENIAN: Now consider to which side we are to entrust our society. For here is a situation which has recurred over and over again in public life before now.

CLINIAS: What situation is that?

ATHENIAN: After a contest for office, the victorious side engrosses the conduct of public affairs so completely to itself that no share whatsoever of office is left to the vanquished, or even to their descendants; each party watches the other in jealous apprehension of insurrection, due to the attainment of office by someone with memories of past wrongs. Such societies, we are now, of course, contending, are no constitutional states, just as enactments, so far as they are not for the common interest of the whole community, are no true laws; men who are for a party, we say, are factionaries, not citizens, and their so-called rights are empty words. And our reason for saying it is that you and I have no intention of conferring an office in your society on anyone for his wealth, or his possession of some similar advantage, such as physical strength, stature, or family. It is, we hold, the man who is most perfect in obedience to established law, the man whose victory over his fellow citizens takes that form, to whom we should give the function of ministry to the gods, the highest post to him who stands first, the second to him who is next in the contest—the remaining posts being assigned similarly to the succeeding candidates in order. If I have just styled the so-called authorities ministers of the law, it is not for the sake of a novel phrase, but because I am persuaded that the preservation or ruin of a society depends on this more than on anything else. Where the law is overruled or obsolete, I see destruction hanging over the community; where it is sovereign
over the authorities and they its humble servants, I discern the presence of salvation and every blessing heaven sends on a society.

**CLINIAS:** Right, sir, right in God's name! You have the long sight of your years.

**ATHENIAN:** Why, yes, a man is always most shortsighted in such matters in youth, and most farsighted in age.

**CLINIAS:** Yes, indeed.

**ATHENIAN:** Well, and our next step? May we not assume our settlers to be here in the country and under our eyes, and address the rest of our discourse to them in person?

**CLINIAS:** By all means.

**ATHENIAN:** My friends!—this is what I would say to them—God, who, as the old saw has it, holds in his hands beginning, end, and middle of all that is, moves through the cycle of nature, straight to his end, and ever at his side walks right, the justicer of them that forsake God's law. He that would be happy follows close in her train with lowly and chastened mien, but whoso is lifted up with vanity—with pride of riches or rank or foolish conceit of youthful comeliness—and all on fire within with wantonness, as one that needs neither governor nor guide, but is fitted rather to be himself a guide to others—such a one is left alone, forsaken of God. In his abandonment he takes to him others like himself, and works general confusion by his frantic career. Now to some he seems to be some great one, but after no long while he makes no stinted amend to right by the sheer ruin of himself, his house, and his state. Now since these things are so, what must the man of judgment do or purpose, and what forbear?

**CLINIAS:** So much is plain; every man must purpose to be of the company who follow after the god.

**ATHENIAN:** What line of conduct, then, is dear to God and a following of him? There is but one, and it is summed up in one ancient rule, the rule that 'like'—when it is a thing of due measure—'loves its like.' For things that have no measure can be loved neither by one another nor by those that have. Now it is God who is, for you and me, of a truth the 'measure of all things,' much more truly than, as they say, 'man.' So he who would be loved by such a being must himself become such to the utmost of his might, and so, by this argument, he that is temperate among us is loved by God, for he is like God, whereas he that is not temperate is unlike God and at variance with him; so also it is with the unjust, and the same rule holds in all else. Now from this rule, I would have you note, follows another—of all rules, to my mind, the grandest and truest, which is this. For the good man 'tis most glorious and good and profitable to happiness of life, aye, and most excellently fit, to do sacrifice and be ever in communion with heaven through prayer and offerings and all manner of worship, but for the evil, entirely the contrary. For the evil man is impure of soul, where
the other is pure, and from the polluted neither good men nor God may ever rightly accept a gift; thus all this toil taken with heaven is but labor thrown away for the impious, though ever seasonable in the pious.

Here, then, is the target at which we have to aim, but what shall we call the shafts which make straight for it, and the engine from which they are fired? Well, first, I say, the mark of godliness will be truly hit if the gods of the lower world are held in honor next to the Olympians, and the patron deities of the state, the even, the second best, and the left hand being consecrated to them, their superior counterparts to the powers which have just been named. After these gods a man of judgment will do worship to spirits, and after them to heroes, and I would give the next place to each man’s images of his household gods, worshiped as the law directs.

And now we come to honor to be shown to parents while they are yet in life. Here religion demands the due discharge of this earliest and heaviest debt, the most sacred of all our obligations. It bids a man count all he has and owns at the service of those who gave him birth and breeding, to minister to their needs to his utmost ability, first with his substance, then with his body, and then with his mind, in repayment of a loan of care and painful labor made so long ago on the security of his youth, and now to be made good to his elders in their age and sore necessity. Moreover, all his life through, a man should observe particular reverence of tongue toward his parents, for light and winged speech brings heavy doom; right has her appointed messenger, Nemesis, to keep watch over the matter. So one should yield to them when they feel anger, and discharge it, in word or deed, and understand that ‘tis but natural in a father who thinks himself wronged by his son to be moved to uncommon anger. But when parents are once no more, the most modest burial is the best. A man should not exceed the customary pompoms, nor yet come short of those wherewith his forefathers were wont to entomb their sires; he should keep also to the same rule in paying the decent annual rites of tendance to the departed. Above all, he should honor the deceased at all times by keeping the memory of them green, while he expends on them what is proportionate to the means fortune permits him. If we act thus and frame our lives to this model, we shall, one and all, always reap the due reward from heaven and the higher powers, and our days, for the main of life, will be passed with bright hopes. As regards duties to children and kinsmen, friends and fellow citizens, as well as works of pious service to strangers, and our relations with them all, by discharge whereof, as the law enjoins, a man should adorn and illustrate his life—in all this the actual recital of the laws will, with heaven’s consent, ensure our society bliss and well-being, in part by persuasion, and in part by enforced and legal correction of characters not amenable to persuasion.
There are other things, too, which should be said and must be said by a legislator like-minded with myself, and yet cannot be fittingly said in the form of a statute. As to these I would advise him, when he has finished the rest of his discourse to the best of his power, to propound a sample to himself and those for whom he is to legislate before he enters on his actual enactments. In what form, then, is such matter best couched? To confine it all within the bounds of a single outline, as I might call it, is none too easy; still, we may be able to reach a definite result if we look at the matter in some such way as this.

CLINIAS: And what result may that be?

ATHENIAN: I should wish the subjects to give a ready audience to persuasions to virtue, and plainly this is the effect at which our legislator will aim throughout his legislation.

CLINIAS: Of course.

ATHENIAN: Well, it struck me that what we have said might do some service—if our words have not been an appeal to utterly brutal souls—toward gaining a civil and friendly hearing. So, as I say, if it makes an auditor a little, even if ever so little, more friendly, and so reader to be instructed, we have every reason to be thankful. Men earnestly bent on becoming thoroughly good, and that with all speed, are not easily to be found, nor in large numbers, and Hesiod is commonly pronounced a wise man for his saying that 'the path to vice is smooth,' and, being so short, can be traveled without sweat, whereas 'before virtue the immortal gods have set sweat, and the road thither is long and uphill and rough at the outset, though when the summit is reached, the going is easy, for all its hardness.'

CLINIAS: And a fine saying it is, too.

ATHENIAN: Yes, no doubt. But I should like to propose to your common consideration the effect our foregoing argument has produced on myself.

CLINIAS: Then let us hear it.

ATHENIAN: Well, let us address our remarks to the legislator, thus. Tell us one thing, legislator. If you knew what we ought to do and say, you would tell us what it is. Surely that is manifest?

CLINIAS: Of course it is.

ATHENIAN: Then suppose we put the case for the poets to him. I wonder whether it might fairly be stated thus.

CLINIAS: How?

* Works and Days 287 sq. 
ATHENIAN: As follows. 'Tis an old story, legislator, which we poets are always telling with the universal approval of the rest of the world, that when a poet takes his seat on the Muse's tripod, his judgment takes leave of him. He is like a fountain which gives free course to the rush of its waters, and since representation is of the essence of his art, must often contradict his own utterances in his presentations of contrasted characters, without knowing whether the truth is on the side of this speaker or of that. Now it is not the legislator's business in his law to make two such statements about one and the same topic; he has regularly to deliver himself of one pronouncement on one matter. Take, as an example, one of the very topics on which you have just delivered yourself. A funeral may be extravagant, it may be mean, it may be decently modest. You select one and only one of those types, the intermediate type, for universal imposition and unrestricted commendation. But, in my case, if my poem dealt with an opulent woman and her instructions for her own funeral, I should commend extravagance, whereas a frugal poor man would be for parsimony, and a man of moderate estate and modest personality would have the same preference as yourself. But in your position it is not enough to use the word 'moderate,' as you did just now; you must tell us what and how much is moderate, or else confess that your statement is not yet a law.

CLINIAS: Truly said, indeed.

ATHENIAN: Then is our appointed lawmaker to set no such prefatory statement in front of his code? Is he just to tell us curtly what we are to do or not to do, add the threat of a penalty, and then turn to the next enactment, without one word of exhortation or advice to the recipients? Just as one type of physician treats us, when we call him in, in one way, and a second in another—but let us remind ourselves of the difference between the two methods, and then we shall have a request to make of our legislator, as children might beg their physician to give them the gentlest treatment. You would like an illustration? Well, there are physicians, and again there are physicians' assistants, whom we also speak of as physicians.

CLINIAS: Just so.

ATHENIAN: All bear the name, whether free men or slaves who gain their professional knowledge by watching their masters and obeying their directions in empirical fashion, not in the scientific way in which free men learn their art and teach it to their pupils. You agree that there are those two types of so-called physicians?

CLINIAS: Certainly I do.

ATHENIAN: Now have you further observed that, as there are slaves as well as free men among the patients of our communities, the slaves, to speak generally, are treated by slaves, who pay them a hurried visit, or receive them in dispensaries? A physician of this kind never gives a servant any account of his complaint, nor asks him for
any; he gives him some empirical injunction with an air of finished knowledge, in the brusque fashion of a dictator, and then is off in hot haste to the next ailing servant—that is how he lightens his master's medical labors for him. The free practitioner, who, for the most part, attends free men, treats their diseases by going into things thoroughly from the beginning in a scientific way, and takes the patient and his family into his confidence. Thus he learns something from the sufferers, and at the same time instructs the invalid to the best of his powers. He does not give his prescriptions until he has won the patient's support, and when he has done so, he steadily aims at producing complete restoration to health by persuading the sufferer into compliance. Now which of the two methods is that of the better physician or director of bodily regimen? That which effects the same result by a twofold process or that which employs a single process, the worse of the two, and exasperates its subject?

CLINIAS: Nay, sir, the double process is vastly superior.

ATHENIAN: Then would you like us to consider the two methods, the double and the single, in their application to legislation itself?

CLINIAS: To be sure I should.

ATHENIAN: Then, I ask you, what will be the first law our legislator will enact? Is not his natural course to begin with an ordinance regulating the first stage in the creation of a society?

CLINIAS: Why, of course.

ATHENIAN: And the first stage in the creation of any society is surely conjugal conjunction and association?

CLINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: Presumably, then, if the legislation of any society is to be sound and right it must start with a marriage law.

CLINIAS: I quite agree.

ATHENIAN: Then let us state that law in the simple form first. It might run to some such effect as this.

A man to marry when he has reached the age of thirty and before he comes to that of thirty-five; neglect to do so to be penalized by fine and loss of status; the fine to be of such and such an amount, and the loss of status to take such and such form.

That may be taken as the simple form of our law of marriage. Its double form we may word thus.

A man to marry when he has reached the age of thirty and before he comes to that of thirty-five, bethinking him that there is a sense in which mankind naturally partakes of immortality, a prize our nature makes desirable to all of us in its every form, for to win renown and not lie in our graves without a name is a desire of this. Thus the race of man is time's equal twin and companion, bound up with him in a union never to be broken, and the manner of their immortality is in this wise. By succession of generations the race abides one and the same, so partaking in immortality through procreation. Whence piety
PLATO: COLLECTED DIALOGUES

724 A T H E N I A N : Good, then. Our preamble, as we are now agreed, has already dealt adequately with gods, subordinate powers, and ancestors living and dead. As I understand you, you want me to throw some light on such parts of the subject as we have not yet touched.

C L I N I A S : Precisely.

A T H E N I A N : Why, in the next place, it is proper and to their common highest interest that speaker and hearers should do their utmost to achieve their own education by meditation on their duties of effort and remission in all that concerns mind, body, and substance. Whence these, and no others, are doubtful the matters of which we must next speak and hear.

C L I N I A S : Very true.

B O O K V

726 A T H E N I A N : Listen then, all ye who but now gave ear to our discourse of gods and well-beloved sires. Of all a man has—after his gods—the divinest thing, and the most truly his own, is his soul. Now things which pertain to any man are ever of two sorts, a superior and better sort to be sovereign, an inferior and worse to be subject. So a man should ever prefer those that are sovereign in honor before those that are subject. Therefore, when I bid men honor their own souls next to the gods, our sovereign lords, and the powers under them, the counsel I give is right. Yet not a man of us, I may say, honors his soul aright, though he dreams he does. Honor, I take it, is a thing divinely good, and can be conferred by nothing that is evil. He who deems he is advancing his soul by speech, gifts, or compliances, and all the while makes it no better than it was before, may dream that he shows it honor, but in truth does it none.

Barely, for example, has a man come to boyhood before he counts himself fit to pronounce on all things, honors his soul, as he fancies, by this flattery, and gives it ready license to act whatever it will. Now our present declaration is that by these courses he does it hurt, not honor, whereas we bid him honor it next to heaven. So again, when a man lays the blame for his several misdeeds and the greater and graver part of his mischances not on himself but on others, ever accounting himself clear of fault, by way of reverence—or so he fancies— for his soul, that is no honor done the soul—far from it—but hurt. Again, when he courts pleasures in defiance of the legislator's admonition and approval, he does his soul no honor, but rather dishonor, by thus defiling it with misery and remorse. Again, in a different way, when a man will not harden himself to endure commended hardships, fears, pains, sufferings, but makes submission, the surrender brings no honor, for all such courses bring disgrace on the soul. Again, when a man counts it good to live at all costs, that also is dishonor to the
soul; 'tis surrender to that within him which accounts the unseen world merely evil, whereas a man should make head against his fancy with cogent proof that he knows not even whether our chiefest good may not be in the gift of the gods of that land. Again, when a man prefers comeliness before goodness, this also is no other than real and utmost dishonor to the soul. For this estimate pronounces body more honorable than soul, and that most falsely. Nothing born of earth is more honorable than the heavenly, and he that conceits himself otherwise of the soul than this knows not the preciousness of this possession he despises. Again, when a man lusts after wealth basely won, or has no disrelish for the winning, he does no real honor to his soul by such offerings—far, far from it! He sells its goodly treasure for a parcel of coin, but all the gold on earth or under earth is no equal exchange for goodness.

To say all in one word, whosoever will not at all hazards keep himself from all the legislator lists in his count of things base and bad, and exercises himself with all his might in all that is in the contrary table of things good and lovely, knows not that by all such ways a man ever heaps foul dishonor and deformity on the divinest thing he has, his soul. In fact, none of us, or few, reckon with the sorest judgment—as the phrase is—on evil-doing, which judgment is that a man grows like those who already are evil, and, as the likeness grows, avoids good men and good converse, and cuts himself off from them, but follows after the other sort and cleaves to them in intimate fellowship, and he who clings to such men cannot but do and have done to him what men of that sort naturally do and say. This state then is not judgment—for judgment is, like justice, a good—but vengeance, the painful consequence of iniquity. He that meets it and he that misses it are alike unhappy, the one because he gets no healing for his disease, the other in that he is cut off for the salvation of many another. But honor, we hold, is, in sum, to follow after what is better, and for what is worse but may be amended, even to make it good as best may be.

There is nothing, then, of all a man owns so natively quick as the soul to shun the evil but follow on the trail of the chief good, win it, and spend the rest of a lifetime at home with it. Whence we have given the soul the second place in honor. The third, and so much must be plain to any vision, belongs to due honor to the body. But next it must be asked what various honors there are, which of them ring true, which are counterfeit, and here is a task for our legislator. He will suggest, I think, that they are these and the like. The body to be honored is not the comely, nor the strong, nor swift, no, nor the healthy, though so many might be of that mind—nor yet that of the contrary sort. The body which displays all these qualities in intermediate degree is by far the most sober, and soundest as well, for the one sort make men's souls vain and overbearing, the other tame and...
abject. 'Tis the same with ownership of wealth and property, and
they must be rated by the same scale. Excess of all such things, as a
rule, breeds public and private feuds and factions, defect, subjection.
Let no man covet wealth for his children's sake, that he may
leave them in opulence; 'tis not for their own good nor for the state's.
For the young an estate that tempts no sycophants and yet has no lack
of things needful is of all others best and most consonant; it works
general concord and concert and banishes pains from our lives. We
should leave our children rich, not in gold but in reverence. Now we
fancy we shall assure that inheritance if we rebuke the young when
they forget their modesty, but in truth the thing is not to be done by
giving the young such admonition as they receive today when they are
told that 'youth must respect all men.' A legislator of judgment will be
more likely to charge older men to respect their juniors and, of all
things, to take heed that no young man ever see or hear one of them-
selves doing act or speaking word of shame, since when the old forget
their modesty, the young, too, cannot be most graceless. Far the
best way to educate our young men and ourselves along with them is
not by admonition, but by lifelong visible practice of all to which a
man would admonish others. If a man pays honor and respect to kin-
dred and all fellowship of common blood in worship of the gods of the
kin, he may reasonably expect the favor of the gods of birth for the
propagation of his own children.

As to friends and comrades in the several affairs of life, a man
will gain their good will if he counts their services to him greater and
ampler than they do, but rates his own kindnesses to friend and com-
panion lower than they themselves. In all that concerns city and fel-
low citizens, the best man, and the best by far, is he who would prize
before an Olympian victory or any triumph in war or peace, the credit
of victory in service to the laws of his home, as one who has all his life
been their true servant above all men. Then, as regards the alien, we
must remember that compacts have a peculiar sanctity; indeed, of-
fenses by alien against alien, we may say, compared with sins against
fellow citizens, more directly draw down the vengeance of God. For
the alien, being without friends or kinsmen, has the greater claim on
pity, human and divine. Whence he that is able to exact the venge-
ance is all the readier to come to his help, and none is so able as the
god or spirit who protects the alien as minister of Zeus Xenios. What
anxious care, then, should a man of any foresight take to come to the
end of life's journey guiltless of offense toward aliens! Moreover, the
gravest of offenses, whether against landsmen or aliens, is always
that done to a suppliant, for the god in whose name the suppliant
made his appeal when he obtained a promise keeps jealous watch
over the sufferer, and thus he will never suffer his wrongs unavenged.

We have now fairly reviewed a man's relations to parents, to
himself, his possessions, his city, his friends, his kindred, to aliens
precious possessions. But every man's most precious possession, as we said, is his soul; no man, then, we may be sure, will of set purpose receive the supreme evil into this most precious thing and live with it there all his life through. And yet, though a wrongdoer or a man in evil case is always a pitiable creature, it is with him whose disease is curable that there is scope for pity. With him one may curb and tame one's passion, and not scold like a vixen, but against the unqualified and incorrigible offender, the utterly corrupt, we must give the rein to wrath. This is why we say it is meet for a good man to be high-spirited and gentle, as occasion requires.

But of all faults of soul the gravest is one which is inborn in most men, one which all excuse in themselves and none therefore attempts to avoid—that conveyed in the maxim that 'everyone is naturally his own friend,' and that it is only right and proper that he should be so, whereas, in truth, this same violent attachment to self is the constant source of all manner of misdeeds in every one of us. The eye of love is blind where the beloved is concerned, and so a man proves a bad judge of right, good, honor, in the conceit that more regard is due to his personality than to the real fact, whereas a man who means to be great must care neither for self nor for its belongings, but for justice, whether exhibited in his own conduct, or rather in that of another. From this same fault springs also that universal conviction that one's own folly is wisdom, with its consequences that we fancy we know everything when we know as good as nothing, refuse to allow others to manage business we do not understand, and fall into inevitable errors in transacting it for ourselves. Every man, then, must shun extreme self-love and follow ever in the steps of his better, undeterred by any shame for his case.

There are also minor and often-formulated, but no less salutary, rules which must be kept in mind by repetition. For where waters, as we may say, are wasted by emission there must always be a balancing immission, and recall is the immission which makes waste of wisdom good. This is why there must be restraint of unseasonable laughter and tears and each of us must urge his fellow to consult decorum by utter concealment of all excess of joy or grief, whether the breeze of fortune is set fair, or, by a shift of circumstance, the fortunes of an enterprise are confronted by a mountain of difficulty. It should be our constant hope that God, by the blessings he bestows, will lighten the troubles that come upon us, and change our present state for the better, while, with heaven's favor, the very reverse will always be true of our blessings. These are the hopes, and these and the like the meditations, in which each of us should live, sparing no pains, alike in work and in play, to bring them to his neighbor's confident recollection and to his own.

We have now dealt pretty completely with what divinity has to say of the institution which ought to be established, and the personal
socrates: It is Hippias, the beautiful and wise! What a long while it is since you came to anchor at Athens!

hippias: I have had no time to spare, Socrates. Elis looks on me as her best judge and reporter of anything said by other governments, and so I am always the first choice among her citizens to be her ambassador when she has business to settle with another state. I have gone on many such missions to different states, but to Lacedaemon most often, and on the most numerous and important subjects. That is the answer to your question why I am so seldom in this part of the world.

socrates: Still, Hippias, what a thing it is to be a complete man, as well as a wise one! As a private person, your talents earn you a great deal of money from the young, and in return you confer on them even greater benefits; in public affairs, again, you can do good work for your country, which is the way to avoid contempt and win popular esteem. Yet I wonder for what possible reason the great figures of the past who are famous for their wisdom—Pittacus and Bias and the school of Thales of Miletus, and others nearer our own time, down to Anaxagoras—why all or most of them clearly made a habit of taking no active part in politics.

hippias: What reason do you suppose except incapacity, the lack of the power to carry their wisdom into both regions of life, the public and the private?

socrates: Then we should be right in saying that just as other arts have advanced until the craftsmen of the past compare ill with those of today, so your art, that of the Sophist, has advanced until the old philosophers cannot stand comparison with you and your fellows?

hippias: Perfectly right.

socrates: So if Bias were to come to life again for our benefit, by your standard he would be a laughingstock, just as according to
SOCRATES: You, my dear Hippias, are blissfully fortunate because you know what way of life a man ought to follow, and moreover have followed it with success—so you tell me. I, however, am subject to what appears to be some supernatural ill fortune. I wander about in unending perplexity, and when I lay my perplexity before you wise men, you turn on me and batter me with abuse as soon as I have explained my plight. You all say just what you, Hippias, are now saying, how foolish and petty and worthless are the matters with which I occupy myself, but when in turn I am convinced by you and repeat exactly what you tell me, that the height of excellence is the ability to produce an eloquent and beautiful speech and win the day in a law court or any other assembly, I am called every kind of bad name by some of the audience, including especially that man who is always cross-questioning me. He is a very close relative of mine and lives in the same house, and when I go home and he hears me give utterance to these opinions he asks me whether I am not ashamed of my audacity in talking about a beautiful way of life, when questioning makes it evident that I do not even know the meaning of the word ‘beauty.’

And yet, he goes on, how can you know whose speech is beautiful or the reverse—and the same applies to any action whatsoever—when you have no knowledge of beauty? And so long as you are what you are, don’t you think that you might as well be dead?

It is my lot, you see, to be reviled and abused alike by you gentlemen, and by him. However, I suppose all this must be endured. I may get some good from it—stranger things have happened. And indeed, Hippias, I do think I have got some good out of my conversation with the two of you. I think now I appreciate the true meaning of the proverb, ‘All that is beautiful is difficult.’
from saying or doing anything offensive to you. Of Dion only you make an exception. Now when you make an exception of Dion, the inference is that I do not exercise authority over my friends. If I did thus exercise authority over you and Dion as well as the others, it would have been better for all of us, and for the rest of the Greeks too, I maintain. The fact is, however, that my power is no more than this. I can count on the obedience of one follower, namely myself. I do not mean by this that there is any truth in what Cratistolus and Polyxenus told you, for one of them, it is said, reports that at Olympia he heard a number of my companions abusing you. Of course his hearing may be keener than mine. I certainly heard nothing of the sort. In my opinion you would do well in future, when anyone makes such a report about any of us, to write and ask me about it, for I shall be neither afraid nor ashamed to tell the truth.

As for you and me and our mutual relations, the situation is as follows. There is no Greek, you may say, who has not heard of us as individuals; moreover our association with one another is generally discussed, and, be not deceived, it will continue to be discussed in time to come, for the number of those who have heard of our intercourse corresponds to its closeness and warmth. Well, what do I mean by this? I will go back a little and explain. It is a natural law that wisdom and great power attract each other. They are always pursuing and seeking after each other and coming together. Furthermore, this is a subject that people always find interesting whether they are themselves discussing it in a private gathering, or are listening to the treatment of it by others in poems. For example, when people are talking of Hieron or the Spartan Pausanias, they like to introduce their association with Simonides and recount his conduct and remarks to them. Again, they are wont to celebrate together Periander of Corinth and Thales of Miletus, or Pericles and Anaxagoras, or again, Croesus and Solon as wise men and Cyrus as ruler. Moreover, the poets copy these examples and bring together Creon and Tiresias, Polyidus and Minos, Agamemnon and Nestor, and Odysseus and Palamedes. With much the same idea, I believe, primitive men brought together Prometheus and Zeus. The poets also show how in some such cases the two characters became enemies—in others, friends—how in some cases they were first friends and then enemies, and how in others they agreed in some things but differed on other points.

Now my object in saying all this is to point the moral that in our case too, discussion of our acts will not forthwith cease with our death. Here then is a matter that demands consideration, for we ought, it appears, to consider as well the time to come, since it is a fact that the most slavish men by a sort of natural law give it no thought, while the best men leave nothing undone to acquire a good reputation with posterity. To me this is a proof that the dead have some perception of events here, for the noblest souls know this truth by intuition, while
the vilest souls deny it, but the intuitions of the godlike are more valid than those of other men.

In my opinion, if those earlier rulers and philosophers whom I have mentioned had it in their power to amend what was amiss in their intercourse with each other, they would do their utmost to have better things said of them than is now the case. For us, though, it is still possible, please God, where we made any mistakes in our former intercourse, to correct them by our actions or by our words. The true philosophy, I maintain, will be better thought of and better spoken of if we conduct ourselves well, but if otherwise, the reverse. Indeed if we were to make this object our concern, we could be engaged in no more pious act, nor in any more impious, if we were to neglect it.

Now I will explain how we must set about attaining this object and will show what principles are involved. I went to Sicily with the reputation of being by far the most distinguished among those devoted to philosophy, but my object in going to Syracuse was to gain your support, so that I might see philosophy held in esteem even among the common throng. The result was not propitious. The reason that I assign for this is not the one that many would give, but that you appeared to have no great faith in me. You wanted to get rid of me in some way and to send for others. You wanted, I believe, in your mistrust, to discover the secret of my activities. At this there were many to take up the cry that you had a poor opinion of me and were devoted to other matters, and this is the report that is in general circulation.

I proceed now to point out the right course for us to take hereafter. This will also answer your question what our relation to each other is to be. If you have no respect at all for philosophical pursuits, let them alone. If you have some respect, but have been taught by someone else or have discovered for yourself a better philosophy than mine, show your esteem for that. If, however, you prefer my philosophical teaching, you ought to make me too an object of special esteem.

Now, as in the beginning, you must show the way and I will follow your leading. If you show me marks of esteem, I will repay them; if I receive no such marks, I shall keep my own counsel. Note too that any marks of respect you show me, if you take the lead, will be evidence that you think highly of philosophy, and the very fact that you have examined other teachers of philosophy besides me will cause many to honor you as a true philosopher. On the other hand any marks of respect that I show you, unless you return them, will be interpreted as evidence of my admiration of and desire for wealth—and such a name, we know, is nowhere an honest one. To put it in a nutshell, if you do homage to me, we both rise in men's esteem; if I do homage to you, we both sink. So much for this subject.

The sphere is not right. Archedemus will make it clear to you
when he comes. He must also by all means give you an explanation of the matter about which you were in difficulty when you dispatched him, a subject indeed higher and more godlike than the other. According to his report you say that you are not satisfied with the demonstration of the nature of the first principle. I must state it to you in riddles, so that in case something happens to the tablet 'by land or sea in fold on fold,' he who reads may not understand. It is like this. It is in relation to the king of all and on his account that everything exists, and that fact is the cause of all that is beautiful. In relation to a second, the second class of things exists, and in relation to a third, the third class. Now the mind of man, when it has to do with them, endeavors to gain a knowledge of their qualities, fixing its attention on the things with which it has itself some affinity; these, however, are in no case adequate. In regard to the king and the things I mentioned there is nothing like this. Thereupon the soul says, 'But what are they like?' This question, thou son of Dionysius and Doris—or rather the travail that this question occasions in the soul—is the cause of all the trouble, and if that be not expelled from a man, he shall never genuinely find the truth.

You told me in the garden under the laurels that you had thought of this yourself and that it was an original discovery of yours. I replied that if you really were clear about it, that fact would relieve me of a great deal of explanation. I said, however, that I had never met anyone else who had made this discovery, that in fact that very point gave me most of my trouble. Probably you had heard it explained by someone, though possibly you might by divine ordering have been impelled of yourself in that direction, and thought that you had a secure hold on the demonstration, and therefore did not fix securely the truth of which you had a glimpse. Instead of remaining fixed it darts to and fro, taking now one form, now another, never getting away from the appearances of things. The truth, though, has no such variability. You are not the only one who has been in such a case. I assure you that no one, the first time he heard me, was ever in any other state in the beginning. One has more difficulty, another less, before he finally gets clear. Hardly anyone has but little difficulty.

Since things have taken and are taking such a course, we have, I think, very nearly found an answer to your question, what our relation to each other is to be. Since you are putting my principles to the proof by going to other teachers and by considering my views in comparison with theirs, as well as by themselves, this time, if your examination is genuine, these principles will grow to be a part of you, and you will be their friend as well as mine.

Now how are these things, together with all that I have mentioned, to come to pass? On the present occasion you did right to send Archedemus, and in future, after he has returned and has reported my message, you will perhaps again be overtaken by other difficulties.
You will accordingly send Archedemus to me again, if you are well advised, and he will come back to you with fresh wares. If you do this two or three times and test adequately what I send, I shall be surprised if the points about which you are now in difficulty do not assume a very different aspect. Take this course then with all confidence, for never will you order nor Archedemus carry finer wares or any more acceptable to the gods than these.

Take precautions, however, lest this teaching ever be disclosed among untrained people, for in my opinion there is in general no doctrine more ridiculous in the eyes of the general public than this, nor on the other hand any more wonderful and inspiring to those naturally gifted. Often repeated and constantly attended to for many years, it is at last like gold with great effort freed from all alloy. Let me tell you, however, the surprising thing about it. There are men, and a good many of them too, who have intelligence and memory and the ability to judge a doctrine after examining it by every possible test, who are now old men and have been receiving instruction not less than thirty years, who have just reached the point of saying that what formerly they thought most uncertain, now appears to them quite certain and evident, while what seemed most certain then, appears now uncertain. Consider these facts and take care lest you sometime come to repent of having now unwisely published your views. It is a very great safeguard to learn by heart instead of writing. It is impossible for what is written not to be disclosed. That is the reason why I have never written anything about these things, and why there is not and will not be any written work of Plato’s own. What are now called his are the work of a Socrates embellished and modernized. Farewell and believe. Read this letter now at once many times and burn it. So much for these matters.

You were surprised that I should send Polyxenus to you. For my part I have long been saying and say now the same thing about Lyco-phon and the others who are with you, that you altogether surpass them in talent for discussion and in logical method. None of them submits to confutation voluntarily, as some suppose, but they are forced to do so. It seems to me, moreover, that you have been very fair in your treatment of them and in your gifts. So much for this, and a great deal for such a subject.

If you are making any use of Philistion yourself, by all means do so, but if it can be done, dismiss him and let Speusippus have him. So Speusippus joins me in the request. Philistion himself promised me that, if you would let him go, he would gladly come to Athens. You did well to release the man from the quarries, but my request about his servants and about Hegesippus, son of Ariston, would not be burdensome to grant. You wrote to me, you know, that if anyone wronged either him or the others and you learned of it, you would not suffer it. I must also give you a truthful report in regard to Lysiclides. He is the
thereupon did not say what it occurred to me to say, for fear lest for a brief word my way might be closed instead of open to the departure to which I was looking forward.

The purpose, however, of all that I have said is this. Stop slandering me by saying that I prevented you from planting settlers in Greek cities that barbarians had destroyed, and from lightening the burdens of the Syracusans by transforming your government from tyranny to kingship. In the first place there is no lie less appropriate to me that you could tell to my discredit, and further, I could, in addition to what I have said, if there were anywhere to be seen a competent tribunal, furnish even clearer evidence than this that it was I who urged this course and you who were unwilling to act. At any rate it is not difficult to put it down in black and white that the accomplishment of these plans would have been the best thing for you, for the Syracusans, and for all the other Sicilian Greeks. Well, sir, if you deny saying what you said, I have my requital. If you admit it, you will thereupon conclude that Stesichorus was wise, imitate his recantation, and shift your position from the false to the true story.

LETTER VII

To THE FRIENDS AND COMPANIONS OF DION, Prosperity

In your letter you urged me to believe that your political convictions are the same as Dion's were, and in this connection you exhorted me to lend your cause such aid as I can by action or by speech. My reply is that I will aid your cause if your views and your aims really are the same as Dion's; if they differ from his, I will take time to think about it. But what was Dion's policy, and what were his aims? To that question I think I could give an answer based not on conjecture but on sure knowledge. For when I first came to Syracuse—I was about forty years old—Dion's age was the same as that of Hipparchinus now, and he at that time arrived at a conclusion that he never departed from. He believed in liberty for the Syracusans under the guidance of the best system of laws. Consequently no one need be surprised if Hipparchinus too were to be divinely led to the same conclusion and to come to agree with Dion's political creed.

The origin of this creed is a tale that young and old may well hear, and I will try to tell you the story from the beginning, for the moment is opportune. Once upon a time in my youth I cherished like many another the hope of entering upon a political career as soon as I came of age. It fell out, moreover, that political events took the following course. There were many who heaped abuse on the form of government then prevailing, and a revolution occurred. In this revolution fifty-one men set themselves up as a government, eleven in the city,
whether from my instruction or from others or by their own discovery. Such writers can in my opinion have no real acquaintance with the subject. I certainly have composed no work in regard to it, nor shall I ever do so in future, for there is no way of putting it in words like other studies. Acquaintance with it must come rather after a long period of attendance on instruction in the subject itself and of close companion­ship, when, suddenly, like a blaze kindled by a leaping spark, it is generated in the soul and at once becomes self-sustaining.

Besides, this at any rate I know, that if there were to be a treatise or a lecture on this subject, I could do it best. I am also sure for that matter that I should be very sorry to see such a treatise poorly written. If I thought it possible to deal adequately with the subject in a treatise or a lecture for the general public, what finer achievement would there have been in my life than to write a work of great benefit to mankind and to bring the nature of things to light for all men? I do not, however, think the attempt to tell mankind of these matters a good thing, except in the case of some few who are capable of discovering the truth for themselves with a little guidance. In the case of the rest to do so would excite in some an unjustified contempt in a thoroughly offensive fashion, in others certain lofty and vain hopes, as if they had acquired some awesome lore.

It has occurred to me to speak on the subject at greater length, for possibly the matter I am discussing would be clearer if I were to do so. There is a true doctrine, which I have often stated before, that stands in the way of the man who would dare to write even the least thing on such matters, and which it seems I am now called upon to repeat.

For everything that exists there are three classes of objects through which knowledge about it must come; the knowledge itself is a fourth, and we must put as a fifth entity the actual object of knowledge which is the true reality. We have then, first, a name, second, a description, third, an image, and fourth, a knowledge of the object. Take a particular case if you want to understand the meaning of what I have just said; then apply the theory to every object in the same way. There is something for instance called a circle, the name of which is the very word I just now uttered. In the second place there is a description of it which is composed of nouns and verbal expressions. For example the description of that which is named round and circumference and circle would run as follows: the thing which has everywhere equal distances between its extremities and its center. In the third place there is the class of object which is drawn and erased and turned on the lathe and destroyed—processes which do not affect the real circle to which these other circles are all related, because it is different from them. In the fourth place there are knowledge and understanding and correct opinion concerning them, all of which we must set down as one thing more that is found not in sounds nor in
shapes of bodies, but in minds, whereby it evidently differs in its nature from the real circle and from the aforementioned three. Of all these four, understanding approaches nearest in affinity and likeness to the fifth entity, while the others are more remote from it.

The same doctrine holds good in regard to shapes and surfaces, both straight and curved, in regard to the good and the beautiful and the just, in regard to all bodies artificial and natural, in regard to fire and water and the like, and in regard to every animal, and in regard to every quality of character, and in respect to all states active and passive. For if in the case of any of these a man does not somehow or other get hold of the first four, he will never gain a complete understanding of the fifth. Furthermore these four [names, descriptions, bodily forms, concepts] do as much to illustrate the particular quality of any object as they do to illustrate its essential reality because of the inadequacy of language. Hence no intelligent man will ever be so bold as to put into language those things which his reason has contemplated, especially not into a form that is unalterable—which must be the case with what is expressed in written symbols.

Again, however, the meaning of what has just been said must be explained. Every circle that is drawn or turned on a lathe in actual operations abounds in the opposite of the fifth entity, for it everywhere touches the straight, while the real circle, I maintain, contains in itself neither much nor little of the opposite character. Names, I maintain, are in no case stable. Nothing prevents the things that are now called round from being called straight and the straight round, and those who have transposed the names and use them in the opposite way will find them no less stable than they are now. The same thing for that matter is true of a description, since it consists of nouns and of verbal expressions, so that in a description there is nowhere any sure ground that is sure enough. One might, however, speak forever about the inaccurate character of each of the four! The important thing is that, as I said a little earlier, there are two things, the essential reality and the particular quality, and when the mind is in quest of knowledge not of the particular but of the essential, each of the four confronts the mind with the unsought particular, whether in verbal or in bodily form. Each of the four makes the reality that is expressed in words or illustrated in objects liable to easy refutation by the evidence of the senses. The result of this is to make practically every man a prey to complete perplexity and uncertainty.

Now in cases where as a result of bad training we are not even accustomed to look for the real essence of anything but are satisfied to accept what confronts us in the phenomenal presentations, we are not rendered ridiculous by each other—the examined by the examiners, who have the ability to handle the four with dexterity and to subject them to examination. In those cases, however, where we demand answers and proofs in regard to the fifth entity, anyone who pleases...
among those who have skill in confutation gains the victory and makes most of the audience think that the man who was first to speak or write or answer has no acquaintance with the matters of which he attempts to write or speak. Sometimes they are unaware that it is not the mind of the writer or speaker that fails in the test, but rather the character of the four—since that is naturally defective. Consideration of all of the four in turn—moving up and down from one to another—barely begets knowledge of a naturally flawless object in a naturally flawless man. If a man is naturally defective—and this is the natural state of most people’s minds with regard to intelligence and to what are called morals—while the objects he inspects are tainted with imperfection, not even Lynceus could make such a one see.

To sum it all up in one word, natural intelligence and a good memory are equally powerless to aid the man who has not an inborn affinity with the subject. Without such endowments there is of course not the slightest possibility. Hence all who have no natural aptitude for and affinity with justice and all the other noble ideals, though in the study of other matters they may be both intelligent and retentive—all those too who have affinity but are stupid and unretentive—such will never any of them attain to an understanding of the most complete truth in regard to moral concepts. The study of virtue and vice must be accompanied by an inquiry into what is false and true of existence in general and must be carried on by constant practice throughout a long period, as I said in the beginning. Hardly after practicing detailed comparisons of names and definitions and visual and other sense perceptions, after scrutinizing them in benevolent disputation by the use of question and answer without jealousy, at last in a flash understanding of each blazes up, and the mind, as it exerts all its powers to the limit of human capacity, is flooded with light.

For this reason no serious man will ever think of writing about serious realities for the general public so as to make them a prey to envy and perplexity. In a word, it is an inevitable conclusion from this that when anyone sees anywhere the written work of anyone, whether that of a lawgiver in his laws or whatever it may be in some other form, the subject treated cannot have been his most serious concern—that is, if he is himself a serious man. His most serious interests have their abode somewhere in the noblest region of the field of his activity. If, however, he really was seriously concerned with these matters and put them in writing, ‘then surely’ not the gods, but mortals ‘have utterly blasted his wits.’

One who has followed my account of the reality and of the deviations from it will be assured of the fact that, whether Dionysius has written anything on the first and highest principles of nature, or

1 Iliad 7.360, 12.234.
anyone else great or small, that man in my opinion has neither re-
ceived any sound instruction nor profited by it in the subjects of which
he wrote. For if he had, he would have felt the same reverence for the
subject that I do and would not boldly have cast it out unbecomingly
and unfittingly. Neither did he put the doctrine in writing to aid his
own memory, for there is no danger of anyone forgetting it, once his
mind grasps it, since it is contained in the very briefest statements.
If he wrote at all, his motive was an ignoble ambition either to be re-
garded as the author of the doctrine or as one not destitute of culture
—of which he was not worthy if he was enamored of the reputation of
having it. Well, if a single interview had the effect of conferring this
culture on Dionysius, it may be so, but how it had that effect, God
wot, as the Theban says, for on that occasion I described my doctrines
to him in the way I have mentioned and once only—after that never
again.

Here the question must be considered by anyone interested in dis-
covering how events happened to take the course they did, what can
be the reason why I did not recount my doctrines a second or a third
time or oftener. Does Dionysius after only one hearing think he
knows, and does he adequately know, the subject, either by that one
hearing or by having discovered the truth himself or by learning it
previously from others? Or does he suppose the doctrine unimportant?
Or thirdly, does he suppose it to be not suited to him, but too high for
him, so that he really would not be able to adapt his life to a concern
for wisdom and virtue? If now he suppose the doctrines to be unim-
portant, he is at variance with many who testify to the opposite, who
are altogether more competent to judge of such matters than Di-
onysius. If on the other hand he supposes that he has already dis-
covered or been taught the doctrine, and considers it valuable for
the cultural education of the mind, how, unless he is a monster among
men, could he ever so callously have insulted the one who has been
pioneer and arbiter in this realm? Let me describe the insults he
inflicted.

Next, after no long interval, although he had up to that time per-
mitted Dion to keep his own property and to enjoy the income, he now
refused to allow the trustees to send it to the Peloponnesus, as if he
had completely forgotten his letter. He said that the property belonged
don't to Dion but to Dion's son, who was his nephew and his lawful
ward. The transactions of that period were as I have stated up to this
point, but when Dionysius acted in this way, I had an accurate insight
into his enthusiasm for philosophy, and had cause for anger,
whether I would or no. It was then already summer and ships were
sailing. I decided, however, that I had no right to quarrel with Dion-
ysius rather than with myself and with those who had forced me to
go the third time to the strait of Scylla that 'once more I might pass
through baleful Charybdis,' and that I would say to Dionysius that I could not remain now that Dion was so insultingly treated. He, however, tried to smooth it over and begged me to stay, for he considered it a bad thing for him that I should go in person at once to report what had happened. On my refusing to wait he said that he would himself provide conveyance for me, for I had been planning to embark and sail in one of the merchant vessels. I was enraged and ready to take the consequences if I were interfered with, since I was obviously not guilty but an innocent sufferer.

When he now saw that I had no thought of remaining, he adopted the following device to keep me over that sailing. He came the next day and made me a plausible proposal. ‘Let Dion and Dion’s affairs,’ said he, ‘be cleared from our path, that you and I may no longer be constantly at variance over them. For your sake,’ said he, ‘I will do this for Dion. I propose that he receive his property and live in the Peloponnesus, not as an exile, but enjoying the right to go abroad and even to visit Syracuse, when he and I and you his friends all come to a mutual agreement. This, provided he contrive no plots against me—and that you and your friends and Dion’s friends here must guarantee. You must look to him for your security. Let whatever money he receives be deposited in the Peloponnesus and in Athens with anyone you please, Dion receiving the interest but having no authority to withdraw any of the principal without your consent. I have no great confidence that, if he had the use of this money, he would deal justly with me, for it will amount to a large sum, but I put more trust in you and your friends. See whether you find this offer satisfactory. If you do, stay on these terms another year and next season take this money and depart. I am sure that Dion too will be very grateful to you for your success in making this arrangement on his behalf.’

This proposal disgusted me, but in spite of that I replied that I would consider the matter and report my decision to him on the next day. Such was our agreement at that time.

Thereupon when I got by myself, I did take counsel in a state of great confusion. The argument, however, that was most important in guiding my counsel was this. ‘Well now, suppose Dionysius really has no intention of carrying out any of his offers; yet, after I am gone, he may write a plausible letter to Dion and may also instruct a great many of his friends to write similar letters, containing his present proposal to me and asserting that he made the offer, and that I refused to accept it and altogether disregarded the interests of Dion. In addition to this he may be no longer willing to send me home and may not only give no orders himself to any of the shipmasters, but may easily make it clear to everyone that he is averse to my leaving. In

2 Odyssey 12.428.
that case will anyone consent to take me as a passenger, setting forth, as I must, from the house of Dionysius?"

Besides my other difficulties, I was living in the garden belonging to the palace, so that even the porter would refuse to let me out unless an order were sent him from Dionysius.

If, though, I wait over the year, I shall be able to write to Dion and let him know my situation and the state of my plans. If, on the other hand, Dionysius does carry out any of his promises, my achievements will not be altogether ridiculous, for probably Dion's property amounts to at least one hundred talents, if rightly estimated. On the other hand if the elements of discord now apparent develop as they probably will, I am at a loss what to do with myself, but in spite of that I suppose I must hold out at least another year and try to expose Dionysius' schemes by actual test.'

Having come to this conclusion, I told Dionysius on the next day that I had decided to remain. 'However,' said I, 'I beg you not to suppose that I have authority over Dion, but to join me in dispatching letters to him to explain the decision that we have just come to and to ask him whether he is satisfied with it. If he is not, but wishes to make some other proposal, let him write at once. You meanwhile must take no further action about his affairs.' Such were our words, such was our agreement, pretty much as I have just stated it.

So the ships now set sail, and it was no longer possible for me to travel, when Dionysius suggested to me that half the property should be Dion's and half his son's. He promised to sell it and to give me half the sum realized to take to Dion, and to retain the other half in Sicily for the boy, since that was really the fairest arrangement. I was amazed at the proposal and thought it most absurd to dispute further. Nevertheless I said that we ought to wait for the letter from Dion and then send these proposals back to him. He, however, immediately afterward in a very headstrong way sold all of Dion's property, choosing his own place and arrangements and buyers, and never uttered a sound to me about it at all. I for my part likewise had no further conversation with him about Dion's affairs, since I thought there was nothing to be gained.

Up to this point I had in this way taken the part of philosophy and of my friends, but from then on Dionysius and I lived, I looking out like a bird that wants to fly away, he engaged in devising a way of frightening me off without paying me any of Dion's money. Just the same we called ourselves friends before all Sicily.

Now Dionysius attempted to decrease the pay of the more elderly of the mercenaries, contrary to his father's practice, and the soldiers, infuriated by this, gathered in a throng and said they would not allow it. Dionysius then attempted to force them to yield by closing the gates of the acropolis, but they at once burst into a sort of barbaric war song and rushed at the walls. Dionysius, terror-stricken
at this, granted everything and more besides to the peltasts then collected there.

Now a report quickly spread that Heraclides was to blame for all this, and he, getting wind of the report, took himself off and disappeared. Dionysius then sought to capture him. Being at a loss, however, he summoned Theodotes to the garden, where I happened to be strolling at the time. The rest of their conversation I have no knowledge of and did not hear, but what Theodotes said to Dionysius in my presence I know and remember.

'Plato,' he said, 'I am trying to persuade Dionysius here, in case I am able to bring Heraclides to this place to talk with us about the charges that are now being made, to accept my proposal that, if it seems undesirable for Heraclides to live in Sicily, he be allowed to take his wife and son and emigrate to the Peloponnesus and live there, not harming Dionysius and receiving the income from his property. I have for that matter already sent for him and I will send for him now again. He may appear in answer to my former summons or in answer to the present one. In any case I beg and beseech Dionysius, if anyone finds Heraclides, whether in the country or here in the city, to let no harm befall him except to leave the country until Dionysius decides otherwise. Do you agree to this?' said he, speaking to Dionysius.

'I do,' said he, 'and if he appears at your house he will suffer no harm beyond what you have just mentioned.'

Now on the afternoon of the next day Eurybius and Theodotes hastily approached me in a state of the greatest alarm and Theodotes asked me, 'Plato, were you present yesterday when Dionysius made the agreement with you and me about Heraclides?'

'Of course,' said I.

'At this moment though,' said he, 'there are peltasts scouring the country in quest of Heraclides, and he must be somewhere about. Do by all means,' said he, 'go with us to Dionysius.'

So we set out and entered the presence of Dionysius. The other two then stood silently weeping, while I spoke. 'These men,' said I, 'are afraid you may take some step in regard to Heraclides that is contrary to the agreement you made yesterday. I think he has been seen making his way in this direction.'

When he heard this he blazed up and turned every kind of color that an angry man would.

Theodotes fell at his feet and, seizing him by the hand, burst into tears and besought him to do no such thing. I broke in and comforted him with the words, 'Courage, Theodotes, for Dionysius will never go so far as to break the agreement of yesterday by doing otherwise.'

And Dionysius gave me a very tyrannical look and said, 'With you I made no agreement either great or small.'

'By the gods,' said I, 'you did, not to do the very thing that this
man is now begging you not to do.' And when I had said this, I turned my back and went out.

Thereupon he kept his men on the trail of Heraclides, but Theodotes sent word to him by messengers to make his escape. Dionysius then dispatched Tisias with peltasts and orders to pursue him. Heraclides, however, it was said, gained the Carthaginian domain a small part of a day ahead of them and so escaped.

After this Dionysius concluded that the old plot afforded a plausible ground for quarreling with me so as not to pay over Dion's money. First he dismissed me from the acropolis, having found a pretext that the women had to celebrate some ten-day festival in the garden where I was living. So he ordered me to stay during this period outside in the house of Archbedemus. While I was there Theodotes sent for me and expressed a good deal of resentment and criticism of Dionysius for his recent behavior. When Dionysius heard that I had visited Theodotes, he found here again a new pretext, akin to the former, for quarreling with me, and sent someone to ask me whether I really had a meeting with Theodotes when he sent for me.

'Certainly,' said I.

'In that case,' said the messenger, 'he bade me tell you that you by no means do well always to prefer Dion and Dion's friends to him.'

After these words he never again sent for me to come to his house, since it was now plain that I was a friend of Theodotes and Heraclides and an enemy to him. He thought too that I was disaffected because Dion's property was being altogether dissipated.

So after this I lived outside the acropolis among the mercenaries. Here there came to me among others those serving in the crews who were from Athens, and so fellow citizens of mine, and reported that I was unpopular among the peltasts, and that some of them threatened to make an end of me, if ever they caught me. I somehow, however, contrived the following way of escape. I sent to Archytas and to my other friends at Tarentum, telling them the situation in which I found myself. They discovered some pretext for an embassy from the city and sent Lamiscus, who was one of their number, with a thirty-oared vessel. When he arrived, he entreated Dionysius on my behalf, saying that I wanted to depart and urging him not to refuse. Dionysius granted his request and sent me off with an allowance of money for my traveling expenses. As for Dion's property, neither was there any further demand for it on my part nor was it restored.

When I arrived at Olympia in the Peloponnesus, I found Dion in attendance at the festival and reported what had happened. He, having called Zeus to witness, at once issued a summons to me and my friends and companions to make preparations for taking vengeance on Dionysius. From us vengeance was due for the crime of deluding a guest, so Dion said and believed, from him for unjust expulsion and exile.
In reply I bade him invite my friends, if they were willing, 'but as for myself,' said I, 'you and the others practically forced me to become a guest at the table and at the hearth of Dionysius and a partaker in sacred rites with him. He very likely thought because of the false reports that many were circulating that I was leagued with you in a plot against him and his government, and yet he scrupled to put me to death. For one thing, then, I am now scarcely of an age to help anyone in making war, and for another you have in me a common friend, in case you ever feel a desire to be friends with each other and want to accomplish some good. As long as you are bent on evil, invite others.' This I said in detestation of my wanderings and misfortunes in Sicily.

By declining instead of accepting my offers of mediation they brought upon themselves all the misfortunes that have now come upon them. None of these, in all human probability, would ever have occurred if Dionysius had paid the money to Dion or had become completely reconciled to him, for I would and I could easily have restrained Dion. As it is, their attacks on each other have everywhere brought a flood of misfortune.

Yet Dion's policy was the same, I should say, as my own or any other decent man's ought to be, in regard to the exercise of power by himself and his friends in his own city, namely, by conferring benefits on the city to acquire for himself the greatest power and the highest honors.

By this I do not mean the man who makes himself and his companions and his city rich by forming a plot and collecting conspirators—some man who is poor and unable to rule himself, a weakling enslaved to his desires—who next puts to death all those who own property—such he terms foes—then plunders their possessions and exhorts his accomplices and companions never to lay it at his door, if they say they are poor. Nor do I mean the man who is honored because of such a service to his city as distributing to the people by decrees the property of the few, nor the man who is head of a great city that has dominion over many smaller ones, and distributes unjustly to his own city the property of the others. On such terms neither Dion nor anyone else will ever, so far as he acts voluntarily, aim at a power baleful to himself and to his race forever and ever. He will aim at a republic and at instituting the best and justest laws without resorting in the least to executions and bloodshed.

Now while Dion was in the act of achieving this, having chosen to be the victim of crimes rather than commit them—though he took precautions against such attempts—then, in spite of all, he stumbled at the very summit of his mastery over his enemies. Nor is it strange that he did, for while a good man dealing with wicked men, a man sober and sane of mind, would in general never be completely deceived in estimating the souls of such men, yet it would not be surprising if he were caught napping like a good helmsman, who might
not altogether overlook the approach of a storm, but might overlook the extraordinary and unexpected magnitude of the tempest and so be overwhelmed by its violence. This is the mistake that Dion made, for assuredly he was aware that those who proved his undoing were bad men. The depth, however, of their folly and their villainy and their bloodthirstiness he did overlook, and so undone, he lies among the fallen, visiting Sicily with woe untold.

The advice I have to give after this narrative has mostly been given and so no more. I went back to the subject of my second visit to Sicily because the necessity of dealing with it seemed forced upon me by the surprising and paradoxical nature of the events. If anyone after this account finds the events less paradoxical and if anyone concludes that there was sufficient justification for what happened, then what I have said is fairly and adequately put.

LETTER VIII

b To the Friends and Companions of Dion, Prosperity

I will try to describe to you as well as I can the policy that you must adopt if genuine prosperity is to be yours. It is my hope that the counsel I give will be advantageous not only to you, though of course to you especially, but also in the second place to all at Syracuse, and in the third place to your enemies and foes, with the exception of any who have perpetrated impious crimes. Such deeds are past redeeming; such stains no one can ever cleanse. Consider now what I have to say.

Now that the despotic power has been overthrown throughout all Sicily, you are at odds only on one issue. On one side are those who desire to restore the empire once more, on the other those who wish to set the final seal on their escape from tyranny. Now the general opinion about such a situation is that the right policy to adopt on any occasion is that one which will do the most damage to the enemy and the most good to your own side. It is, however, by no means easy to do a great deal of damage to the other side without also receiving a good deal yourselves in return. You need not travel to any distant land to see glaring instances of that sort of thing. You have on the spot in Sicily an object lesson in the recent course of events. You have seen how the two parties tried respectively to inflict injuries and to avenge them, and you need only tell the tale to others to give on each occasion adequate instruction on that point. You need hardly be at a loss for examples of that sort. Examples, however, of measures conducive to the advantage of all, friend and foe alike, or of measures involving the least possible damage to both sides, it is neither easy to discover nor, when one has discovered them, to put them into effect.