ПЛАТОН

THE REPUBLIC

Платон
The Republic

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=25293011
The Republic:

Содержание

Plato
The Republic

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS

The Republic of Plato is the longest of his works with the exception of the Laws, and is certainly the greatest of them. There are nearer approaches to modern metaphysics in the Philebus and in the Sophist; the Politicus or Statesman is more ideal; the form and institutions of the State are more clearly drawn out in the Laws; as works of art, the Symposium and the Protagoras are of higher excellence. But no other Dialogue of Plato has the same largeness of view and the same perfection of style; no other shows an equal knowledge of the world, or contains more of those thoughts which are new as well as old, and not of one age only but of all. Nowhere in Plato is there a deeper irony or a greater wealth of humour or imagery, or more dramatic power. Nor in any other of his writings is the attempt made to interweave life and speculation, or to connect politics with philosophy. The Republic is the centre around which the other Dialogues may be grouped; here philosophy reaches the highest point (cp, especially in Books V, VI, VII) to which ancient thinkers ever attained. Plato among the Greeks, like Bacon among the moderns, was the first who conceived a method

of knowledge, although neither of them always distinguished the bare outline or form from the substance of truth; and both of them had to be content with an abstraction of science which was not yet realized. He was the greatest metaphysical genius whom the world has seen; and in him, more than in any other ancient thinker, the germs of future knowledge are contained. The sciences of logic and psychology, which have supplied so many instruments of thought to after-ages, are based upon the analyses of Socrates and Plato. The principles of definition, the law of contradiction, the fallacy of arguing in a circle, the distinction between the essence and accidents of a thing or notion, between means and ends, between causes and conditions; also the division of the mind into the rational, concupiscent, and irascible elements, or of pleasures and desires into necessary and unnecessary – these and other great forms of thought are all of them to be found in the Republic, and were probably first invented by Plato. The greatest of all logical truths, and the one of which writers on philosophy are most apt to lose sight, the difference between words and things, has been most strenuously insisted on by him (cp. Rep.; Polit.; Cratyl. 435, 436 ff), although he has not always avoided the confusion of them in his own writings (e.g. Rep.). But he does not bind up truth in logical formulae, – logic is still veiled in metaphysics; and the science which he imagines to 'contemplate all truth and all existence' is very unlike the doctrine of the syllogism which Aristotle claims to have discovered (Soph. Elenchi, 33. 18).

Neither must we forget that the Republic is but the third part of a still larger design which was to have included an ideal history of Athens, as well as a political and physical philosophy. The fragment of the Critias has given birth to a world-famous fiction, second only in importance to the tale of Troy and the legend of Arthur; and is said as a fact to have inspired some of the early navigators of the sixteenth century. This mythical tale, of which the subject was a history of the wars of the Athenians against the Island of Atlantis, is supposed to be founded upon an unfinished poem of Solon, to which it would have stood in the same relation as the writings of the logographers to the poems of Homer. It would have told of a struggle for Liberty (cp. Tim. 25 C), intended to represent the conflict of Persia and Hellas. We may judge from the noble commencement of the Timaeus, from the fragment of the Critias itself, and from the third book of the Laws, in what manner Plato would have treated this high argument. We can only guess why the great design was abandoned; perhaps because Plato became sensible of some incongruity in a fictitious history, or because he had lost his interest in it, or because advancing years forbade the completion of it; and we may please ourselves with the fancy that had this imaginary narrative ever been finished, we should have found Plato himself sympathising with the struggle for Hellenic independence (cp. Laws, iii. 698 ff.), singing a hymn of triumph over Marathon and Salamis, perhaps making the reflection of Herodotus (v. 78) where he contemplates the growth of the

Athenian empire – 'How brave a thing is freedom of speech, which has made the Athenians so far exceed every other state of Hellas in greatness!' or, more probably, attributing the victory to the ancient good order of Athens and to the favor of Apollo and Athene (cp. Introd. to Critias).

Again, Plato may be regarded as the 'captain' ('arhchegoz') or leader of a goodly band of followers; for in the Republic is to be found the original of Cicero's De Republica, of St. Augustine's City of God, of the Utopia of Sir Thomas More, and of the numerous other imaginary States which are framed upon the same model. The extent to which Aristotle or the Aristotelian school were indebted to him in the Politics has been little recognised, and the recognition is the more necessary because it is not made by Aristotle himself. The two philosophers had more in common than they were conscious of; and probably some elements of Plato remain still undetected in Aristotle. In English philosophy too, many affinities may be traced, not only in the works of the Cambridge Platonists, but in great original writers like Berkeley or Coleridge, to Plato and his ideas. That there is a truth higher than experience, of which the mind bears witness to herself, is a conviction which in our own generation has been enthusiastically asserted, and is perhaps gaining ground. Of the Greek authors who at the Renaissance brought a new life into the world Plato has had the greatest influence. The Republic of Plato is also the first treatise upon education, of which the writings of Milton and Locke, Rousseau, Jean Paul, and Goethe

are the legitimate descendants. Like Dante or Bunyan, he has a revelation of another life; like Bacon, he is profoundly impressed with the unity of knowledge; in the early Church he exercised a real influence on theology, and at the Revival of Literature on politics. Even the fragments of his words when 'repeated at second-hand' (Symp. 215 D) have in all ages ravished the hearts of men, who have seen reflected in them their own higher nature. He is the father of idealism in philosophy, in politics, in literature. And many of the latest conceptions of modern thinkers and statesmen, such as the unity of knowledge, the reign of law, and the equality of the sexes, have been anticipated in a dream by him.

The argument of the Republic is the search after Justice, the nature of which is first hinted at by Cephalus, the just and blameless old man – then discussed on the basis of proverbial morality by Socrates and Polemarchus – then caricatured by Thrasymachus and partially explained by Socrates – reduced to an abstraction by Glaucon and Adeimantus, and having become invisible in the individual reappears at length in the ideal State which is constructed by Socrates. The first care of the rulers is to be education, of which an outline is drawn after the old Hellenic model, providing only for an improved religion and morality, and more simplicity in music and gymnastic, a manlier strain of poetry, and greater harmony of the individual and the State. We are thus led on to the conception of a higher State, in which 'no man calls anything his own,' and in which there is neither

'marrying nor giving in marriage,' and 'kings are philosophers' and 'philosophers are kings;' and there is another and higher education, intellectual as well as moral and religious, of science as well as of art, and not of youth only but of the whole of life. Such a State is hardly to be realized in this world and quickly degenerates. To the perfect ideal succeeds the government of the soldier and the lover of honour, this again declining into democracy, and democracy into tyranny, in an imaginary but regular order having not much resemblance to the actual facts. When 'the wheel has come full circle' we do not begin again with a new period of human life; but we have passed from the best to the worst, and there we end. The subject is then changed and the old quarrel of poetry and philosophy which had been more lightly treated in the earlier books of the Republic is now resumed and fought out to a conclusion. Poetry is discovered to be an imitation thrice removed from the truth, and Homer, as well as the dramatic poets, having been condemned as an imitator, is sent into banishment along with them. And the idea of the State is supplemented by the revelation of a future life.

The division into books, like all similar divisions (Cp. Sir G.C. Lewis in the Classical Museum, vol. ii. p 1.), is probably later than the age of Plato. The natural divisions are five in number; – (1) Book I and the first half of Book II down to the paragraph beginning, 'I had always admired the genius of Glaucon and Adeimantus,' which is introductory; the first book containing a refutation of the popular and sophistical notions of justice,

and concluding, like some of the earlier Dialogues, without arriving at any definite result. To this is appended a restatement of the nature of justice according to common opinion, and an answer is demanded to the question – What is justice, stripped of appearances? The second division (2) includes the remainder of the second and the whole of the third and fourth books, which are mainly occupied with the construction of the first State and the first education. The third division (3) consists of the fifth, sixth, and seventh books, in which philosophy rather than justice is the subject of enquiry, and the second State is constructed on principles of communism and ruled by philosophers, and the contemplation of the idea of good takes the place of the social and political virtues. In the eighth and ninth books (4) the perversions of States and of the individuals who correspond to them are reviewed in succession; and the nature of pleasure and the principle of tyranny are further analysed in the individual man. The tenth book (5) is the conclusion of the whole, in which the relations of philosophy to poetry are finally determined, and the happiness of the citizens in this life, which has now been assured, is crowned by the vision of another.

Or a more general division into two parts may be adopted; the first (Books I – IV) containing the description of a State framed generally in accordance with Hellenic notions of religion and morality, while in the second (Books V – X) the Hellenic State is transformed into an ideal kingdom of philosophy, of which all other governments are the perversions. These two

points of view are really opposed, and the opposition is only veiled by the genius of Plato. The Republic, like the Phaedrus (see Introduction to Phaedrus), is an imperfect whole; the higher light of philosophy breaks through the regularity of the Hellenic temple, which at last fades away into the heavens. Whether this imperfection of structure arises from an enlargement of the plan; or from the imperfect reconcilement in the writer's own mind of the struggling elements of thought which are now first brought together by him; or, perhaps, from the composition of the work at different times – are questions, like the similar question about the Iliad and the Odyssey, which are worth asking, but which cannot have a distinct answer. In the age of Plato there was no regular mode of publication, and an author would have the less scruple in altering or adding to a work which was known only to a few of his friends. There is no absurdity in supposing that he may have laid his labours aside for a time, or turned from one work to another; and such interruptions would be more likely to occur in the case of a long than of a short writing. In all attempts to determine the chronological order of the Platonic writings on internal evidence, this uncertainty about any single Dialogue being composed at one time is a disturbing element, which must be admitted to affect longer works, such as the Republic and the Laws, more than shorter ones. But, on the other hand, the seeming discrepancies of the Republic may only arise out of the discordant elements which the philosopher has attempted to unite in a single whole, perhaps without being himself able to

recognise the inconsistency which is obvious to us. For there is a judgment of after ages which few great writers have ever been able to anticipate for themselves. They do not perceive the want of connexion in their own writings, or the gaps in their systems which are visible enough to those who come after them. In the beginnings of literature and philosophy, amid the first efforts of thought and language, more inconsistencies occur than now, when the paths of speculation are well worn and the meaning of words precisely defined. For consistency, too, is the growth of time; and some of the greatest creations of the human mind have been wanting in unity. Tried by this test, several of the Platonic Dialogues, according to our modern ideas, appear to be defective, but the deficiency is no proof that they were composed at different times or by different hands. And the supposition that the Republic was written uninterruptedly and by a continuous effort is in some degree confirmed by the numerous references from one part of the work to another.

The second title, 'Concerning Justice,' is not the one by which the Republic is quoted, either by Aristotle or generally in antiquity, and, like the other second titles of the Platonic Dialogues, may therefore be assumed to be of later date. Morgenstern and others have asked whether the definition of justice, which is the professed aim, or the construction of the State is the principal argument of the work. The answer is, that the two blend in one, and are two faces of the same truth; for justice is the order of the State, and the State is the visible

embodiment of justice under the conditions of human society. The one is the soul and the other is the body, and the Greek ideal of the State, as of the individual, is a fair mind in a fair body. In Hegelian phraseology the state is the reality of which justice is the idea. Or, described in Christian language, the kingdom of God is within, and yet developes into a Church or external kingdom; 'the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' is reduced to the proportions of an earthly building. Or, to use a Platonic image, justice and the State are the warp and the woof which run through the whole texture. And when the constitution of the State is completed, the conception of justice is not dismissed, but reappears under the same or different names throughout the work, both as the inner law of the individual soul, and finally as the principle of rewards and punishments in another life. The virtues are based on justice, of which common honesty in buying and selling is the shadow, and justice is based on the idea of good, which is the harmony of the world, and is reflected both in the institutions of states and in motions of the heavenly bodies (cp. Tim. 47). The Timaeus, which takes up the political rather than the ethical side of the Republic, and is chiefly occupied with hypotheses concerning the outward world, yet contains many indications that the same law is supposed to reign over the State, over nature, and over man.

Too much, however, has been made of this question both in ancient and modern times. There is a stage of criticism in which all works, whether of nature or of art, are referred to design.

Now in ancient writings, and indeed in literature generally, there remains often a large element which was not comprehended in the original design. For the plan grows under the author's hand; new thoughts occur to him in the act of writing; he has not worked out the argument to the end before he begins. The reader who seeks to find some one idea under which the whole may be conceived, must necessarily seize on the vaguest and most general. Thus Stallbaum, who is dissatisfied with the ordinary explanations of the argument of the Republic, imagines himself to have found the true argument 'in the representation of human life in a State perfected by justice, and governed according to the idea of good.' There may be some use in such general descriptions, but they can hardly be said to express the design of the writer. The truth is, that we may as well speak of many designs as of one; nor need anything be excluded from the plan of a great work to which the mind is naturally led by the association of ideas, and which does not interfere with the general purpose. What kind or degree of unity is to be sought after in a building, in the plastic arts, in poetry, in prose, is a problem which has to be determined relatively to the subject-matter. To Plato himself, the enquiry 'what was the intention of the writer,' or 'what was the principal argument of the Republic' would have been hardly intelligible, and therefore had better be at once dismissed (cp. the Introduction to the Phaedrus).

Is not the Republic the vehicle of three or four great truths which, to Plato's own mind, are most naturally represented in

the form of the State? Just as in the Jewish prophets the reign of Messiah, or 'the day of the Lord,' or the suffering Servant or people of God, or the 'Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings' only convey, to us at least, their great spiritual ideals, so through the Greek State Plato reveals to us his own thoughts about divine perfection, which is the idea of good – like the sun in the visible world; – about human perfection, which is justice – about education beginning in youth and continuing in later years – about poets and sophists and tyrants who are the false teachers and evil rulers of mankind – about 'the world' which is the embodiment of them – about a kingdom which exists nowhere upon earth but is laid up in heaven to be the pattern and rule of human life. No such inspired creation is at unity with itself, any more than the clouds of heaven when the sun pierces through them. Every shade of light and dark, of truth, and of fiction which is the veil of truth, is allowable in a work of philosophical imagination. It is not all on the same plane; it easily passes from ideas to myths and fancies, from facts to figures of speech. It is not prose but poetry, at least a great part of it, and ought not to be judged by the rules of logic or the probabilities of history. The writer is not fashioning his ideas into an artistic whole; they take possession of him and are too much for him. We have no need therefore to discuss whether a State such as Plato has conceived is practicable or not, or whether the outward form or the inward life came first into the mind of the writer. For the practicability of his ideas has nothing to do with their truth; and

the highest thoughts to which he attains may be truly said to bear the greatest 'marks of design' – justice more than the external frame-work of the State, the idea of good more than justice. The great science of dialectic or the organisation of ideas has no real content; but is only a type of the method or spirit in which the higher knowledge is to be pursued by the spectator of all time and all existence. It is in the fifth, sixth, and seventh books that Plato reaches the 'summit of speculation,' and these, although they fail to satisfy the requirements of a modern thinker, may therefore be regarded as the most important, as they are also the most original, portions of the work.

It is not necessary to discuss at length a minor question which has been raised by Boeckh, respecting the imaginary date at which the conversation was held (the year 411 B.C. which is proposed by him will do as well as any other); for a writer of fiction, and especially a writer who, like Plato, is notoriously careless of chronology (cp. Rep., Symp., 193 A, etc.), only aims at general probability. Whether all the persons mentioned in the Republic could ever have met at any one time is not a difficulty which would have occurred to an Athenian reading the work forty years later, or to Plato himself at the time of writing (any more than to Shakespeare respecting one of his own dramas); and need not greatly trouble us now. Yet this may be a question having no answer 'which is still worth asking,' because the investigation shows that we cannot argue historically from the dates in Plato; it would be useless therefore to waste time in

inventing far-fetched reconcilements of them in order to avoid chronological difficulties, such, for example, as the conjecture of C.F. Hermann, that Glaucon and Adeimantus are not the brothers but the uncles of Plato (cp. Apol. 34 A), or the fancy of Stallbaum that Plato intentionally left anachronisms indicating the dates at which some of his Dialogues were written.

The principal characters in the Republic are Cephalus, Polemarchus, Thrasymachus, Socrates, Glaucon, and Adeimantus. Cephalus appears in the introduction only, Polemarchus drops at the end of the first argument, and Thrasymachus is reduced to silence at the close of the first book. The main discussion is carried on by Socrates, Glaucon, and Adeimantus. Among the company are Lysias (the orator) and Euthydemus, the sons of Cephalus and brothers of Polemarchus, an unknown Charmantides – these are mute auditors; also there is Cleitophon, who once interrupts, where, as in the Dialogue which bears his name, he appears as the friend and ally of Thrasymachus.

Cephalus, the patriarch of the house, has been appropriately engaged in offering a sacrifice. He is the pattern of an old man who has almost done with life, and is at peace with himself and with all mankind. He feels that he is drawing nearer to the world below, and seems to linger around the memory of the past. He is eager that Socrates should come to visit him, fond of the poetry of the last generation, happy in the consciousness of a well-spent life, glad at having escaped from the tyranny of youthful lusts.

His love of conversation, his affection, his indifference to riches, even his garrulity, are interesting traits of character. He is not one of those who have nothing to say, because their whole mind has been absorbed in making money. Yet he acknowledges that riches have the advantage of placing men above the temptation to dishonesty or falsehood. The respectful attention shown to him by Socrates, whose love of conversation, no less than the mission imposed upon him by the Oracle, leads him to ask questions of all men, young and old alike, should also be noted. Who better suited to raise the question of justice than Cephalus, whose life might seem to be the expression of it? The moderation with which old age is pictured by Cephalus as a very tolerable portion of existence is characteristic, not only of him, but of Greek feeling generally, and contrasts with the exaggeration of Cicero in the De Senectute. The evening of life is described by Plato in the most expressive manner, yet with the fewest possible touches. As Cicero remarks (Ep. ad Attic. iv. 16), the aged Cephalus would have been out of place in the discussion which follows, and which he could neither have understood nor taken part in without a violation of dramatic propriety (cp. Lysimachus in the Laches).

His 'son and heir' Polemarchus has the frankness and impetuousness of youth; he is for detaining Socrates by force in the opening scene, and will not 'let him off' on the subject of women and children. Like Cephalus, he is limited in his point of view, and represents the proverbial stage of morality which has rules of life rather than principles; and he quotes Simonides

(cp. Aristoph. Clouds) as his father had quoted Pindar. But after this he has no more to say; the answers which he makes are only elicited from him by the dialectic of Socrates. He has not yet experienced the influence of the Sophists like Glaucon and Adeimantus, nor is he sensible of the necessity of refuting them; he belongs to the pre-Socratic or pre-dialectical age. He is incapable of arguing, and is bewildered by Socrates to such a degree that he does not know what he is saying. He is made to admit that justice is a thief, and that the virtues follow the analogy of the arts. From his brother Lysias (contra Eratosth.) we learn that he fell a victim to the Thirty Tyrants, but no allusion is here made to his fate, nor to the circumstance that Cephalus and his family were of Syracusan origin, and had migrated from Thurii to Athens.

The 'Chalcedonian giant,' Thrasymachus, of whom we have already heard in the Phaedrus, is the personification of the Sophists, according to Plato's conception of them, in some of their worst characteristics. He is vain and blustering, refusing to discourse unless he is paid, fond of making an oration, and hoping thereby to escape the inevitable Socrates; but a mere child in argument, and unable to foresee that the next 'move' (to use a Platonic expression) will 'shut him up.' He has reached the stage of framing general notions, and in this respect is in advance of Cephalus and Polemarchus. But he is incapable of defending them in a discussion, and vainly tries to cover his confusion with banter and insolence. Whether such doctrines as are attributed

to him by Plato were really held either by him or by any other Sophist is uncertain; in the infancy of philosophy serious errors about morality might easily grow up – they are certainly put into the mouths of speakers in Thucydides; but we are concerned at present with Plato's description of him, and not with the historical reality. The inequality of the contest adds greatly to the humour of the scene. The pompous and empty Sophist is utterly helpless in the hands of the great master of dialectic, who knows how to touch all the springs of vanity and weakness in him. He is greatly irritated by the irony of Socrates, but his noisy and imbecile rage only lays him more and more open to the thrusts of his assailant. His determination to cram down their throats, or put 'bodily into their souls' his own words, elicits a cry of horror from Socrates. The state of his temper is quite as worthy of remark as the process of the argument. Nothing is more amusing than his complete submission when he has been once thoroughly beaten. At first he seems to continue the discussion with reluctance, but soon with apparent good-will, and he even testifies his interest at a later stage by one or two occasional remarks. When attacked by Glaucon he is humorously protected by Socrates 'as one who has never been his enemy and is now his friend.' From Cicero and Quintilian and from Aristotle's Rhetoric we learn that the Sophist whom Plato has made so ridiculous was a man of note whose writings were preserved in later ages. The play on his name which was made by his contemporary Herodicus (Aris. Rhet.), 'thou wast ever bold in battle,' seems to show that the description of

him is not devoid of verisimilitude.

When Thrasymachus has been silenced, the two principal respondents, Glaucon and Adeimantus, appear on the scene: here, as in Greek tragedy (cp. Introd. to Phaedo), three actors are introduced. At first sight the two sons of Ariston may seem to wear a family likeness, like the two friends Simmias and Cebes in the Phaedo. But on a nearer examination of them the similarity vanishes, and they are seen to be distinct characters. Glaucon is the impetuous youth who can 'just never have enough of fechting' (cp. the character of him in Xen. Mem. iii. 6); the man of pleasure who is acquainted with the mysteries of love; the 'juvenis qui gaudet canibus,' and who improves the breed of animals; the lover of art and music who has all the experiences of youthful life. He is full of quickness and penetration, piercing easily below the clumsy platitudes of Thrasymachus to the real difficulty; he turns out to the light the seamy side of human life, and yet does not lose faith in the just and true. It is Glaucon who seizes what may be termed the ludicrous relation of the philosopher to the world, to whom a state of simplicity is 'a city of pigs,' who is always prepared with a jest when the argument offers him an opportunity, and who is ever ready to second the humour of Socrates and to appreciate the ridiculous, whether in the connoisseurs of music, or in the lovers of theatricals, or in the fantastic behaviour of the citizens of democracy. His weaknesses are several times alluded to by Socrates, who, however, will not allow him to be attacked by his brother Adeimantus. He is a

soldier, and, like Adeimantus, has been distinguished at the battle of Megara (anno 456?)…The character of Adeimantus is deeper and graver, and the profounder objections are commonly put into his mouth. Glaucon is more demonstrative, and generally opens the game. Adeimantus pursues the argument further. Glaucon has more of the liveliness and quick sympathy of youth; Adeimantus has the maturer judgment of a grown-up man of the world. In the second book, when Glaucon insists that justice and injustice shall be considered without regard to their consequences, Adeimantus remarks that they are regarded by mankind in general only for the sake of their consequences; and in a similar vein of reflection he urges at the beginning of the fourth book that Socrates fails in making his citizens happy, and is answered that happiness is not the first but the second thing, not the direct aim but the indirect consequence of the good government of a State. In the discussion about religion and mythology, Adeimantus is the respondent, but Glaucon breaks in with a slight jest, and carries on the conversation in a lighter tone about music and gymnastic to the end of the book. It is Adeimantus again who volunteers the criticism of common sense on the Socratic method of argument, and who refuses to let Socrates pass lightly over the question of women and children. It is Adeimantus who is the respondent in the more argumentative, as Glaucon in the lighter and more imaginative portions of the Dialogue. For example, throughout the greater part of the sixth book, the causes of the corruption of philosophy and the

conception of the idea of good are discussed with Adeimantus. Glaucon resumes his place of principal respondent; but he has a difficulty in apprehending the higher education of Socrates, and makes some false hits in the course of the discussion. Once more Adeimantus returns with the allusion to his brother Glaucon whom he compares to the contentious State; in the next book he is again superseded, and Glaucon continues to the end.

Thus in a succession of characters Plato represents the successive stages of morality, beginning with the Athenian gentleman of the olden time, who is followed by the practical man of that day regulating his life by proverbs and saws; to him succeeds the wild generalization of the Sophists, and lastly come the young disciples of the great teacher, who know the sophistical arguments but will not be convinced by them, and desire to go deeper into the nature of things. These too, like Cephalus, Polemarchus, Thrasymachus, are clearly distinguished from one another. Neither in the Republic, nor in any other Dialogue of Plato, is a single character repeated.

The delineation of Socrates in the Republic is not wholly consistent. In the first book we have more of the real Socrates, such as he is depicted in the Memorabilia of Xenophon, in the earliest Dialogues of Plato, and in the Apology. He is ironical, provoking, questioning, the old enemy of the Sophists, ready to put on the mask of Silenus as well as to argue seriously. But in the sixth book his enmity towards the Sophists abates; he acknowledges that they are the representatives rather than the

corrupters of the world. He also becomes more dogmatic and constructive, passing beyond the range either of the political or the speculative ideas of the real Socrates. In one passage Plato himself seems to intimate that the time had now come for Socrates, who had passed his whole life in philosophy, to give his own opinion and not to be always repeating the notions of other men. There is no evidence that either the idea of good or the conception of a perfect state were comprehended in the Socratic teaching, though he certainly dwelt on the nature of the universal and of final causes (cp. Xen. Mem.; Phaedo); and a deep thinker like him, in his thirty or forty years of public teaching, could hardly have failed to touch on the nature of family relations, for which there is also some positive evidence in the Memorabilia (Mem.) The Socratic method is nominally retained; and every inference is either put into the mouth of the respondent or represented as the common discovery of him and Socrates. But any one can see that this is a mere form, of which the affectation grows wearisome as the work advances. The method of enquiry has passed into a method of teaching in which by the help of interlocutors the same thesis is looked at from various points of view. The nature of the process is truly characterized by Glaucon, when he describes himself as a companion who is not good for much in an investigation, but can see what he is shown, and may, perhaps, give the answer to a question more fluently than another.

Neither can we be absolutely certain that Socrates himself

taught the immortality of the soul, which is unknown to his disciple Glaucon in the Republic (cp. Apol.); nor is there any reason to suppose that he used myths or revelations of another world as a vehicle of instruction, or that he would have banished poetry or have denounced the Greek mythology. His favorite oath is retained, and a slight mention is made of the daemonium, or internal sign, which is alluded to by Socrates as a phenomenon peculiar to himself. A real element of Socratic teaching, which is more prominent in the Republic than in any of the other Dialogues of Plato, is the use of example and illustration (Greek): 'Let us apply the test of common instances.' 'You,' says Adeimantus, ironically, in the sixth book, 'are so unaccustomed to speak in images.' And this use of examples or images, though truly Socratic in origin, is enlarged by the genius of Plato into the form of an allegory or parable, which embodies in the concrete what has been already described, or is about to be described, in the abstract. Thus the figure of the cave in Book VII is a recapitulation of the divisions of knowledge in Book VI. The composite animal in Book IX is an allegory of the parts of the soul. The noble captain and the ship and the true pilot in Book VI are a figure of the relation of the people to the philosophers in the State which has been described. Other figures, such as the dog, or the marriage of the portionless maiden, or the drones and wasps in the eighth and ninth books, also form links of connexion in long passages, or are used to recall previous discussions.

Plato is most true to the character of his master when he

describes him as 'not of this world.' And with this representation of him the ideal state and the other paradoxes of the Republic are quite in accordance, though they cannot be shown to have been speculations of Socrates. To him, as to other great teachers both philosophical and religious, when they looked upward, the world seemed to be the embodiment of error and evil. The common sense of mankind has revolted against this view, or has only partially admitted it. And even in Socrates himself the sterner judgement of the multitude at times passes into a sort of ironical pity or love. Men in general are incapable of philosophy, and are therefore at enmity with the philosopher; but their misunderstanding of him is unavoidable: for they have never seen him as he truly is in his own image; they are only acquainted with artificial systems possessing no native force of truth – words which admit of many applications. Their leaders have nothing to measure with, and are therefore ignorant of their own stature. But they are to be pitied or laughed at, not to be quarrelled with; they mean well with their nostrums, if they could only learn that they are cutting off a Hydra's head. This moderation towards those who are in error is one of the most characteristic features of Socrates in the Republic. In all the different representations of Socrates, whether of Xenophon or Plato, and amid the differences of the earlier or later Dialogues, he always retains the character of the unwearied and disinterested seeker after truth, without which he would have ceased to be Socrates.

Leaving the characters we may now analyse the contents of the Republic, and then proceed to consider (1) The general aspects of this Hellenic ideal of the State, (2) The modern lights in which the thoughts of Plato may be read.

BOOK I. The Republic opens with a truly Greek scene – a festival in honour of the goddess Bendis which is held in the Piraeus; to this is added the promise of an equestrian torch-race in the evening. The whole work is supposed to be recited by Socrates on the day after the festival to a small party, consisting of Critias, Timaeus, Hermocrates, and another; this we learn from the first words of the Timaeus.

When the rhetorical advantage of reciting the Dialogue has been gained, the attention is not distracted by any reference to the audience; nor is the reader further reminded of the extraordinary length of the narrative. Of the numerous company, three only take any serious part in the discussion; nor are we informed whether in the evening they went to the torch-race, or talked, as in the Symposium, through the night. The manner in which the conversation has arisen is described as follows: – Socrates and his companion Glaucon are about to leave the festival when they are detained by a message from Polemarchus, who speedily appears accompanied by Adeimantus, the brother of Glaucon, and with playful violence compels them to remain, promising them not only the torch-race, but the pleasure of conversation with the young, which to Socrates is a far greater attraction. They return to the house of Cephalus, Polemarchus' father, now in extreme

old age, who is found sitting upon a cushioned seat crowned for a sacrifice. 'You should come to me oftener, Socrates, for I am too old to go to you; and at my time of life, having lost other pleasures, I care the more for conversation.' Socrates asks him what he thinks of age, to which the old man replies, that the sorrows and discontents of age are to be attributed to the tempers of men, and that age is a time of peace in which the tyranny of the passions is no longer felt. Yes, replies Socrates, but the world will say, Cephalus, that you are happy in old age because you are rich. 'And there is something in what they say, Socrates, but not so much as they imagine – as Themistocles replied to the Seriphian, "Neither you, if you had been an Athenian, nor I, if I had been a Seriphian, would ever have been famous," I might in like manner reply to you, Neither a good poor man can be happy in age, nor yet a bad rich man.' Socrates remarks that Cephalus appears not to care about riches, a quality which he ascribes to his having inherited, not acquired them, and would like to know what he considers to be the chief advantage of them. Cephalus answers that when you are old the belief in the world below grows upon you, and then to have done justice and never to have been compelled to do injustice through poverty, and never to have deceived anyone, are felt to be unspeakable blessings. Socrates, who is evidently preparing for an argument, next asks, What is the meaning of the word justice? To tell the truth and pay your debts? No more than this? Or must we admit exceptions? Ought I, for example, to put back into the hands of my friend,

who has gone mad, the sword which I borrowed of him when he was in his right mind? 'There must be exceptions.' 'And yet,' says Polemarchus, 'the definition which has been given has the authority of Simonides.' Here Cephalus retires to look after the sacrifices, and bequeaths, as Socrates facetiously remarks, the possession of the argument to his heir, Polemarchus…

The description of old age is finished, and Plato, as his manner is, has touched the key-note of the whole work in asking for the definition of justice, first suggesting the question which Glaucon afterwards pursues respecting external goods, and preparing for the concluding mythus of the world below in the slight allusion of Cephalus. The portrait of the just man is a natural frontispiece or introduction to the long discourse which follows, and may perhaps imply that in all our perplexity about the nature of justice, there is no difficulty in discerning 'who is a just man.' The first explanation has been supported by a saying of Simonides; and now Socrates has a mind to show that the resolution of justice into two unconnected precepts, which have no common principle, fails to satisfy the demands of dialectic.

…He proceeds: What did Simonides mean by this saying of his? Did he mean that I was to give back arms to a madman? 'No, not in that case, not if the parties are friends, and evil would result. He meant that you were to do what was proper, good to friends and harm to enemies.' Every act does something to somebody; and following this analogy, Socrates asks, What is this due and proper thing which justice does, and to whom? He is

answered that justice does good to friends and harm to enemies. But in what way good or harm? 'In making alliances with the one, and going to war with the other.' Then in time of peace what is the good of justice? The answer is that justice is of use in contracts, and contracts are money partnerships. Yes; but how in such partnerships is the just man of more use than any other man? 'When you want to have money safely kept and not used.' Then justice will be useful when money is useless. And there is another difficulty: justice, like the art of war or any other art, must be of opposites, good at attack as well as at defence, at stealing as well as at guarding. But then justice is a thief, though a hero notwithstanding, like Autolycus, the Homeric hero, who was 'excellent above all men in theft and perjury' – to such a pass have you and Homer and Simonides brought us; though I do not forget that the thieving must be for the good of friends and the harm of enemies. And still there arises another question: Are friends to be interpreted as real or seeming; enemies as real or seeming? And are our friends to be only the good, and our enemies to be the evil? The answer is, that we must do good to our seeming and real good friends, and evil to our seeming and real evil enemies – good to the good, evil to the evil. But ought we to render evil for evil at all, when to do so will only make men more evil? Can justice produce injustice any more than the art of horsemanship can make bad horsemen, or heat produce cold? The final conclusion is, that no sage or poet ever said that the just return evil for evil; this was a maxim of some rich and mighty

man, Periander, Perdiccas, or Ismenias the Theban (about B.C. 398-381)…

Thus the first stage of aphoristic or unconscious morality is shown to be inadequate to the wants of the age; the authority of the poets is set aside, and through the winding mazes of dialectic we make an approach to the Christian precept of forgiveness of injuries. Similar words are applied by the Persian mystic poet to the Divine being when the questioning spirit is stirred within him: – 'If because I do evil, Thou punishest me by evil, what is the difference between Thee and me?' In this both Plato and Kheyam rise above the level of many Christian (?) theologians. The first definition of justice easily passes into the second; for the simple words 'to speak the truth and pay your debts' is substituted the more abstract 'to do good to your friends and harm to your enemies.' Either of these explanations gives a sufficient rule of life for plain men, but they both fall short of the precision of philosophy. We may note in passing the antiquity of casuistry, which not only arises out of the conflict of established principles in particular cases, but also out of the effort to attain them, and is prior as well as posterior to our fundamental notions of morality. The 'interrogation' of moral ideas; the appeal to the authority of Homer; the conclusion that the maxim, 'Do good to your friends and harm to your enemies,' being erroneous, could not have been the word of any great man, are all of them very characteristic of the Platonic Socrates.

…Here Thrasymachus, who has made several attempts to

interrupt, but has hitherto been kept in order by the company, takes advantage of a pause and rushes into the arena, beginning, like a savage animal, with a roar. 'Socrates,' he says, 'what folly is this? – Why do you agree to be vanquished by one another in a pretended argument?' He then prohibits all the ordinary definitions of justice; to which Socrates replies that he cannot tell how many twelve is, if he is forbidden to say 2 x 6, or 3 x 4, or 6 x 2, or 4 x 3. At first Thrasymachus is reluctant to argue; but at length, with a promise of payment on the part of the company and of praise from Socrates, he is induced to open the game. 'Listen,' he says, 'my answer is that might is right, justice the interest of the stronger: now praise me.' Let me understand you first. Do you mean that because Polydamas the wrestler, who is stronger than we are, finds the eating of beef for his interest, the eating of beef is also for our interest, who are not so strong? Thrasymachus is indignant at the illustration, and in pompous words, apparently intended to restore dignity to the argument, he explains his meaning to be that the rulers make laws for their own interests. But suppose, says Socrates, that the ruler or stronger makes a mistake – then the interest of the stronger is not his interest. Thrasymachus is saved from this speedy downfall by his disciple Cleitophon, who introduces the word 'thinks;' – not the actual interest of the ruler, but what he thinks or what seems to be his interest, is justice. The contradiction is escaped by the unmeaning evasion: for though his real and apparent interests may differ, what the ruler thinks to be his interest will always

remain what he thinks to be his interest.

Of course this was not the original assertion, nor is the new interpretation accepted by Thrasymachus himself. But Socrates is not disposed to quarrel about words, if, as he significantly insinuates, his adversary has changed his mind. In what follows Thrasymachus does in fact withdraw his admission that the ruler may make a mistake, for he affirms that the ruler as a ruler is infallible. Socrates is quite ready to accept the new position, which he equally turns against Thrasymachus by the help of the analogy of the arts. Every art or science has an interest, but this interest is to be distinguished from the accidental interest of the artist, and is only concerned with the good of the things or persons which come under the art. And justice has an interest which is the interest not of the ruler or judge, but of those who come under his sway.

Thrasymachus is on the brink of the inevitable conclusion, when he makes a bold diversion. 'Tell me, Socrates,' he says, 'have you a nurse?' What a question! Why do you ask? 'Because, if you have, she neglects you and lets you go about drivelling, and has not even taught you to know the shepherd from the sheep. For you fancy that shepherds and rulers never think of their own interest, but only of their sheep or subjects, whereas the truth is that they fatten them for their use, sheep and subjects alike. And experience proves that in every relation of life the just man is the loser and the unjust the gainer, especially where injustice is on the grand scale, which is quite another thing from the petty rogueries

of swindlers and burglars and robbers of temples. The language of men proves this – our 'gracious' and 'blessed' tyrant and the like – all which tends to show (1) that justice is the interest of the stronger; and (2) that injustice is more profitable and also stronger than justice.'

Thrasymachus, who is better at a speech than at a close argument, having deluged the company with words, has a mind to escape. But the others will not let him go, and Socrates adds a humble but earnest request that he will not desert them at such a crisis of their fate. 'And what can I do more for you?' he says; 'would you have me put the words bodily into your souls?' God forbid! replies Socrates; but we want you to be consistent in the use of terms, and not to employ 'physician' in an exact sense, and then again 'shepherd' or 'ruler' in an inexact, – if the words are strictly taken, the ruler and the shepherd look only to the good of their people or flocks and not to their own: whereas you insist that rulers are solely actuated by love of office. 'No doubt about it,' replies Thrasymachus. Then why are they paid? Is not the reason, that their interest is not comprehended in their art, and is therefore the concern of another art, the art of pay, which is common to the arts in general, and therefore not identical with any one of them? Nor would any man be a ruler unless he were induced by the hope of reward or the fear of punishment; – the reward is money or honour, the punishment is the necessity of being ruled by a man worse than himself. And if a State (or Church) were composed entirely of good men, they would be

affected by the last motive only; and there would be as much 'nolo episcopari' as there is at present of the opposite…

The satire on existing governments is heightened by the simple and apparently incidental manner in which the last remark is introduced. There is a similar irony in the argument that the governors of mankind do not like being in office, and that therefore they demand pay.

…Enough of this: the other assertion of Thrasymachus is far more important – that the unjust life is more gainful than the just. Now, as you and I, Glaucon, are not convinced by him, we must reply to him; but if we try to compare their respective gains we shall want a judge to decide for us; we had better therefore proceed by making mutual admissions of the truth to one another.

Thrasymachus had asserted that perfect injustice was more gainful than perfect justice, and after a little hesitation he is induced by Socrates to admit the still greater paradox that injustice is virtue and justice vice. Socrates praises his frankness, and assumes the attitude of one whose only wish is to understand the meaning of his opponents. At the same time he is weaving a net in which Thrasymachus is finally enclosed. The admission is elicited from him that the just man seeks to gain an advantage over the unjust only, but not over the just, while the unjust would gain an advantage over either. Socrates, in order to test this statement, employs once more the favourite analogy of the arts. The musician, doctor, skilled artist of any sort, does not seek

to gain more than the skilled, but only more than the unskilled (that is to say, he works up to a rule, standard, law, and does not exceed it), whereas the unskilled makes random efforts at excess. Thus the skilled falls on the side of the good, and the unskilled on the side of the evil, and the just is the skilled, and the unjust is the unskilled.

There was great difficulty in bringing Thrasymachus to the point; the day was hot and he was streaming with perspiration, and for the first time in his life he was seen to blush. But his other thesis that injustice was stronger than justice has not yet been refuted, and Socrates now proceeds to the consideration of this, which, with the assistance of Thrasymachus, he hopes to clear up; the latter is at first churlish, but in the judicious hands of Socrates is soon restored to good-humour: Is there not honour among thieves? Is not the strength of injustice only a remnant of justice? Is not absolute injustice absolute weakness also? A house that is divided against itself cannot stand; two men who quarrel detract from one another's strength, and he who is at war with himself is the enemy of himself and the gods. Not wickedness therefore, but semi-wickedness flourishes in states, – a remnant of good is needed in order to make union in action possible, – there is no kingdom of evil in this world.

Another question has not been answered: Is the just or the unjust the happier? To this we reply, that every art has an end and an excellence or virtue by which the end is accomplished. And is not the end of the soul happiness, and justice the excellence

of the soul by which happiness is attained? Justice and happiness being thus shown to be inseparable, the question whether the just or the unjust is the happier has disappeared.

Thrasymachus replies: 'Let this be your entertainment, Socrates, at the festival of Bendis.' Yes; and a very good entertainment with which your kindness has supplied me, now that you have left off scolding. And yet not a good entertainment – but that was my own fault, for I tasted of too many things. First of all the nature of justice was the subject of our enquiry, and then whether justice is virtue and wisdom, or evil and folly; and then the comparative advantages of just and unjust: and the sum of all is that I know not what justice is; how then shall I know whether the just is happy or not?..

Thus the sophistical fabric has been demolished, chiefly by appealing to the analogy of the arts. 'Justice is like the arts (1) in having no external interest, and (2) in not aiming at excess, and (3) justice is to happiness what the implement of the workman is to his work.' At this the modern reader is apt to stumble, because he forgets that Plato is writing in an age when the arts and the virtues, like the moral and intellectual faculties, were still undistinguished. Among early enquirers into the nature of human action the arts helped to fill up the void of speculation; and at first the comparison of the arts and the virtues was not perceived by them to be fallacious. They only saw the points of agreement in them and not the points of difference. Virtue, like art, must take means to an end; good manners are both an art and a virtue;

character is naturally described under the image of a statue; and there are many other figures of speech which are readily transferred from art to morals. The next generation cleared up these perplexities; or at least supplied after ages with a further analysis of them. The contemporaries of Plato were in a state of transition, and had not yet fully realized the common-sense distinction of Aristotle, that 'virtue is concerned with action, art with production' (Nic. Eth.), or that 'virtue implies intention and constancy of purpose,' whereas 'art requires knowledge only'. And yet in the absurdities which follow from some uses of the analogy, there seems to be an intimation conveyed that virtue is more than art. This is implied in the reductio ad absurdum that 'justice is a thief,' and in the dissatisfaction which Socrates expresses at the final result.

The expression 'an art of pay' which is described as 'common to all the arts' is not in accordance with the ordinary use of language. Nor is it employed elsewhere either by Plato or by any other Greek writer. It is suggested by the argument, and seems to extend the conception of art to doing as well as making. Another flaw or inaccuracy of language may be noted in the words 'men who are injured are made more unjust.' For those who are injured are not necessarily made worse, but only harmed or ill-treated.

The second of the three arguments, 'that the just does not aim at excess,' has a real meaning, though wrapped up in an enigmatical form. That the good is of the nature of the finite is a peculiarly Hellenic sentiment, which may be compared with the

language of those modern writers who speak of virtue as fitness, and of freedom as obedience to law. The mathematical or logical notion of limit easily passes into an ethical one, and even finds a mythological expression in the conception of envy (Greek). Ideas of measure, equality, order, unity, proportion, still linger in the writings of moralists; and the true spirit of the fine arts is better conveyed by such terms than by superlatives.

> 'When workmen strive to do better than well,
> They do confound their skill in covetousness.' (King John.)

The harmony of the soul and body, and of the parts of the soul with one another, a harmony 'fairer than that of musical notes,' is the true Hellenic mode of conceiving the perfection of human nature.

In what may be called the epilogue of the discussion with Thrasymachus, Plato argues that evil is not a principle of strength, but of discord and dissolution, just touching the question which has been often treated in modern times by theologians and philosophers, of the negative nature of evil. In the last argument we trace the germ of the Aristotelian doctrine of an end and a virtue directed towards the end, which again is suggested by the arts. The final reconcilement of justice and happiness and the identity of the individual and the State are also intimated. Socrates reassumes the character of a 'know-nothing;' at the same time he appears to be not wholly satisfied with the manner in which the argument has been conducted. Nothing is

concluded; but the tendency of the dialectical process, here as always, is to enlarge our conception of ideas, and to widen their application to human life.

BOOK II. Thrasymachus is pacified, but the intrepid Glaucon insists on continuing the argument. He is not satisfied with the indirect manner in which, at the end of the last book, Socrates had disposed of the question 'Whether the just or the unjust is the happier.' He begins by dividing goods into three classes: – first, goods desirable in themselves; secondly, goods desirable in themselves and for their results; thirdly, goods desirable for their results only. He then asks Socrates in which of the three classes he would place justice. In the second class, replies Socrates, among goods desirable for themselves and also for their results. 'Then the world in general are of another mind, for they say that justice belongs to the troublesome class of goods which are desirable for their results only. Socrates answers that this is the doctrine of Thrasymachus which he rejects. Glaucon thinks that Thrasymachus was too ready to listen to the voice of the charmer, and proposes to consider the nature of justice and injustice in themselves and apart from the results and rewards of them which the world is always dinning in his ears. He will first of all speak of the nature and origin of justice; secondly, of the manner in which men view justice as a necessity and not a good; and thirdly, he will prove the reasonableness of this view.

'To do injustice is said to be a good; to suffer injustice an evil. As the evil is discovered by experience to be greater than the

good, the sufferers, who cannot also be doers, make a compact that they will have neither, and this compact or mean is called justice, but is really the impossibility of doing injustice. No one would observe such a compact if he were not obliged. Let us suppose that the just and unjust have two rings, like that of Gyges in the well-known story, which make them invisible, and then no difference will appear in them, for every one will do evil if he can. And he who abstains will be regarded by the world as a fool for his pains. Men may praise him in public out of fear for themselves, but they will laugh at him in their hearts (Cp. Gorgias.)

'And now let us frame an ideal of the just and unjust. Imagine the unjust man to be master of his craft, seldom making mistakes and easily correcting them; having gifts of money, speech, strength – the greatest villain bearing the highest character: and at his side let us place the just in his nobleness and simplicity – being, not seeming – without name or reward – clothed in his justice only – the best of men who is thought to be the worst, and let him die as he has lived. I might add (but I would rather put the rest into the mouth of the panegyrists of injustice – they will tell you) that the just man will be scourged, racked, bound, will have his eyes put out, and will at last be crucified (literally impaled) – and all this because he ought to have preferred seeming to being. How different is the case of the unjust who clings to appearance as the true reality! His high character makes him a ruler; he can marry where he likes, trade where he likes, help his friends and

hurt his enemies; having got rich by dishonesty he can worship the gods better, and will therefore be more loved by them than the just.'

I was thinking what to answer, when Adeimantus joined in the already unequal fray. He considered that the most important point of all had been omitted: – 'Men are taught to be just for the sake of rewards; parents and guardians make reputation the incentive to virtue. And other advantages are promised by them of a more solid kind, such as wealthy marriages and high offices. There are the pictures in Homer and Hesiod of fat sheep and heavy fleeces, rich corn-fields and trees toppling with fruit, which the gods provide in this life for the just. And the Orphic poets add a similar picture of another. The heroes of Musaeus and Eumolpus lie on couches at a festival, with garlands on their heads, enjoying as the meed of virtue a paradise of immortal drunkenness. Some go further, and speak of a fair posterity in the third and fourth generation. But the wicked they bury in a slough and make them carry water in a sieve: and in this life they attribute to them the infamy which Glaucon was assuming to be the lot of the just who are supposed to be unjust.

'Take another kind of argument which is found both in poetry and prose: – "Virtue," as Hesiod says, "is honourable but difficult, vice is easy and profitable." You may often see the wicked in great prosperity and the righteous afflicted by the will of heaven. And mendicant prophets knock at rich men's doors, promising to atone for the sins of themselves or their fathers in

an easy fashion with sacrifices and festive games, or with charms and invocations to get rid of an enemy good or bad by divine help and at a small charge; – they appeal to books professing to be written by Musaeus and Orpheus, and carry away the minds of whole cities, and promise to "get souls out of purgatory;" and if we refuse to listen to them, no one knows what will happen to us.

'When a lively-minded ingenuous youth hears all this, what will be his conclusion? "Will he," in the language of Pindar, "make justice his high tower, or fortify himself with crooked deceit?" Justice, he reflects, without the appearance of justice, is misery and ruin; injustice has the promise of a glorious life. Appearance is master of truth and lord of happiness. To appearance then I will turn, – I will put on the show of virtue and trail behind me the fox of Archilochus. I hear some one saying that "wickedness is not easily concealed," to which I reply that "nothing great is easy." Union and force and rhetoric will do much; and if men say that they cannot prevail over the gods, still how do we know that there are gods? Only from the poets, who acknowledge that they may be appeased by sacrifices. Then why not sin and pay for indulgences out of your sin? For if the righteous are only unpunished, still they have no further reward, while the wicked may be unpunished and have the pleasure of sinning too. But what of the world below? Nay, says the argument, there are atoning powers who will set that matter right, as the poets, who are the sons of the gods, tell us; and this is confirmed by the authority of the State.

'How can we resist such arguments in favour of injustice? Add good manners, and, as the wise tell us, we shall make the best of both worlds. Who that is not a miserable caitiff will refrain from smiling at the praises of justice? Even if a man knows the better part he will not be angry with others; for he knows also that more than human virtue is needed to save a man, and that he only praises justice who is incapable of injustice.

'The origin of the evil is that all men from the beginning, heroes, poets, instructors of youth, have always asserted "the temporal dispensation," the honours and profits of justice. Had we been taught in early youth the power of justice and injustice inherent in the soul, and unseen by any human or divine eye, we should not have needed others to be our guardians, but every one would have been the guardian of himself. This is what I want you to show, Socrates; – other men use arguments which rather tend to strengthen the position of Thrasymachus that "might is right;" but from you I expect better things. And please, as Glaucon said, to exclude reputation; let the just be thought unjust and the unjust just, and do you still prove to us the superiority of justice'…

The thesis, which for the sake of argument has been maintained by Glaucon, is the converse of that of Thrasymachus – not right is the interest of the stronger, but right is the necessity of the weaker. Starting from the same premises he carries the analysis of society a step further back; – might is still right, but the might is the weakness of the many combined against the strength of the few.

There have been theories in modern as well as in ancient times which have a family likeness to the speculations of Glaucon; e.g. that power is the foundation of right; or that a monarch has a divine right to govern well or ill; or that virtue is self-love or the love of power; or that war is the natural state of man; or that private vices are public benefits. All such theories have a kind of plausibility from their partial agreement with experience. For human nature oscillates between good and evil, and the motives of actions and the origin of institutions may be explained to a certain extent on either hypothesis according to the character or point of view of a particular thinker. The obligation of maintaining authority under all circumstances and sometimes by rather questionable means is felt strongly and has become a sort of instinct among civilized men. The divine right of kings, or more generally of governments, is one of the forms under which this natural feeling is expressed. Nor again is there any evil which has not some accompaniment of good or pleasure; nor any good which is free from some alloy of evil; nor any noble or generous thought which may not be attended by a shadow or the ghost of a shadow of self-interest or of self-love. We know that all human actions are imperfect; but we do not therefore attribute them to the worse rather than to the better motive or principle. Such a philosophy is both foolish and false, like that opinion of the clever rogue who assumes all other men to be like himself. And theories of this sort do not represent the real nature of the State, which is based on a vague sense of right gradually corrected and enlarged

by custom and law (although capable also of perversion), any more than they describe the origin of society, which is to be sought in the family and in the social and religious feelings of man. Nor do they represent the average character of individuals, which cannot be explained simply on a theory of evil, but has always a counteracting element of good. And as men become better such theories appear more and more untruthful to them, because they are more conscious of their own disinterestedness. A little experience may make a man a cynic; a great deal will bring him back to a truer and kindlier view of the mixed nature of himself and his fellow men.

The two brothers ask Socrates to prove to them that the just is happy when they have taken from him all that in which happiness is ordinarily supposed to consist. Not that there is (1) any absurdity in the attempt to frame a notion of justice apart from circumstances. For the ideal must always be a paradox when compared with the ordinary conditions of human life. Neither the Stoical ideal nor the Christian ideal is true as a fact, but they may serve as a basis of education, and may exercise an ennobling influence. An ideal is none the worse because 'some one has made the discovery' that no such ideal was ever realized. And in a few exceptional individuals who are raised above the ordinary level of humanity, the ideal of happiness may be realized in death and misery. This may be the state which the reason deliberately approves, and which the utilitarian as well as every other moralist may be bound in certain cases to prefer.

Nor again, (2) must we forget that Plato, though he agrees generally with the view implied in the argument of the two brothers, is not expressing his own final conclusion, but rather seeking to dramatize one of the aspects of ethical truth. He is developing his idea gradually in a series of positions or situations. He is exhibiting Socrates for the first time undergoing the Socratic interrogation. Lastly, (3) the word 'happiness' involves some degree of confusion because associated in the language of modern philosophy with conscious pleasure or satisfaction, which was not equally present to his mind.

Glaucon has been drawing a picture of the misery of the just and the happiness of the unjust, to which the misery of the tyrant in Book IX is the answer and parallel. And still the unjust must appear just; that is 'the homage which vice pays to virtue.' But now Adeimantus, taking up the hint which had been already given by Glaucon, proceeds to show that in the opinion of mankind justice is regarded only for the sake of rewards and reputation, and points out the advantage which is given to such arguments as those of Thrasymachus and Glaucon by the conventional morality of mankind. He seems to feel the difficulty of 'justifying the ways of God to man.' Both the brothers touch upon the question, whether the morality of actions is determined by their consequences; and both of them go beyond the position of Socrates, that justice belongs to the class of goods not desirable for themselves only, but desirable for themselves and for their results, to which he recalls them. In their attempt to

view justice as an internal principle, and in their condemnation of the poets, they anticipate him. The common life of Greece is not enough for them; they must penetrate deeper into the nature of things.

It has been objected that justice is honesty in the sense of Glaucon and Adeimantus, but is taken by Socrates to mean all virtue. May we not more truly say that the old-fashioned notion of justice is enlarged by Socrates, and becomes equivalent to universal order or well-being, first in the State, and secondly in the individual? He has found a new answer to his old question (Protag.), 'whether the virtues are one or many,' viz. that one is the ordering principle of the three others. In seeking to establish the purely internal nature of justice, he is met by the fact that man is a social being, and he tries to harmonise the two opposite theses as well as he can. There is no more inconsistency in this than was inevitable in his age and country; there is no use in turning upon him the cross lights of modern philosophy, which, from some other point of view, would appear equally inconsistent. Plato does not give the final solution of philosophical questions for us; nor can he be judged of by our standard.

The remainder of the Republic is developed out of the question of the sons of Ariston. Three points are deserving of remark in what immediately follows: – First, that the answer of Socrates is altogether indirect. He does not say that happiness consists in the contemplation of the idea of justice, and still less will he be tempted to affirm the Stoical paradox that the just man

can be happy on the rack. But first he dwells on the difficulty of the problem and insists on restoring man to his natural condition, before he will answer the question at all. He too will frame an ideal, but his ideal comprehends not only abstract justice, but the whole relations of man. Under the fanciful illustration of the large letters he implies that he will only look for justice in society, and that from the State he will proceed to the individual. His answer in substance amounts to this, – that under favourable conditions, i.e. in the perfect State, justice and happiness will coincide, and that when justice has been once found, happiness may be left to take care of itself. That he falls into some degree of inconsistency, when in the tenth book he claims to have got rid of the rewards and honours of justice, may be admitted; for he has left those which exist in the perfect State. And the philosopher 'who retires under the shelter of a wall' can hardly have been esteemed happy by him, at least not in this world. Still he maintains the true attitude of moral action. Let a man do his duty first, without asking whether he will be happy or not, and happiness will be the inseparable accident which attends him. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

Secondly, it may be remarked that Plato preserves the genuine character of Greek thought in beginning with the State and in going on to the individual. First ethics, then politics – this is the order of ideas to us; the reverse is the order of history. Only after many struggles of thought does the individual assert his

right as a moral being. In early ages he is not ONE, but one of many, the citizen of a State which is prior to him; and he has no notion of good or evil apart from the law of his country or the creed of his church. And to this type he is constantly tending to revert, whenever the influence of custom, or of party spirit, or the recollection of the past becomes too strong for him.

Thirdly, we may observe the confusion or identification of the individual and the State, of ethics and politics, which pervades early Greek speculation, and even in modern times retains a certain degree of influence. The subtle difference between the collective and individual action of mankind seems to have escaped early thinkers, and we too are sometimes in danger of forgetting the conditions of united human action, whenever we either elevate politics into ethics, or lower ethics to the standard of politics. The good man and the good citizen only coincide in the perfect State; and this perfection cannot be attained by legislation acting upon them from without, but, if at all, by education fashioning them from within.

…Socrates praises the sons of Ariston, 'inspired offspring of the renowned hero,' as the elegiac poet terms them; but he does not understand how they can argue so eloquently on behalf of injustice while their character shows that they are uninfluenced by their own arguments. He knows not how to answer them, although he is afraid of deserting justice in the hour of need. He therefore makes a condition, that having weak eyes he shall be allowed to read the large letters first and then go on to the smaller,

that is, he must look for justice in the State first, and will then proceed to the individual. Accordingly he begins to construct the State.

Society arises out of the wants of man. His first want is food; his second a house; his third a coat. The sense of these needs and the possibility of satisfying them by exchange, draw individuals together on the same spot; and this is the beginning of a State, which we take the liberty to invent, although necessity is the real inventor. There must be first a husbandman, secondly a builder, thirdly a weaver, to which may be added a cobbler. Four or five citizens at least are required to make a city. Now men have different natures, and one man will do one thing better than many; and business waits for no man. Hence there must be a division of labour into different employments; into wholesale and retail trade; into workers, and makers of workmen's tools; into shepherds and husbandmen. A city which includes all this will have far exceeded the limit of four or five, and yet not be very large. But then again imports will be required, and imports necessitate exports, and this implies variety of produce in order to attract the taste of purchasers; also merchants and ships. In the city too we must have a market and money and retail trades; otherwise buyers and sellers will never meet, and the valuable time of the producers will be wasted in vain efforts at exchange. If we add hired servants the State will be complete. And we may guess that somewhere in the intercourse of the citizens with one another justice and injustice will appear.

Here follows a rustic picture of their way of life. They spend their days in houses which they have built for themselves; they make their own clothes and produce their own corn and wine. Their principal food is meal and flour, and they drink in moderation. They live on the best of terms with each other, and take care not to have too many children. 'But,' said Glaucon, interposing, 'are they not to have a relish?' Certainly; they will have salt and olives and cheese, vegetables and fruits, and chestnuts to roast at the fire. "Tis a city of pigs, Socrates.' Why, I replied, what do you want more? 'Only the comforts of life, – sofas and tables, also sauces and sweets.' I see; you want not only a State, but a luxurious State; and possibly in the more complex frame we may sooner find justice and injustice. Then the fine arts must go to work – every conceivable instrument and ornament of luxury will be wanted. There will be dancers, painters, sculptors, musicians, cooks, barbers, tire-women, nurses, artists; swineherds and neatherds too for the animals, and physicians to cure the disorders of which luxury is the source. To feed all these superfluous mouths we shall need a part of our neighbour's land, and they will want a part of ours. And this is the origin of war, which may be traced to the same causes as other political evils. Our city will now require the slight addition of a camp, and the citizen will be converted into a soldier. But then again our old doctrine of the division of labour must not be forgotten. The art of war cannot be learned in a day, and there must be a natural aptitude for military duties. There will be some warlike natures

who have this aptitude – dogs keen of scent, swift of foot to pursue, and strong of limb to fight. And as spirit is the foundation of courage, such natures, whether of men or animals, will be full of spirit. But these spirited natures are apt to bite and devour one another; the union of gentleness to friends and fierceness against enemies appears to be an impossibility, and the guardian of a State requires both qualities. Who then can be a guardian? The image of the dog suggests an answer. For dogs are gentle to friends and fierce to strangers. Your dog is a philosopher who judges by the rule of knowing or not knowing; and philosophy, whether in man or beast, is the parent of gentleness. The human watchdogs must be philosophers or lovers of learning which will make them gentle. And how are they to be learned without education?

But what shall their education be? Is any better than the old-fashioned sort which is comprehended under the name of music and gymnastic? Music includes literature, and literature is of two kinds, true and false. 'What do you mean?' he said. I mean that children hear stories before they learn gymnastics, and that the stories are either untrue, or have at most one or two grains of truth in a bushel of falsehood. Now early life is very impressible, and children ought not to learn what they will have to unlearn when they grow up; we must therefore have a censorship of nursery tales, banishing some and keeping others. Some of them are very improper, as we may see in the great instances of Homer and Hesiod, who not only tell lies but bad

lies; stories about Uranus and Saturn, which are immoral as well as false, and which should never be spoken of to young persons, or indeed at all; or, if at all, then in a mystery, after the sacrifice, not of an Eleusinian pig, but of some unprocurable animal. Shall our youth be encouraged to beat their fathers by the example of Zeus, or our citizens be incited to quarrel by hearing or seeing representations of strife among the gods? Shall they listen to the narrative of Hephaestus binding his mother, and of Zeus sending him flying for helping her when she was beaten? Such tales may possibly have a mystical interpretation, but the young are incapable of understanding allegory. If any one asks what tales are to be allowed, we will answer that we are legislators and not book-makers; we only lay down the principles according to which books are to be written; to write them is the duty of others.

And our first principle is, that God must be represented as he is; not as the author of all things, but of good only. We will not suffer the poets to say that he is the steward of good and evil, or that he has two casks full of destinies; – or that Athene and Zeus incited Pandarus to break the treaty; or that God caused the sufferings of Niobe, or of Pelops, or the Trojan war; or that he makes men sin when he wishes to destroy them. Either these were not the actions of the gods, or God was just, and men were the better for being punished. But that the deed was evil, and God the author, is a wicked, suicidal fiction which we will allow no one, old or young, to utter. This is our first and great principle – God is the author of good only.

And the second principle is like unto it: – With God is no variableness or change of form. Reason teaches us this; for if we suppose a change in God, he must be changed either by another or by himself. By another? – but the best works of nature and art and the noblest qualities of mind are least liable to be changed by any external force. By himself? – but he cannot change for the better; he will hardly change for the worse. He remains for ever fairest and best in his own image. Therefore we refuse to listen to the poets who tell us of Here begging in the likeness of a priestess or of other deities who prowl about at night in strange disguises; all that blasphemous nonsense with which mothers fool the manhood out of their children must be suppressed. But some one will say that God, who is himself unchangeable, may take a form in relation to us. Why should he? For gods as well as men hate the lie in the soul, or principle of falsehood; and as for any other form of lying which is used for a purpose and is regarded as innocent in certain exceptional cases – what need have the gods of this? For they are not ignorant of antiquity like the poets, nor are they afraid of their enemies, nor is any madman a friend of theirs. God then is true, he is absolutely true; he changes not, he deceives not, by day or night, by word or sign. This is our second great principle – God is true. Away with the lying dream of Agamemnon in Homer, and the accusation of Thetis against Apollo in Aeschylus…

In order to give clearness to his conception of the State, Plato proceeds to trace the first principles of mutual need and

of division of labour in an imaginary community of four or five citizens. Gradually this community increases; the division of labour extends to countries; imports necessitate exports; a medium of exchange is required, and retailers sit in the market-place to save the time of the producers. These are the steps by which Plato constructs the first or primitive State, introducing the elements of political economy by the way. As he is going to frame a second or civilized State, the simple naturally comes before the complex. He indulges, like Rousseau, in a picture of primitive life – an idea which has indeed often had a powerful influence on the imagination of mankind, but he does not seriously mean to say that one is better than the other (Politicus); nor can any inference be drawn from the description of the first state taken apart from the second, such as Aristotle appears to draw in the Politics. We should not interpret a Platonic dialogue any more than a poem or a parable in too literal or matter-of-fact a style. On the other hand, when we compare the lively fancy of Plato with the dried-up abstractions of modern treatises on philosophy, we are compelled to say with Protagoras, that the 'mythus is more interesting' (Protag.)

Several interesting remarks which in modern times would have a place in a treatise on Political Economy are scattered up and down the writings of Plato: especially Laws, Population; Free Trade; Adulteration; Wills and Bequests; Begging; Eryxias, (though not Plato's), Value and Demand; Republic, Division of Labour. The last subject, and also the origin of Retail Trade,

is treated with admirable lucidity in the second book of the Republic. But Plato never combined his economic ideas into a system, and never seems to have recognized that Trade is one of the great motive powers of the State and of the world. He would make retail traders only of the inferior sort of citizens (Rep., Laws), though he remarks, quaintly enough (Laws), that 'if only the best men and the best women everywhere were compelled to keep taverns for a time or to carry on retail trade, etc., then we should knew how pleasant and agreeable all these things are.'

The disappointment of Glaucon at the 'city of pigs,' the ludicrous description of the ministers of luxury in the more refined State, and the afterthought of the necessity of doctors, the illustration of the nature of the guardian taken from the dog, the desirableness of offering some almost unprocurable victim when impure mysteries are to be celebrated, the behaviour of Zeus to his father and of Hephaestus to his mother, are touches of humour which have also a serious meaning. In speaking of education Plato rather startles us by affirming that a child must be trained in falsehood first and in truth afterwards. Yet this is not very different from saying that children must be taught through the medium of imagination as well as reason; that their minds can only develope gradually, and that there is much which they must learn without understanding. This is also the substance of Plato's view, though he must be acknowledged to have drawn the line somewhat differently from modern ethical writers, respecting truth and falsehood. To us, economies or accommodations would

not be allowable unless they were required by the human faculties or necessary for the communication of knowledge to the simple and ignorant. We should insist that the word was inseparable from the intention, and that we must not be 'falsely true,' i.e. speak or act falsely in support of what was right or true. But Plato would limit the use of fictions only by requiring that they should have a good moral effect, and that such a dangerous weapon as falsehood should be employed by the rulers alone and for great objects.

A Greek in the age of Plato attached no importance to the question whether his religion was an historical fact. He was just beginning to be conscious that the past had a history; but he could see nothing beyond Homer and Hesiod. Whether their narratives were true or false did not seriously affect the political or social life of Hellas. Men only began to suspect that they were fictions when they recognised them to be immoral. And so in all religions: the consideration of their morality comes first, afterwards the truth of the documents in which they are recorded, or of the events natural or supernatural which are told of them. But in modern times, and in Protestant countries perhaps more than in Catholic, we have been too much inclined to identify the historical with the moral; and some have refused to believe in religion at all, unless a superhuman accuracy was discernible in every part of the record. The facts of an ancient or religious history are amongst the most important of all facts; but they are frequently uncertain, and we only learn the true lesson which

is to be gathered from them when we place ourselves above them. These reflections tend to show that the difference between Plato and ourselves, though not unimportant, is not so great as might at first sight appear. For we should agree with him in placing the moral before the historical truth of religion; and, generally, in disregarding those errors or misstatements of fact which necessarily occur in the early stages of all religions. We know also that changes in the traditions of a country cannot be made in a day; and are therefore tolerant of many things which science and criticism would condemn.

We note in passing that the allegorical interpretation of mythology, said to have been first introduced as early as the sixth century before Christ by Theagenes of Rhegium, was well established in the age of Plato, and here, as in the Phaedrus, though for a different reason, was rejected by him. That anachronisms whether of religion or law, when men have reached another stage of civilization, should be got rid of by fictions is in accordance with universal experience. Great is the art of interpretation; and by a natural process, which when once discovered was always going on, what could not be altered was explained away. And so without any palpable inconsistency there existed side by side two forms of religion, the tradition inherited or invented by the poets and the customary worship of the temple; on the other hand, there was the religion of the philosopher, who was dwelling in the heaven of ideas, but did not therefore refuse to offer a cock to Aesculapius, or to

be seen saying his prayers at the rising of the sun. At length the antagonism between the popular and philosophical religion, never so great among the Greeks as in our own age, disappeared, and was only felt like the difference between the religion of the educated and uneducated among ourselves. The Zeus of Homer and Hesiod easily passed into the 'royal mind' of Plato (Philebus); the giant Heracles became the knight-errant and benefactor of mankind. These and still more wonderful transformations were readily effected by the ingenuity of Stoics and neo-Platonists in the two or three centuries before and after Christ. The Greek and Roman religions were gradually permeated by the spirit of philosophy; having lost their ancient meaning, they were resolved into poetry and morality; and probably were never purer than at the time of their decay, when their influence over the world was waning.

A singular conception which occurs towards the end of the book is the lie in the soul; this is connected with the Platonic and Socratic doctrine that involuntary ignorance is worse than voluntary. The lie in the soul is a true lie, the corruption of the highest truth, the deception of the highest part of the soul, from which he who is deceived has no power of delivering himself. For example, to represent God as false or immoral, or, according to Plato, as deluding men with appearances or as the author of evil; or again, to affirm with Protagoras that 'knowledge is sensation,' or that 'being is becoming,' or with Thrasymachus 'that might is right,' would have been regarded by Plato as a lie of this hateful

sort. The greatest unconsciousness of the greatest untruth, e.g. if, in the language of the Gospels (John), 'he who was blind' were to say 'I see,' is another aspect of the state of mind which Plato is describing. The lie in the soul may be further compared with the sin against the Holy Ghost (Luke), allowing for the difference between Greek and Christian modes of speaking. To this is opposed the lie in words, which is only such a deception as may occur in a play or poem, or allegory or figure of speech, or in any sort of accommodation, – which though useless to the gods may be useful to men in certain cases. Socrates is here answering the question which he had himself raised about the propriety of deceiving a madman; and he is also contrasting the nature of God and man. For God is Truth, but mankind can only be true by appearing sometimes to be partial, or false. Reserving for another place the greater questions of religion or education, we may note further, (1) the approval of the old traditional education of Greece; (2) the preparation which Plato is making for the attack on Homer and the poets; (3) the preparation which he is also making for the use of economies in the State; (4) the contemptuous and at the same time euphemistic manner in which here as below he alludes to the 'Chronique Scandaleuse' of the gods.

BOOK III. There is another motive in purifying religion, which is to banish fear; for no man can be courageous who is afraid of death, or who believes the tales which are repeated by the poets concerning the world below. They must be gently

requested not to abuse hell; they may be reminded that their stories are both untrue and discouraging. Nor must they be angry if we expunge obnoxious passages, such as the depressing words of Achilles – 'I would rather be a serving-man than rule over all the dead;' and the verses which tell of the squalid mansions, the senseless shadows, the flitting soul mourning over lost strength and youth, the soul with a gibber going beneath the earth like smoke, or the souls of the suitors which flutter about like bats. The terrors and horrors of Cocytus and Styx, ghosts and sapless shades, and the rest of their Tartarean nomenclature, must vanish. Such tales may have their use; but they are not the proper food for soldiers. As little can we admit the sorrows and sympathies of the Homeric heroes: – Achilles, the son of Thetis, in tears, throwing ashes on his head, or pacing up and down the sea-shore in distraction; or Priam, the cousin of the gods, crying aloud, rolling in the mire. A good man is not prostrated at the loss of children or fortune. Neither is death terrible to him; and therefore lamentations over the dead should not be practised by men of note; they should be the concern of inferior persons only, whether women or men. Still worse is the attribution of such weakness to the gods; as when the goddesses say, 'Alas! my travail!' and worst of all, when the king of heaven himself laments his inability to save Hector, or sorrows over the impending doom of his dear Sarpedon. Such a character of God, if not ridiculed by our young men, is likely to be imitated by them. Nor should our citizens be given to excess of laughter –

'Such violent delights' are followed by a violent re-action. The description in the Iliad of the gods shaking their sides at the clumsiness of Hephaestus will not be admitted by us. 'Certainly not.'

Truth should have a high place among the virtues, for falsehood, as we were saying, is useless to the gods, and only useful to men as a medicine. But this employment of falsehood must remain a privilege of state; the common man must not in return tell a lie to the ruler; any more than the patient would tell a lie to his physician, or the sailor to his captain.

In the next place our youth must be temperate, and temperance consists in self-control and obedience to authority. That is a lesson which Homer teaches in some places: 'The Achaeans marched on breathing prowess, in silent awe of their leaders;' – but a very different one in other places: 'O heavy with wine, who hast the eyes of a dog, but the heart of a stag.' Language of the latter kind will not impress self-control on the minds of youth. The same may be said about his praises of eating and drinking and his dread of starvation; also about the verses in which he tells of the rapturous loves of Zeus and Here, or of how Hephaestus once detained Ares and Aphrodite in a net on a similar occasion. There is a nobler strain heard in the words: – 'Endure, my soul, thou hast endured worse.' Nor must we allow our citizens to receive bribes, or to say, 'Gifts persuade the gods, gifts reverend kings;' or to applaud the ignoble advice of Phoenix to Achilles that he should get money out of the Greeks before

he assisted them; or the meanness of Achilles himself in taking gifts from Agamemnon; or his requiring a ransom for the body of Hector; or his cursing of Apollo; or his insolence to the river-god Scamander; or his dedication to the dead Patroclus of his own hair which had been already dedicated to the other river-god Spercheius; or his cruelty in dragging the body of Hector round the walls, and slaying the captives at the pyre: such a combination of meanness and cruelty in Cheiron's pupil is inconceivable. The amatory exploits of Peirithous and Theseus are equally unworthy. Either these so-called sons of gods were not the sons of gods, or they were not such as the poets imagine them, any more than the gods themselves are the authors of evil. The youth who believes that such things are done by those who have the blood of heaven flowing in their veins will be too ready to imitate their example.

Enough of gods and heroes; – what shall we say about men? What the poets and story-tellers say – that the wicked prosper and the righteous are afflicted, or that justice is another's gain? Such misrepresentations cannot be allowed by us. But in this we are anticipating the definition of justice, and had therefore better defer the enquiry.

The subjects of poetry have been sufficiently treated; next follows style. Now all poetry is a narrative of events past, present, or to come; and narrative is of three kinds, the simple, the imitative, and a composition of the two. An instance will make my meaning clear. The first scene in Homer is of the last or mixed kind, being partly description and partly dialogue. But if

you throw the dialogue into the 'oratio obliqua,' the passage will run thus: The priest came and prayed Apollo that the Achaeans might take Troy and have a safe return if Agamemnon would only give him back his daughter; and the other Greeks assented, but Agamemnon was wroth, and so on – The whole then becomes descriptive, and the poet is the only speaker left; or, if you omit the narrative, the whole becomes dialogue. These are the three styles – which of them is to be admitted into our State? 'Do you ask whether tragedy and comedy are to be admitted?' Yes, but also something more – Is it not doubtful whether our guardians are to be imitators at all? Or rather, has not the question been already answered, for we have decided that one man cannot in his life play many parts, any more than he can act both tragedy and comedy, or be rhapsodist and actor at once? Human nature is coined into very small pieces, and as our guardians have their own business already, which is the care of freedom, they will have enough to do without imitating. If they imitate they should imitate, not any meanness or baseness, but the good only; for the mask which the actor wears is apt to become his face. We cannot allow men to play the parts of women, quarrelling, weeping, scolding, or boasting against the gods, – least of all when making love or in labour. They must not represent slaves, or bullies, or cowards, drunkards, or madmen, or blacksmiths, or neighing horses, or bellowing bulls, or sounding rivers, or a raging sea. A good or wise man will be willing to perform good and wise actions, but he will be ashamed to play an inferior part

which he has never practised; and he will prefer to employ the descriptive style with as little imitation as possible. The man who has no self-respect, on the contrary, will imitate anybody and anything; sounds of nature and cries of animals alike; his whole performance will be imitation of gesture and voice. Now in the descriptive style there are few changes, but in the dramatic there are a great many. Poets and musicians use either, or a compound of both, and this compound is very attractive to youth and their teachers as well as to the vulgar. But our State in which one man plays one part only is not adapted for complexity. And when one of these polyphonous pantomimic gentlemen offers to exhibit himself and his poetry we will show him every observance of respect, but at the same time tell him that there is no room for his kind in our State; we prefer the rough, honest poet, and will not depart from our original models (Laws).

Next as to the music. A song or ode has three parts, – the subject, the harmony, and the rhythm; of which the two last are dependent upon the first. As we banished strains of lamentation, so we may now banish the mixed Lydian harmonies, which are the harmonies of lamentation; and as our citizens are to be temperate, we may also banish convivial harmonies, such as the Ionian and pure Lydian. Two remain – the Dorian and Phrygian, the first for war, the second for peace; the one expressive of courage, the other of obedience or instruction or religious feeling. And as we reject varieties of harmony, we shall also reject the many-stringed, variously-shaped instruments

which give utterance to them, and in particular the flute, which is more complex than any of them. The lyre and the harp may be permitted in the town, and the Pan's-pipe in the fields. Thus we have made a purgation of music, and will now make a purgation of metres. These should be like the harmonies, simple and suitable to the occasion. There are four notes of the tetrachord, and there are three ratios of metre, 3/2, 2/2, 2/1, which have all their characteristics, and the feet have different characteristics as well as the rhythms. But about this you and I must ask Damon, the great musician, who speaks, if I remember rightly, of a martial measure as well as of dactylic, trochaic, and iambic rhythms, which he arranges so as to equalize the syllables with one another, assigning to each the proper quantity. We only venture to affirm the general principle that the style is to conform to the subject and the metre to the style; and that the simplicity and harmony of the soul should be reflected in them all. This principle of simplicity has to be learnt by every one in the days of his youth, and may be gathered anywhere, from the creative and constructive arts, as well as from the forms of plants and animals.

Other artists as well as poets should be warned against meanness or unseemliness. Sculpture and painting equally with music must conform to the law of simplicity. He who violates it cannot be allowed to work in our city, and to corrupt the taste of our citizens. For our guardians must grow up, not amid images of deformity which will gradually poison and corrupt their souls, but in a land of health and beauty where they will drink in from

every object sweet and harmonious influences. And of all these influences the greatest is the education given by music, which finds a way into the innermost soul and imparts to it the sense of beauty and of deformity. At first the effect is unconscious; but when reason arrives, then he who has been thus trained welcomes her as the friend whom he always knew. As in learning to read, first we acquire the elements or letters separately, and afterwards their combinations, and cannot recognize reflections of them until we know the letters themselves; – in like manner we must first attain the elements or essential forms of the virtues, and then trace their combinations in life and experience. There is a music of the soul which answers to the harmony of the world; and the fairest object of a musical soul is the fair mind in the fair body. Some defect in the latter may be excused, but not in the former. True love is the daughter of temperance, and temperance is utterly opposed to the madness of bodily pleasure. Enough has been said of music, which makes a fair ending with love.

Next we pass on to gymnastics; about which I would remark, that the soul is related to the body as a cause to an effect, and therefore if we educate the mind we may leave the education of the body in her charge, and need only give a general outline of the course to be pursued. In the first place the guardians must abstain from strong drink, for they should be the last persons to lose their wits. Whether the habits of the palaestra are suitable to them is more doubtful, for the ordinary gymnastic is a sleepy sort of thing, and if left off suddenly is apt to endanger health.

But our warrior athletes must be wide-awake dogs, and must also be inured to all changes of food and climate. Hence they will require a simpler kind of gymnastic, akin to their simple music; and for their diet a rule may be found in Homer, who feeds his heroes on roast meat only, and gives them no fish although they are living at the sea-side, nor boiled meats which involve an apparatus of pots and pans; and, if I am not mistaken, he nowhere mentions sweet sauces. Sicilian cookery and Attic confections and Corinthian courtezans, which are to gymnastic what Lydian and Ionian melodies are to music, must be forbidden. Where gluttony and intemperance prevail the town quickly fills with doctors and pleaders; and law and medicine give themselves airs as soon as the freemen of a State take an interest in them. But what can show a more disgraceful state of education than to have to go abroad for justice because you have none of your own at home? And yet there IS a worse stage of the same disease – when men have learned to take a pleasure and pride in the twists and turns of the law; not considering how much better it would be for them so to order their lives as to have no need of a nodding justice. And there is a like disgrace in employing a physician, not for the cure of wounds or epidemic disorders, but because a man has by laziness and luxury contracted diseases which were unknown in the days of Asclepius. How simple is the Homeric practice of medicine. Eurypylus after he has been wounded drinks a posset of Pramnian wine, which is of a heating nature; and yet the sons of Asclepius blame neither the damsel

who gives him the drink, nor Patroclus who is attending on him. The truth is that this modern system of nursing diseases was introduced by Herodicus the trainer; who, being of a sickly constitution, by a compound of training and medicine tortured first himself and then a good many other people, and lived a great deal longer than he had any right. But Asclepius would not practise this art, because he knew that the citizens of a well-ordered State have no leisure to be ill, and therefore he adopted the 'kill or cure' method, which artisans and labourers employ. 'They must be at their business,' they say, 'and have no time for coddling: if they recover, well; if they don't, there is an end of them.' Whereas the rich man is supposed to be a gentleman who can afford to be ill. Do you know a maxim of Phocylides – that 'when a man begins to be rich' (or, perhaps, a little sooner) 'he should practise virtue'? But how can excessive care of health be inconsistent with an ordinary occupation, and yet consistent with that practice of virtue which Phocylides inculcates? When a student imagines that philosophy gives him a headache, he never does anything; he is always unwell. This was the reason why Asclepius and his sons practised no such art. They were acting in the interest of the public, and did not wish to preserve useless lives, or raise up a puny offspring to wretched sires. Honest diseases they honestly cured; and if a man was wounded, they applied the proper remedies, and then let him eat and drink what he liked. But they declined to treat intemperate and worthless subjects, even though they might have made large fortunes out

of them. As to the story of Pindar, that Asclepius was slain by a thunderbolt for restoring a rich man to life, that is a lie – following our old rule we must say either that he did not take bribes, or that he was not the son of a god.

Glaucon then asks Socrates whether the best physicians and the best judges will not be those who have had severally the greatest experience of diseases and of crimes. Socrates draws a distinction between the two professions. The physician should have had experience of disease in his own body, for he cures with his mind and not with his body. But the judge controls mind by mind; and therefore his mind should not be corrupted by crime. Where then is he to gain experience? How is he to be wise and also innocent? When young a good man is apt to be deceived by evil-doers, because he has no pattern of evil in himself; and therefore the judge should be of a certain age; his youth should have been innocent, and he should have acquired insight into evil not by the practice of it, but by the observation of it in others. This is the ideal of a judge; the criminal turned detective is wonderfully suspicious, but when in company with good men who have experience, he is at fault, for he foolishly imagines that every one is as bad as himself. Vice may be known of virtue, but cannot know virtue. This is the sort of medicine and this the sort of law which will prevail in our State; they will be healing arts to better natures; but the evil body will be left to die by the one, and the evil soul will be put to death by the other. And the need of either will be greatly diminished by good music

which will give harmony to the soul, and good gymnastic which will give health to the body. Not that this division of music and gymnastic really corresponds to soul and body; for they are both equally concerned with the soul, which is tamed by the one and aroused and sustained by the other. The two together supply our guardians with their twofold nature. The passionate disposition when it has too much gymnastic is hardened and brutalized, the gentle or philosophic temper which has too much music becomes enervated. While a man is allowing music to pour like water through the funnel of his ears, the edge of his soul gradually wears away, and the passionate or spirited element is melted out of him. Too little spirit is easily exhausted; too much quickly passes into nervous irritability. So, again, the athlete by feeding and training has his courage doubled, but he soon grows stupid; he is like a wild beast, ready to do everything by blows and nothing by counsel or policy. There are two principles in man, reason and passion, and to these, not to the soul and body, the two arts of music and gymnastic correspond. He who mingles them in harmonious concord is the true musician, – he shall be the presiding genius of our State.

The next question is, Who are to be our rulers? First, the elder must rule the younger; and the best of the elders will be the best guardians. Now they will be the best who love their subjects most, and think that they have a common interest with them in the welfare of the state. These we must select; but they must be watched at every epoch of life to see whether they have retained

the same opinions and held out against force and enchantment. For time and persuasion and the love of pleasure may enchant a man into a change of purpose, and the force of grief and pain may compel him. And therefore our guardians must be men who have been tried by many tests, like gold in the refiner's fire, and have been passed first through danger, then through pleasure, and at every age have come out of such trials victorious and without stain, in full command of themselves and their principles; having all their faculties in harmonious exercise for their country's good. These shall receive the highest honours both in life and death. (It would perhaps be better to confine the term 'guardians' to this select class: the younger men may be called 'auxiliaries.')

And now for one magnificent lie, in the belief of which, Oh that we could train our rulers! – at any rate let us make the attempt with the rest of the world. What I am going to tell is only another version of the legend of Cadmus; but our unbelieving generation will be slow to accept such a story. The tale must be imparted, first to the rulers, then to the soldiers, lastly to the people. We will inform them that their youth was a dream, and that during the time when they seemed to be undergoing their education they were really being fashioned in the earth, who sent them up when they were ready; and that they must protect and cherish her whose children they are, and regard each other as brothers and sisters. 'I do not wonder at your being ashamed to propound such a fiction.' There is more behind. These brothers and sisters have different natures, and some of them God framed

to rule, whom he fashioned of gold; others he made of silver, to be auxiliaries; others again to be husbandmen and craftsmen, and these were formed by him of brass and iron. But as they are all sprung from a common stock, a golden parent may have a silver son, or a silver parent a golden son, and then there must be a change of rank; the son of the rich must descend, and the child of the artisan rise, in the social scale; for an oracle says 'that the State will come to an end if governed by a man of brass or iron.' Will our citizens ever believe all this? 'Not in the present generation, but in the next, perhaps, Yes.'

Now let the earthborn men go forth under the command of their rulers, and look about and pitch their camp in a high place, which will be safe against enemies from without, and likewise against insurrections from within. There let them sacrifice and set up their tents; for soldiers they are to be and not shopkeepers, the watchdogs and guardians of the sheep; and luxury and avarice will turn them into wolves and tyrants. Their habits and their dwellings should correspond to their education. They should have no property; their pay should only meet their expenses; and they should have common meals. Gold and silver we will tell them that they have from God, and this divine gift in their souls they must not alloy with that earthly dross which passes under the name of gold. They only of the citizens may not touch it, or be under the same roof with it, or drink from it; it is the accursed thing. Should they ever acquire houses or lands or money of their own, they will become householders and tradesmen instead of guardians,

enemies and tyrants instead of helpers, and the hour of ruin, both to themselves and the rest of the State, will be at hand.

The religious and ethical aspect of Plato's education will hereafter be considered under a separate head. Some lesser points may be more conveniently noticed in this place.

1. The constant appeal to the authority of Homer, whom, with grave irony, Plato, after the manner of his age, summons as a witness about ethics and psychology, as well as about diet and medicine; attempting to distinguish the better lesson from the worse, sometimes altering the text from design; more than once quoting or alluding to Homer inaccurately, after the manner of the early logographers turning the Iliad into prose, and delighting to draw far-fetched inferences from his words, or to make ludicrous applications of them. He does not, like Heracleitus, get into a rage with Homer and Archilochus (Heracl.), but uses their words and expressions as vehicles of a higher truth; not on a system like Theagenes of Rhegium or Metrodorus, or in later times the Stoics, but as fancy may dictate. And the conclusions drawn from them are sound, although the premises are fictitious. These fanciful appeals to Homer add a charm to Plato's style, and at the same time they have the effect of a satire on the follies of Homeric interpretation. To us (and probably to himself), although they take the form of arguments, they are really figures of speech. They may be compared with modern citations from Scripture, which have often a great rhetorical power even when the original meaning of the words is entirely

lost sight of. The real, like the Platonic Socrates, as we gather from the Memorabilia of Xenophon, was fond of making similar adaptations. Great in all ages and countries, in religion as well as in law and literature, has been the art of interpretation.

2. 'The style is to conform to the subject and the metre to the style.' Notwithstanding the fascination which the word 'classical' exercises over us, we can hardly maintain that this rule is observed in all the Greek poetry which has come down to us. We cannot deny that the thought often exceeds the power of lucid expression in Aeschylus and Pindar; or that rhetoric gets the better of the thought in the Sophist-poet Euripides. Only perhaps in Sophocles is there a perfect harmony of the two; in him alone do we find a grace of language like the beauty of a Greek statue, in which there is nothing to add or to take away; at least this is true of single plays or of large portions of them. The connection in the Tragic Choruses and in the Greek lyric poets is not unfrequently a tangled thread which in an age before logic the poet was unable to draw out. Many thoughts and feelings mingled in his mind, and he had no power of disengaging or arranging them. For there is a subtle influence of logic which requires to be transferred from prose to poetry, just as the music and perfection of language are infused by poetry into prose. In all ages the poet has been a bad judge of his own meaning (Apol.); for he does not see that the word which is full of associations to his own mind is difficult and unmeaning to that of another; or that the sequence which is clear to himself is puzzling to

others. There are many passages in some of our greatest modern poets which are far too obscure; in which there is no proportion between style and subject, in which any half-expressed figure, any harsh construction, any distorted collocation of words, any remote sequence of ideas is admitted; and there is no voice 'coming sweetly from nature,' or music adding the expression of feeling to thought. As if there could be poetry without beauty, or beauty without ease and clearness. The obscurities of early Greek poets arose necessarily out of the state of language and logic which existed in their age. They are not examples to be followed by us; for the use of language ought in every generation to become clearer and clearer. Like Shakespere, they were great in spite, not in consequence, of their imperfections of expression. But there is no reason for returning to the necessary obscurity which prevailed in the infancy of literature. The English poets of the last century were certainly not obscure; and we have no excuse for losing what they had gained, or for going back to the earlier or transitional age which preceded them. The thought of our own times has not out-stripped language; a want of Plato's 'art of measuring' is the rule cause of the disproportion between them.

3. In the third book of the Republic a nearer approach is made to a theory of art than anywhere else in Plato. His views may be summed up as follows: – True art is not fanciful and imitative, but simple and ideal, – the expression of the highest moral energy, whether in action or repose. To live among works of plastic art

which are of this noble and simple character, or to listen to such strains, is the best of influences, – the true Greek atmosphere, in which youth should be brought up. That is the way to create in them a natural good taste, which will have a feeling of truth and beauty in all things. For though the poets are to be expelled, still art is recognized as another aspect of reason – like love in the Symposium, extending over the same sphere, but confined to the preliminary education, and acting through the power of habit; and this conception of art is not limited to strains of music or the forms of plastic art, but pervades all nature and has a wide kindred in the world. The Republic of Plato, like the Athens of Pericles, has an artistic as well as a political side.

There is hardly any mention in Plato of the creative arts; only in two or three passages does he even allude to them (Rep.; Soph.). He is not lost in rapture at the great works of Phidias, the Parthenon, the Propylea, the statues of Zeus or Athene. He would probably have regarded any abstract truth of number or figure as higher than the greatest of them. Yet it is hard to suppose that some influence, such as he hopes to inspire in youth, did not pass into his own mind from the works of art which he saw around him. We are living upon the fragments of them, and find in a few broken stones the standard of truth and beauty. But in Plato this feeling has no expression; he nowhere says that beauty is the object of art; he seems to deny that wisdom can take an external form (Phaedrus); he does not distinguish the fine from the mechanical arts. Whether or no, like some writers, he felt

more than he expressed, it is at any rate remarkable that the greatest perfection of the fine arts should coincide with an almost entire silence about them. In one very striking passage he tells us that a work of art, like the State, is a whole; and this conception of a whole and the love of the newly-born mathematical sciences may be regarded, if not as the inspiring, at any rate as the regulating principles of Greek art (Xen. Mem.; and Sophist).

4. Plato makes the true and subtle remark that the physician had better not be in robust health; and should have known what illness is in his own person. But the judge ought to have had no similar experience of evil; he is to be a good man who, having passed his youth in innocence, became acquainted late in life with the vices of others. And therefore, according to Plato, a judge should not be young, just as a young man according to Aristotle is not fit to be a hearer of moral philosophy. The bad, on the other hand, have a knowledge of vice, but no knowledge of virtue. It may be doubted, however, whether this train of reflection is well founded. In a remarkable passage of the Laws it is acknowledged that the evil may form a correct estimate of the good. The union of gentleness and courage in Book ii. at first seemed to be a paradox, yet was afterwards ascertained to be a truth. And Plato might also have found that the intuition of evil may be consistent with the abhorrence of it. There is a directness of aim in virtue which gives an insight into vice. And the knowledge of character is in some degree a natural sense independent of any special experience of good or evil.

5. One of the most remarkable conceptions of Plato, because un-Greek and also very different from anything which existed at all in his age of the world, is the transposition of ranks. In the Spartan state there had been enfranchisement of Helots and degradation of citizens under special circumstances. And in the ancient Greek aristocracies, merit was certainly recognized as one of the elements on which government was based. The founders of states were supposed to be their benefactors, who were raised by their great actions above the ordinary level of humanity; at a later period, the services of warriors and legislators were held to entitle them and their descendants to the privileges of citizenship and to the first rank in the state. And although the existence of an ideal aristocracy is slenderly proven from the remains of early Greek history, and we have a difficulty in ascribing such a character, however the idea may be defined, to any actual Hellenic state – or indeed to any state which has ever existed in the world – still the rule of the best was certainly the aspiration of philosophers, who probably accommodated a good deal their views of primitive history to their own notions of good government. Plato further insists on applying to the guardians of his state a series of tests by which all those who fell short of a fixed standard were either removed from the governing body, or not admitted to it; and this 'academic' discipline did to a certain extent prevail in Greek states, especially in Sparta. He also indicates that the system of caste, which existed in a great part of the ancient, and is by no means extinct in the modern

European world, should be set aside from time to time in favour of merit. He is aware how deeply the greater part of mankind resent any interference with the order of society, and therefore he proposes his novel idea in the form of what he himself calls a 'monstrous fiction.' (Compare the ceremony of preparation for the two 'great waves' in Book v.) Two principles are indicated by him: first, that there is a distinction of ranks dependent on circumstances prior to the individual: second, that this distinction is and ought to be broken through by personal qualities. He adapts mythology like the Homeric poems to the wants of the state, making 'the Phoenician tale' the vehicle of his ideas. Every Greek state had a myth respecting its own origin; the Platonic republic may also have a tale of earthborn men. The gravity and verisimilitude with which the tale is told, and the analogy of Greek tradition, are a sufficient verification of the 'monstrous falsehood.' Ancient poetry had spoken of a gold and silver and brass and iron age succeeding one another, but Plato supposes these differences in the natures of men to exist together in a single state. Mythology supplies a figure under which the lesson may be taught (as Protagoras says, 'the myth is more interesting'), and also enables Plato to touch lightly on new principles without going into details. In this passage he shadows forth a general truth, but he does not tell us by what steps the transposition of ranks is to be effected. Indeed throughout the Republic he allows the lower ranks to fade into the distance. We do not know whether they are to carry arms, and whether in the fifth book they

are or are not included in the communistic regulations respecting property and marriage. Nor is there any use in arguing strictly either from a few chance words, or from the silence of Plato, or in drawing inferences which were beyond his vision. Aristotle, in his criticism on the position of the lower classes, does not perceive that the poetical creation is 'like the air, invulnerable,' and cannot be penetrated by the shafts of his logic (Pol.).

6. Two paradoxes which strike the modern reader as in the highest degree fanciful and ideal, and which suggest to him many reflections, are to be found in the third book of the Republic: first, the great power of music, so much beyond any influence which is experienced by us in modern times, when the art or science has been far more developed, and has found the secret of harmony, as well as of melody; secondly, the indefinite and almost absolute control which the soul is supposed to exercise over the body.

In the first we suspect some degree of exaggeration, such as we may also observe among certain masters of the art, not unknown to us, at the present day. With this natural enthusiasm, which is felt by a few only, there seems to mingle in Plato a sort of Pythagorean reverence for numbers and numerical proportion to which Aristotle is a stranger. Intervals of sound and number are to him sacred things which have a law of their own, not dependent on the variations of sense. They rise above sense, and become a connecting link with the world of ideas. But it is evident that Plato is describing what to him appears to be

also a fact. The power of a simple and characteristic melody on the impressible mind of the Greek is more than we can easily appreciate. The effect of national airs may bear some comparison with it. And, besides all this, there is a confusion between the harmony of musical notes and the harmony of soul and body, which is so potently inspired by them.

The second paradox leads up to some curious and interesting questions – How far can the mind control the body? Is the relation between them one of mutual antagonism or of mutual harmony? Are they two or one, and is either of them the cause of the other? May we not at times drop the opposition between them, and the mode of describing them, which is so familiar to us, and yet hardly conveys any precise meaning, and try to view this composite creature, man, in a more simple manner? Must we not at any rate admit that there is in human nature a higher and a lower principle, divided by no distinct line, which at times break asunder and take up arms against one another? Or again, they are reconciled and move together, either unconsciously in the ordinary work of life, or consciously in the pursuit of some noble aim, to be attained not without an effort, and for which every thought and nerve are strained. And then the body becomes the good friend or ally, or servant or instrument of the mind. And the mind has often a wonderful and almost superhuman power of banishing disease and weakness and calling out a hidden strength. Reason and the desires, the intellect and the senses are brought into harmony and obedience so as to form

a single human being. They are ever parting, ever meeting; and the identity or diversity of their tendencies or operations is for the most part unnoticed by us. When the mind touches the body through the appetites, we acknowledge the responsibility of the one to the other. There is a tendency in us which says 'Drink.' There is another which says, 'Do not drink; it is not good for you.' And we all of us know which is the rightful superior. We are also responsible for our health, although into this sphere there enter some elements of necessity which may be beyond our control. Still even in the management of health, care and thought, continued over many years, may make us almost free agents, if we do not exact too much of ourselves, and if we acknowledge that all human freedom is limited by the laws of nature and of mind.

We are disappointed to find that Plato, in the general condemnation which he passes on the practice of medicine prevailing in his own day, depreciates the effects of diet. He would like to have diseases of a definite character and capable of receiving a definite treatment. He is afraid of invalidism interfering with the business of life. He does not recognize that time is the great healer both of mental and bodily disorders; and that remedies which are gradual and proceed little by little are safer than those which produce a sudden catastrophe. Neither does he see that there is no way in which the mind can more surely influence the body than by the control of eating and drinking; or any other action or occasion of human life on which

the higher freedom of the will can be more simple or truly asserted.

7. Lesser matters of style may be remarked.

(1) The affected ignorance of music, which is Plato's way of expressing that he is passing lightly over the subject.

(2) The tentative manner in which here, as in the second book, he proceeds with the construction of the State.

(3) The description of the State sometimes as a reality, and then again as a work of imagination only; these are the arts by which he sustains the reader's interest.

(4) Connecting links, or the preparation for the entire expulsion of the poets in Book X.

(5) The companion pictures of the lover of litigation and the valetudinarian, the satirical jest about the maxim of Phocylides, the manner in which the image of the gold and silver citizens is taken up into the subject, and the argument from the practice of Asclepius, should not escape notice.

BOOK IV. Adeimantus said: 'Suppose a person to argue, Socrates, that you make your citizens miserable, and this by their own free-will; they are the lords of the city, and yet instead of having, like other men, lands and houses and money of their own, they live as mercenaries and are always mounting guard.' You may add, I replied, that they receive no pay but only their food, and have no money to spend on a journey or a mistress. 'Well, and what answer do you give?' My answer is, that our guardians may or may not be the happiest of men, – I should

not be surprised to find in the long-run that they were, – but this is not the aim of our constitution, which was designed for the good of the whole and not of any one part. If I went to a sculptor and blamed him for having painted the eye, which is the noblest feature of the face, not purple but black, he would reply: 'The eye must be an eye, and you should look at the statue as a whole.' 'Now I can well imagine a fool's paradise, in which everybody is eating and drinking, clothed in purple and fine linen, and potters lie on sofas and have their wheel at hand, that they may work a little when they please; and cobblers and all the other classes of a State lose their distinctive character. And a State may get on without cobblers; but when the guardians degenerate into boon companions, then the ruin is complete. Remember that we are not talking of peasants keeping holiday, but of a State in which every man is expected to do his own work. The happiness resides not in this or that class, but in the State as a whole. I have another remark to make: – A middle condition is best for artisans; they should have money enough to buy tools, and not enough to be independent of business. And will not the same condition be best for our citizens? If they are poor, they will be mean; if rich, luxurious and lazy; and in neither case contented. 'But then how will our poor city be able to go to war against an enemy who has money?' There may be a difficulty in fighting against one enemy; against two there will be none. In the first place, the contest will be carried on by trained warriors against well-to-do citizens: and is not a regular athlete an easy match for two stout opponents at

least? Suppose also, that before engaging we send ambassadors to one of the two cities, saying, 'Silver and gold we have not; do you help us and take our share of the spoil;' – who would fight against the lean, wiry dogs, when they might join with them in preying upon the fatted sheep? 'But if many states join their resources, shall we not be in danger?' I am amused to hear you use the word 'state' of any but our own State. They are 'states,' but not 'a state' – many in one. For in every state there are two hostile nations, rich and poor, which you may set one against the other. But our State, while she remains true to her principles, will be in very deed the mightiest of Hellenic states.

To the size of the state there is no limit but the necessity of unity; it must be neither too large nor too small to be one. This is a matter of secondary importance, like the principle of transposition which was intimated in the parable of the earthborn men. The meaning there implied was that every man should do that for which he was fitted, and be at one with himself, and then the whole city would be united. But all these things are secondary, if education, which is the great matter, be duly regarded. When the wheel has once been set in motion, the speed is always increasing; and each generation improves upon the preceding, both in physical and moral qualities. The care of the governors should be directed to preserve music and gymnastic from innovation; alter the songs of a country, Damon says, and you will soon end by altering its laws. The change appears innocent at first, and begins in play; but the evil soon becomes

serious, working secretly upon the characters of individuals, then upon social and commercial relations, and lastly upon the institutions of a state; and there is ruin and confusion everywhere. But if education remains in the established form, there will be no danger. A restorative process will be always going on; the spirit of law and order will raise up what has fallen down. Nor will any regulations be needed for the lesser matters of life – rules of deportment or fashions of dress. Like invites like for good or for evil. Education will correct deficiencies and supply the power of self-government. Far be it from us to enter into the particulars of legislation; let the guardians take care of education, and education will take care of all other things.

But without education they may patch and mend as they please; they will make no progress, any more than a patient who thinks to cure himself by some favourite remedy and will not give up his luxurious mode of living. If you tell such persons that they must first alter their habits, then they grow angry; they are charming people. 'Charming, – nay, the very reverse.' Evidently these gentlemen are not in your good graces, nor the state which is like them. And such states there are which first ordain under penalty of death that no one shall alter the constitution, and then suffer themselves to be flattered into and out of anything; and he who indulges them and fawns upon them, is their leader and saviour. 'Yes, the men are as bad as the states.' But do you not admire their cleverness? 'Nay, some of them are stupid enough to believe what the people tell them.' And when all the world is

telling a man that he is six feet high, and he has no measure, how can he believe anything else? But don't get into a passion: to see our statesmen trying their nostrums, and fancying that they can cut off at a blow the Hydra-like rogueries of mankind, is as good as a play. Minute enactments are superfluous in good states, and are useless in bad ones.

And now what remains of the work of legislation? Nothing for us; but to Apollo the god of Delphi we leave the ordering of the greatest of all things – that is to say, religion. Only our ancestral deity sitting upon the centre and navel of the earth will be trusted by us if we have any sense, in an affair of such magnitude. No foreign god shall be supreme in our realms…

Here, as Socrates would say, let us 'reflect on' (Greek) what has preceded: thus far we have spoken not of the happiness of the citizens, but only of the well-being of the State. They may be the happiest of men, but our principal aim in founding the State was not to make them happy. They were to be guardians, not holiday-makers. In this pleasant manner is presented to us the famous question both of ancient and modern philosophy, touching the relation of duty to happiness, of right to utility.

First duty, then happiness, is the natural order of our moral ideas. The utilitarian principle is valuable as a corrective of error, and shows to us a side of ethics which is apt to be neglected. It may be admitted further that right and utility are co-extensive, and that he who makes the happiness of mankind his object has one of the highest and noblest motives of human action. But

utility is not the historical basis of morality; nor the aspect in which moral and religious ideas commonly occur to the mind. The greatest happiness of all is, as we believe, the far-off result of the divine government of the universe. The greatest happiness of the individual is certainly to be found in a life of virtue and goodness. But we seem to be more assured of a law of right than we can be of a divine purpose, that 'all mankind should be saved;' and we infer the one from the other. And the greatest happiness of the individual may be the reverse of the greatest happiness in the ordinary sense of the term, and may be realised in a life of pain, or in a voluntary death. Further, the word 'happiness' has several ambiguities; it may mean either pleasure or an ideal life, happiness subjective or objective, in this world or in another, of ourselves only or of our neighbours and of all men everywhere. By the modern founder of Utilitarianism the self-regarding and disinterested motives of action are included under the same term, although they are commonly opposed by us as benevolence and self-love. The word happiness has not the definiteness or the sacredness of 'truth' and 'right'; it does not equally appeal to our higher nature, and has not sunk into the conscience of mankind. It is associated too much with the comforts and conveniences of life; too little with 'the goods of the soul which we desire for their own sake.' In a great trial, or danger, or temptation, or in any great and heroic action, it is scarcely thought of. For these reasons 'the greatest happiness' principle is not the true foundation of ethics. But though not the first principle, it is the second, which is like

unto it, and is often of easier application. For the larger part of human actions are neither right nor wrong, except in so far as they tend to the happiness of mankind (Introd. to Gorgias and Philebus).

The same question reappears in politics, where the useful or expedient seems to claim a larger sphere and to have a greater authority. For concerning political measures, we chiefly ask: How will they affect the happiness of mankind? Yet here too we may observe that what we term expediency is merely the law of right limited by the conditions of human society. Right and truth are the highest aims of government as well as of individuals; and we ought not to lose sight of them because we cannot directly enforce them. They appeal to the better mind of nations; and sometimes they are too much for merely temporal interests to resist. They are the watchwords which all men use in matters of public policy, as well as in their private dealings; the peace of Europe may be said to depend upon them. In the most commercial and utilitarian states of society the power of ideas remains. And all the higher class of statesmen have in them something of that idealism which Pericles is said to have gathered from the teaching of Anaxagoras. They recognise that the true leader of men must be above the motives of ambition, and that national character is of greater value than material comfort and prosperity. And this is the order of thought in Plato; first, he expects his citizens to do their duty, and then under favourable circumstances, that is to say, in a well-ordered State,

their happiness is assured. That he was far from excluding the modern principle of utility in politics is sufficiently evident from other passages; in which 'the most beneficial is affirmed to be the most honourable', and also 'the most sacred'.

We may note

(1) The manner in which the objection of Adeimantus here, is designed to draw out and deepen the argument of Socrates.

(2) The conception of a whole as lying at the foundation both of politics and of art, in the latter supplying the only principle of criticism, which, under the various names of harmony, symmetry, measure, proportion, unity, the Greek seems to have applied to works of art.

(3) The requirement that the State should be limited in size, after the traditional model of a Greek state; as in the Politics of Aristotle, the fact that the cities of Hellas were small is converted into a principle.

(4) The humorous pictures of the lean dogs and the fatted sheep, of the light active boxer upsetting two stout gentlemen at least, of the 'charming' patients who are always making themselves worse; or again, the playful assumption that there is no State but our own; or the grave irony with which the statesman is excused who believes that he is six feet high because he is told so, and having nothing to measure with is to be pardoned for his ignorance – he is too amusing for us to be seriously angry with him.

(5) The light and superficial manner in which religion is

passed over when provision has been made for two great principles, – first, that religion shall be based on the highest conception of the gods, secondly, that the true national or Hellenic type shall be maintained…

Socrates proceeds: But where amid all this is justice? Son of Ariston, tell me where. Light a candle and search the city, and get your brother and the rest of our friends to help in seeking for her. 'That won't do,' replied Glaucon, 'you yourself promised to make the search and talked about the impiety of deserting justice.' Well, I said, I will lead the way, but do you follow. My notion is, that our State being perfect will contain all the four virtues – wisdom, courage, temperance, justice. If we eliminate the three first, the unknown remainder will be justice.

First then, of wisdom: the State which we have called into being will be wise because politic. And policy is one among many kinds of skill, – not the skill of the carpenter, or of the worker in metal, or of the husbandman, but the skill of him who advises about the interests of the whole State. Of such a kind is the skill of the guardians, who are a small class in number, far smaller than the blacksmiths; but in them is concentrated the wisdom of the State. And if this small ruling class have wisdom, then the whole State will be wise.

Our second virtue is courage, which we have no difficulty in finding in another class – that of soldiers. Courage may be defined as a sort of salvation – the never-failing salvation of the opinions which law and education have prescribed concerning

dangers. You know the way in which dyers first prepare the white ground and then lay on the dye of purple or of any other colour. Colours dyed in this way become fixed, and no soap or lye will ever wash them out. Now the ground is education, and the laws are the colours; and if the ground is properly laid, neither the soap of pleasure nor the lye of pain or fear will ever wash them out. This power which preserves right opinion about danger I would ask you to call 'courage,' adding the epithet 'political' or 'civilized' in order to distinguish it from mere animal courage and from a higher courage which may hereafter be discussed.

Two virtues remain; temperance and justice. More than the preceding virtues temperance suggests the idea of harmony. Some light is thrown upon the nature of this virtue by the popular description of a man as 'master of himself' – which has an absurd sound, because the master is also the servant. The expression really means that the better principle in a man masters the worse. There are in cities whole classes – women, slaves and the like – who correspond to the worse, and a few only to the better; and in our State the former class are held under control by the latter. Now to which of these classes does temperance belong? 'To both of them.' And our State if any will be the abode of temperance; and we were right in describing this virtue as a harmony which is diffused through the whole, making the dwellers in the city to be of one mind, and attuning the upper and middle and lower classes like the strings of an instrument, whether you suppose them to differ in wisdom, strength or wealth.

And now we are near the spot; let us draw in and surround the cover and watch with all our eyes, lest justice should slip away and escape. Tell me, if you see the thicket move first. 'Nay, I would have you lead.' Well then, offer up a prayer and follow. The way is dark and difficult; but we must push on. I begin to see a track. 'Good news.' Why, Glaucon, our dulness of scent is quite ludicrous! While we are straining our eyes into the distance, justice is tumbling out at our feet. We are as bad as people looking for a thing which they have in their hands. Have you forgotten our old principle of the division of labour, or of every man doing his own business, concerning which we spoke at the foundation of the State – what but this was justice? Is there any other virtue remaining which can compete with wisdom and temperance and courage in the scale of political virtue? For 'every one having his own' is the great object of government; and the great object of trade is that every man should do his own business. Not that there is much harm in a carpenter trying to be a cobbler, or a cobbler transforming himself into a carpenter; but great evil may arise from the cobbler leaving his last and turning into a guardian or legislator, or when a single individual is trainer, warrior, legislator, all in one. And this evil is injustice, or every man doing another's business. I do not say that as yet we are in a condition to arrive at a final conclusion. For the definition which we believe to hold good in states has still to be tested by the individual. Having read the large letters we will now come back to the small. From the two together a brilliant light may be

struck out…

Socrates proceeds to discover the nature of justice by a method of residues. Each of the first three virtues corresponds to one of the three parts of the soul and one of the three classes in the State, although the third, temperance, has more of the nature of a harmony than the first two. If there be a fourth virtue, that can only be sought for in the relation of the three parts in the soul or classes in the State to one another. It is obvious and simple, and for that very reason has not been found out. The modern logician will be inclined to object that ideas cannot be separated like chemical substances, but that they run into one another and may be only different aspects or names of the same thing, and such in this instance appears to be the case. For the definition here given of justice is verbally the same as one of the definitions of temperance given by Socrates in the Charmides, which however is only provisional, and is afterwards rejected. And so far from justice remaining over when the other virtues are eliminated, the justice and temperance of the Republic can with difficulty be distinguished. Temperance appears to be the virtue of a part only, and one of three, whereas justice is a universal virtue of the whole soul. Yet on the other hand temperance is also described as a sort of harmony, and in this respect is akin to justice. Justice seems to differ from temperance in degree rather than in kind; whereas temperance is the harmony of discordant elements, justice is the perfect order by which all natures and classes do their own business, the right man in the right place,

the division and co-operation of all the citizens. Justice, again, is a more abstract notion than the other virtues, and therefore, from Plato's point of view, the foundation of them, to which they are referred and which in idea precedes them. The proposal to omit temperance is a mere trick of style intended to avoid monotony.

There is a famous question discussed in one of the earlier Dialogues of Plato (Protagoras; Arist. Nic. Ethics), 'Whether the virtues are one or many?' This receives an answer which is to the effect that there are four cardinal virtues (now for the first time brought together in ethical philosophy), and one supreme over the rest, which is not like Aristotle's conception of universal justice, virtue relative to others, but the whole of virtue relative to the parts. To this universal conception of justice or order in the first education and in the moral nature of man, the still more universal conception of the good in the second education and in the sphere of speculative knowledge seems to succeed. Both might be equally described by the terms 'law,' 'order,' 'harmony;' but while the idea of good embraces 'all time and all existence,' the conception of justice is not extended beyond man.

…Socrates is now going to identify the individual and the State. But first he must prove that there are three parts of the individual soul. His argument is as follows: – Quantity makes no difference in quality. The word 'just,' whether applied to the individual or to the State, has the same meaning. And the term 'justice' implied that the same three principles in the State and in the individual were doing their own business. But are they

really three or one? The question is difficult, and one which can hardly be solved by the methods which we are now using; but the truer and longer way would take up too much of our time. 'The shorter will satisfy me.' Well then, you would admit that the qualities of states mean the qualities of the individuals who compose them? The Scythians and Thracians are passionate, our own race intellectual, and the Egyptians and Phoenicians covetous, because the individual members of each have such and such a character; the difficulty is to determine whether the several principles are one or three; whether, that is to say, we reason with one part of our nature, desire with another, are angry with another, or whether the whole soul comes into play in each sort of action. This enquiry, however, requires a very exact definition of terms. The same thing in the same relation cannot be affected in two opposite ways. But there is no impossibility in a man standing still, yet moving his arms, or in a top which is fixed on one spot going round upon its axis. There is no necessity to mention all the possible exceptions; let us provisionally assume that opposites cannot do or be or suffer opposites in the same relation. And to the class of opposites belong assent and dissent, desire and avoidance. And one form of desire is thirst and hunger: and here arises a new point – thirst is thirst of drink, hunger is hunger of food; not of warm drink or of a particular kind of food, with the single exception of course that the very fact of our desiring anything implies that it is good. When relative terms have no attributes, their correlatives have no

attributes; when they have attributes, their correlatives also have them. For example, the term 'greater' is simply relative to 'less,' and knowledge refers to a subject of knowledge. But on the other hand, a particular knowledge is of a particular subject. Again, every science has a distinct character, which is defined by an object; medicine, for example, is the science of health, although not to be confounded with health. Having cleared our ideas thus far, let us return to the original instance of thirst, which has a definite object – drink. Now the thirsty soul may feel two distinct impulses; the animal one saying 'Drink;' the rational one, which says 'Do not drink.' The two impulses are contradictory; and therefore we may assume that they spring from distinct principles in the soul. But is passion a third principle, or akin to desire? There is a story of a certain Leontius which throws some light on this question. He was coming up from the Piraeus outside the north wall, and he passed a spot where there were dead bodies lying by the executioner. He felt a longing desire to see them and also an abhorrence of them; at first he turned away and shut his eyes, then, suddenly tearing them open, he said, – 'Take your fill, ye wretches, of the fair sight.' Now is there not here a third principle which is often found to come to the assistance of reason against desire, but never of desire against reason? This is passion or spirit, of the separate existence of which we may further convince ourselves by putting the following case: – When a man suffers justly, if he be of a generous nature he is not indignant at the hardships which he undergoes: but when he

suffers unjustly, his indignation is his great support; hunger and thirst cannot tame him; the spirit within him must do or die, until the voice of the shepherd, that is, of reason, bidding his dog bark no more, is heard within. This shows that passion is the ally of reason. Is passion then the same with reason? No, for the former exists in children and brutes; and Homer affords a proof of the distinction between them when he says, 'He smote his breast, and thus rebuked his soul.'

And now, at last, we have reached firm ground, and are able to infer that the virtues of the State and of the individual are the same. For wisdom and courage and justice in the State are severally the wisdom and courage and justice in the individuals who form the State. Each of the three classes will do the work of its own class in the State, and each part in the individual soul; reason, the superior, and passion, the inferior, will be harmonized by the influence of music and gymnastic. The counsellor and the warrior, the head and the arm, will act together in the town of Mansoul, and keep the desires in proper subjection. The courage of the warrior is that quality which preserves a right opinion about dangers in spite of pleasures and pains. The wisdom of the counsellor is that small part of the soul which has authority and reason. The virtue of temperance is the friendship of the ruling and the subject principles, both in the State and in the individual. Of justice we have already spoken; and the notion already given of it may be confirmed by common instances. Will the just state or the just individual steal, lie, commit adultery,

or be guilty of impiety to gods and men? 'No.' And is not the reason of this that the several principles, whether in the state or in the individual, do their own business? And justice is the quality which makes just men and just states. Moreover, our old division of labour, which required that there should be one man for one use, was a dream or anticipation of what was to follow; and that dream has now been realized in justice, which begins by binding together the three chords of the soul, and then acts harmoniously in every relation of life. And injustice, which is the insubordination and disobedience of the inferior elements in the soul, is the opposite of justice, and is inharmonious and unnatural, being to the soul what disease is to the body; for in the soul as well as in the body, good or bad actions produce good or bad habits. And virtue is the health and beauty and well-being of the soul, and vice is the disease and weakness and deformity of the soul.

Again the old question returns upon us: Is justice or injustice the more profitable? The question has become ridiculous. For injustice, like mortal disease, makes life not worth having. Come up with me to the hill which overhangs the city and look down upon the single form of virtue, and the infinite forms of vice, among which are four special ones, characteristic both of states and of individuals. And the state which corresponds to the single form of virtue is that which we have been describing, wherein reason rules under one of two names – monarchy and aristocracy. Thus there are five forms in all, both of states and of souls…

In attempting to prove that the soul has three separate faculties, Plato takes occasion to discuss what makes difference of faculties. And the criterion which he proposes is difference in the working of the faculties. The same faculty cannot produce contradictory effects. But the path of early reasoners is beset by thorny entanglements, and he will not proceed a step without first clearing the ground. This leads him into a tiresome digression, which is intended to explain the nature of contradiction. First, the contradiction must be at the same time and in the same relation. Secondly, no extraneous word must be introduced into either of the terms in which the contradictory proposition is expressed: for example, thirst is of drink, not of warm drink. He implies, what he does not say, that if, by the advice of reason, or by the impulse of anger, a man is restrained from drinking, this proves that thirst, or desire under which thirst is included, is distinct from anger and reason. But suppose that we allow the term 'thirst' or 'desire' to be modified, and say an 'angry thirst,' or a 'revengeful desire,' then the two spheres of desire and anger overlap and become confused. This case therefore has to be excluded. And still there remains an exception to the rule in the use of the term 'good,' which is always implied in the object of desire. These are the discussions of an age before logic; and any one who is wearied by them should remember that they are necessary to the clearing up of ideas in the first development of the human faculties.

The psychology of Plato extends no further than the division of the soul into the rational, irascible, and concupiscent elements,

which, as far as we know, was first made by him, and has been retained by Aristotle and succeeding ethical writers. The chief difficulty in this early analysis of the mind is to define exactly the place of the irascible faculty (Greek), which may be variously described under the terms righteous indignation, spirit, passion. It is the foundation of courage, which includes in Plato moral courage, the courage of enduring pain, and of surmounting intellectual difficulties, as well as of meeting dangers in war. Though irrational, it inclines to side with the rational: it cannot be aroused by punishment when justly inflicted: it sometimes takes the form of an enthusiasm which sustains a man in the performance of great actions. It is the 'lion heart' with which the reason makes a treaty. On the other hand it is negative rather than positive; it is indignant at wrong or falsehood, but does not, like Love in the Symposium and Phaedrus, aspire to the vision of Truth or Good. It is the peremptory military spirit which prevails in the government of honour. It differs from anger (Greek), this latter term having no accessory notion of righteous indignation. Although Aristotle has retained the word, yet we may observe that 'passion' (Greek) has with him lost its affinity to the rational and has become indistinguishable from 'anger' (Greek). And to this vernacular use Plato himself in the Laws seems to revert, though not always. By modern philosophy too, as well as in our ordinary conversation, the words anger or passion are employed almost exclusively in a bad sense; there is no connotation of a just or reasonable cause by which they are aroused. The feeling

of 'righteous indignation' is too partial and accidental to admit of our regarding it as a separate virtue or habit. We are tempted also to doubt whether Plato is right in supposing that an offender, however justly condemned, could be expected to acknowledge the justice of his sentence; this is the spirit of a philosopher or martyr rather than of a criminal.

We may observe how nearly Plato approaches Aristotle's famous thesis, that 'good actions produce good habits.' The words 'as healthy practices (Greek) produce health, so do just practices produce justice,' have a sound very like the Nicomachean Ethics. But we note also that an incidental remark in Plato has become a far-reaching principle in Aristotle, and an inseparable part of a great Ethical system.

There is a difficulty in understanding what Plato meant by 'the longer way': he seems to intimate some metaphysic of the future which will not be satisfied with arguing from the principle of contradiction. In the sixth and seventh books (compare Sophist and Parmenides) he has given us a sketch of such a metaphysic; but when Glaucon asks for the final revelation of the idea of good, he is put off with the declaration that he has not yet studied the preliminary sciences. How he would have filled up the sketch, or argued about such questions from a higher point of view, we can only conjecture. Perhaps he hoped to find some a priori method of developing the parts out of the whole; or he might have asked which of the ideas contains the other ideas, and possibly have stumbled on the Hegelian

identity of the 'ego' and the 'universal.' Or he may have imagined that ideas might be constructed in some manner analogous to the construction of figures and numbers in the mathematical sciences. The most certain and necessary truth was to Plato the universal; and to this he was always seeking to refer all knowledge or opinion, just as in modern times we seek to rest them on the opposite pole of induction and experience. The aspirations of metaphysicians have always tended to pass beyond the limits of human thought and language: they seem to have reached a height at which they are 'moving about in worlds unrealized,' and their conceptions, although profoundly affecting their own minds, become invisible or unintelligible to others. We are not therefore surprized to find that Plato himself has nowhere clearly explained his doctrine of ideas; or that his school in a later generation, like his contemporaries Glaucon and Adeimantus, were unable to follow him in this region of speculation. In the Sophist, where he is refuting the scepticism which maintained either that there was no such thing as predication, or that all might be predicated of all, he arrives at the conclusion that some ideas combine with some, but not all with all. But he makes only one or two steps forward on this path; he nowhere attains to any connected system of ideas, or even to a knowledge of the most elementary relations of the sciences to one another.

BOOK V. I was going to enumerate the four forms of vice or decline in states, when Polemarchus – he was sitting a little farther from me than Adeimantus – taking him by the coat and

leaning towards him, said something in an undertone, of which I only caught the words, 'Shall we let him off?' 'Certainly not,' said Adeimantus, raising his voice. Whom, I said, are you not going to let off? 'You,' he said. Why? 'Because we think that you are not dealing fairly with us in omitting women and children, of whom you have slily disposed under the general formula that friends have all things in common.' And was I not right? 'Yes,' he replied, 'but there are many sorts of communism or community, and we want to know which of them is right. The company, as you have just heard, are resolved to have a further explanation.' Thrasymachus said, 'Do you think that we have come hither to dig for gold, or to hear you discourse?' Yes, I said; but the discourse should be of a reasonable length. Glaucon added, 'Yes, Socrates, and there is reason in spending the whole of life in such discussions; but pray, without more ado, tell us how this community is to be carried out, and how the interval between birth and education is to be filled up.' Well, I said, the subject has several difficulties – What is possible? is the first question. What is desirable? is the second. 'Fear not,' he replied, 'for you are speaking among friends.' That, I replied, is a sorry consolation; I shall destroy my friends as well as myself. Not that I mind a little innocent laughter; but he who kills the truth is a murderer. 'Then,' said Glaucon, laughing, 'in case you should murder us we will acquit you beforehand, and you shall be held free from the guilt of deceiving us.'

Socrates proceeds: – The guardians of our state are to be

watch-dogs, as we have already said. Now dogs are not divided into hes and shes – we do not take the masculine gender out to hunt and leave the females at home to look after their puppies. They have the same employments – the only difference between them is that the one sex is stronger and the other weaker. But if women are to have the same employments as men, they must have the same education – they must be taught music and gymnastics, and the art of war. I know that a great joke will be made of their riding on horseback and carrying weapons; the sight of the naked old wrinkled women showing their agility in the palaestra will certainly not be a vision of beauty, and may be expected to become a famous jest. But we must not mind the wits; there was a time when they might have laughed at our present gymnastics. All is habit: people have at last found out that the exposure is better than the concealment of the person, and now they laugh no more. Evil only should be the subject of ridicule.

The first question is, whether women are able either wholly or partially to share in the employments of men. And here we may be charged with inconsistency in making the proposal at all. For we started originally with the division of labour; and the diversity of employments was based on the difference of natures. But is there no difference between men and women? Nay, are they not wholly different? THERE was the difficulty, Glaucon, which made me unwilling to speak of family relations. However, when a man is out of his depth, whether in a pool or in an ocean,

he can only swim for his life; and we must try to find a way of escape, if we can.

The argument is, that different natures have different uses, and the natures of men and women are said to differ. But this is only a verbal opposition. We do not consider that the difference may be purely nominal and accidental; for example, a bald man and a hairy man are opposed in a single point of view, but you cannot infer that because a bald man is a cobbler a hairy man ought not to be a cobbler. Now why is such an inference erroneous? Simply because the opposition between them is partial only, like the difference between a male physician and a female physician, not running through the whole nature, like the difference between a physician and a carpenter. And if the difference of the sexes is only that the one beget and the other bear children, this does not prove that they ought to have distinct educations. Admitting that women differ from men in capacity, do not men equally differ from one another? Has not nature scattered all the qualities which our citizens require indifferently up and down among the two sexes? and even in their peculiar pursuits, are not women often, though in some cases superior to men, ridiculously enough surpassed by them? Women are the same in kind as men, and have the same aptitude or want of aptitude for medicine or gymnastic or war, but in a less degree. One woman will be a good guardian, another not; and the good must be chosen to be the colleagues of our guardians. If however their natures are the same, the inference is that their education must also be the same;

there is no longer anything unnatural or impossible in a woman learning music and gymnastic. And the education which we give them will be the very best, far superior to that of cobblers, and will train up the very best women, and nothing can be more advantageous to the State than this. Therefore let them strip, clothed in their chastity, and share in the toils of war and in the defence of their country; he who laughs at them is a fool for his pains.

The first wave is past, and the argument is compelled to admit that men and women have common duties and pursuits. A second and greater wave is rolling in – community of wives and children; is this either expedient or possible? The expediency I do not doubt; I am not so sure of the possibility. 'Nay, I think that a considerable doubt will be entertained on both points.' I meant to have escaped the trouble of proving the first, but as you have detected the little stratagem I must even submit. Only allow me to feed my fancy like the solitary in his walks, with a dream of what might be, and then I will return to the question of what can be.

In the first place our rulers will enforce the laws and make new ones where they are wanted, and their allies or ministers will obey. You, as legislator, have already selected the men; and now you shall select the women. After the selection has been made, they will dwell in common houses and have their meals in common, and will be brought together by a necessity more certain than that of mathematics. But they cannot be allowed to live in licentiousness; that is an unholy thing, which the rulers are

determined to prevent. For the avoidance of this, holy marriage festivals will be instituted, and their holiness will be in proportion to their usefulness. And here, Glaucon, I should like to ask (as I know that you are a breeder of birds and animals), Do you not take the greatest care in the mating? 'Certainly.' And there is no reason to suppose that less care is required in the marriage of human beings. But then our rulers must be skilful physicians of the State, for they will often need a strong dose of falsehood in order to bring about desirable unions between their subjects. The good must be paired with the good, and the bad with the bad, and the offspring of the one must be reared, and of the other destroyed; in this way the flock will be preserved in prime condition. Hymeneal festivals will be celebrated at times fixed with an eye to population, and the brides and bridegrooms will meet at them; and by an ingenious system of lots the rulers will contrive that the brave and the fair come together, and that those of inferior breed are paired with inferiors – the latter will ascribe to chance what is really the invention of the rulers. And when children are born, the offspring of the brave and fair will be carried to an enclosure in a certain part of the city, and there attended by suitable nurses; the rest will be hurried away to places unknown. The mothers will be brought to the fold and will suckle the children; care however must be taken that none of them recognise their own offspring; and if necessary other nurses may also be hired. The trouble of watching and getting up at night will be transferred to attendants. 'Then the wives of our guardians

will have a fine easy time when they are having children.' And quite right too, I said, that they should.

The parents ought to be in the prime of life, which for a man may be reckoned at thirty years – from twenty-five, when he has 'passed the point at which the speed of life is greatest,' to fifty-five; and at twenty years for a woman – from twenty to forty. Any one above or below those ages who partakes in the hymeneals shall be guilty of impiety; also every one who forms a marriage connexion at other times without the consent of the rulers. This latter regulation applies to those who are within the specified ages, after which they may range at will, provided they avoid the prohibited degrees of parents and children, or of brothers and sisters, which last, however, are not absolutely prohibited, if a dispensation be procured. 'But how shall we know the degrees of affinity, when all things are common?' The answer is, that brothers and sisters are all such as are born seven or nine months after the espousals, and their parents those who are then espoused, and every one will have many children and every child many parents.

Socrates proceeds: I have now to prove that this scheme is advantageous and also consistent with our entire polity. The greatest good of a State is unity; the greatest evil, discord and distraction. And there will be unity where there are no private pleasures or pains or interests – where if one member suffers all the members suffer, if one citizen is touched all are quickly sensitive; and the least hurt to the little finger of the State runs

through the whole body and vibrates to the soul. For the true State, like an individual, is injured as a whole when any part is affected. Every State has subjects and rulers, who in a democracy are called rulers, and in other States masters: but in our State they are called saviours and allies; and the subjects who in other States are termed slaves, are by us termed nurturers and paymasters, and those who are termed comrades and colleagues in other places, are by us called fathers and brothers. And whereas in other States members of the same government regard one of their colleagues as a friend and another as an enemy, in our State no man is a stranger to another; for every citizen is connected with every other by ties of blood, and these names and this way of speaking will have a corresponding reality – brother, father, sister, mother, repeated from infancy in the ears of children, will not be mere words. Then again the citizens will have all things in common, in having common property they will have common pleasures and pains.

Can there be strife and contention among those who are of one mind; or lawsuits about property when men have nothing but their bodies which they call their own; or suits about violence when every one is bound to defend himself? The permission to strike when insulted will be an 'antidote' to the knife and will prevent disturbances in the State. But no younger man will strike an elder; reverence will prevent him from laying hands on his kindred, and he will fear that the rest of the family may retaliate. Moreover, our citizens will be rid of the lesser evils of life; there

will be no flattery of the rich, no sordid household cares, no borrowing and not paying. Compared with the citizens of other States, ours will be Olympic victors, and crowned with blessings greater still – they and their children having a better maintenance during life, and after death an honourable burial. Nor has the happiness of the individual been sacrificed to the happiness of the State; our Olympic victor has not been turned into a cobbler, but he has a happiness beyond that of any cobbler. At the same time, if any conceited youth begins to dream of appropriating the State to himself, he must be reminded that 'half is better than the whole.' 'I should certainly advise him to stay where he is when he has the promise of such a brave life.'

But is such a community possible? – as among the animals, so also among men; and if possible, in what way possible? About war there is no difficulty; the principle of communism is adapted to military service. Parents will take their children to look on at a battle, just as potters' boys are trained to the business by looking on at the wheel. And to the parents themselves, as to other animals, the sight of their young ones will prove a great incentive to bravery. Young warriors must learn, but they must not run into danger, although a certain degree of risk is worth incurring when the benefit is great. The young creatures should be placed under the care of experienced veterans, and they should have wings – that is to say, swift and tractable steeds on which they may fly away and escape. One of the first things to be done is to teach a youth to ride.

Cowards and deserters shall be degraded to the class of husbandmen; gentlemen who allow themselves to be taken prisoners, may be presented to the enemy. But what shall be done to the hero? First of all he shall be crowned by all the youths in the army; secondly, he shall receive the right hand of fellowship; and thirdly, do you think that there is any harm in his being kissed? We have already determined that he shall have more wives than others, in order that he may have as many children as possible. And at a feast he shall have more to eat; we have the authority of Homer for honouring brave men with 'long chines,' which is an appropriate compliment, because meat is a very strengthening thing. Fill the bowl then, and give the best seats and meats to the brave – may they do them good! And he who dies in battle will be at once declared to be of the golden race, and will, as we believe, become one of Hesiod's guardian angels. He shall be worshipped after death in the manner prescribed by the oracle; and not only he, but all other benefactors of the State who die in any other way, shall be admitted to the same honours.

The next question is, How shall we treat our enemies? Shall Hellenes be enslaved? No; for there is too great a risk of the whole race passing under the yoke of the barbarians. Or shall the dead be despoiled? Certainly not; for that sort of thing is an excuse for skulking, and has been the ruin of many an army. There is meanness and feminine malice in making an enemy of the dead body, when the soul which was the owner has fled – like a dog who cannot reach his assailants, and quarrels with

the stones which are thrown at him instead. Again, the arms of Hellenes should not be offered up in the temples of the Gods; they are a pollution, for they are taken from brethren. And on similar grounds there should be a limit to the devastation of Hellenic territory – the houses should not be burnt, nor more than the annual produce carried off. For war is of two kinds, civil and foreign; the first of which is properly termed 'discord,' and only the second 'war;' and war between Hellenes is in reality civil war – a quarrel in a family, which is ever to be regarded as unpatriotic and unnatural, and ought to be prosecuted with a view to reconciliation in a true phil-Hellenic spirit, as of those who would chasten but not utterly enslave. The war is not against a whole nation who are a friendly multitude of men, women, and children, but only against a few guilty persons; when they are punished peace will be restored. That is the way in which Hellenes should war against one another – and against barbarians, as they war against one another now.

'But, my dear Socrates, you are forgetting the main question: Is such a State possible? I grant all and more than you say about the blessedness of being one family – fathers, brothers, mothers, daughters, going out to war together; but I want to ascertain the possibility of this ideal State.' You are too unmerciful. The first wave and the second wave I have hardly escaped, and now you will certainly drown me with the third. When you see the towering crest of the wave, I expect you to take pity. 'Not a whit.'

Well, then, we were led to form our ideal polity in the search

after justice, and the just man answered to the just State. Is this ideal at all the worse for being impracticable? Would the picture of a perfectly beautiful man be any the worse because no such man ever lived? Can any reality come up to the idea? Nature will not allow words to be fully realized; but if I am to try and realize the ideal of the State in a measure, I think that an approach may be made to the perfection of which I dream by one or two, I do not say slight, but possible changes in the present constitution of States. I would reduce them to a single one – the great wave, as I call it. Until, then, kings are philosophers, or philosophers are kings, cities will never cease from ill: no, nor the human race; nor will our ideal polity ever come into being. I know that this is a hard saying, which few will be able to receive. 'Socrates, all the world will take off his coat and rush upon you with sticks and stones, and therefore I would advise you to prepare an answer.' You got me into the scrape, I said. 'And I was right,' he replied; 'however, I will stand by you as a sort of do-nothing, well-meaning ally.' Having the help of such a champion, I will do my best to maintain my position. And first, I must explain of whom I speak and what sort of natures these are who are to be philosophers and rulers. As you are a man of pleasure, you will not have forgotten how indiscriminate lovers are in their attachments; they love all, and turn blemishes into beauties. The snub-nosed youth is said to have a winning grace; the beak of another has a royal look; the featureless are faultless; the dark are manly, the fair angels; the sickly have a new term of

endearment invented expressly for them, which is 'honey-pale.' Lovers of wine and lovers of ambition also desire the objects of their affection in every form. Now here comes the point: – The philosopher too is a lover of knowledge in every form; he has an insatiable curiosity. 'But will curiosity make a philosopher? Are the lovers of sights and sounds, who let out their ears to every chorus at the Dionysiac festivals, to be called philosophers?' They are not true philosophers, but only an imitation. 'Then how are we to describe the true?'

You would acknowledge the existence of abstract ideas, such as justice, beauty, good, evil, which are severally one, yet in their various combinations appear to be many. Those who recognize these realities are philosophers; whereas the other class hear sounds and see colours, and understand their use in the arts, but cannot attain to the true or waking vision of absolute justice or beauty or truth; they have not the light of knowledge, but of opinion, and what they see is a dream only. Perhaps he of whom we say the last will be angry with us; can we pacify him without revealing the disorder of his mind? Suppose we say that, if he has knowledge we rejoice to hear it, but knowledge must be of something which is, as ignorance is of something which is not; and there is a third thing, which both is and is not, and is matter of opinion only. Opinion and knowledge, then, having distinct objects, must also be distinct faculties. And by faculties I mean powers unseen and distinguishable only by the difference in their objects, as opinion and knowledge differ, since the one is liable

to err, but the other is unerring and is the mightiest of all our faculties. If being is the object of knowledge, and not-being of ignorance, and these are the extremes, opinion must lie between them, and may be called darker than the one and brighter than the other. This intermediate or contingent matter is and is not at the same time, and partakes both of existence and of non-existence. Now I would ask my good friend, who denies abstract beauty and justice, and affirms a many beautiful and a many just, whether everything he sees is not in some point of view different – the beautiful ugly, the pious impious, the just unjust? Is not the double also the half, and are not heavy and light relative terms which pass into one another? Everything is and is not, as in the old riddle – 'A man and not a man shot and did not shoot a bird and not a bird with a stone and not a stone.' The mind cannot be fixed on either alternative; and these ambiguous, intermediate, erring, half-lighted objects, which have a disorderly movement in the region between being and not-being, are the proper matter of opinion, as the immutable objects are the proper matter of knowledge. And he who grovels in the world of sense, and has only this uncertain perception of things, is not a philosopher, but a lover of opinion only…

The fifth book is the new beginning of the Republic, in which the community of property and of family are first maintained, and the transition is made to the kingdom of philosophers. For both of these Plato, after his manner, has been preparing in some chance words of Book IV, which fall unperceived on the reader's

mind, as they are supposed at first to have fallen on the ear of Glaucon and Adeimantus. The 'paradoxes,' as Morgenstern terms them, of this book of the Republic will be reserved for another place; a few remarks on the style, and some explanations of difficulties, may be briefly added.

First, there is the image of the waves, which serves for a sort of scheme or plan of the book. The first wave, the second wave, the third and greatest wave come rolling in, and we hear the roar of them. All that can be said of the extravagance of Plato's proposals is anticipated by himself. Nothing is more admirable than the hesitation with which he proposes the solemn text, 'Until kings are philosophers,' etc.; or the reaction from the sublime to the ridiculous, when Glaucon describes the manner in which the new truth will be received by mankind.

Some defects and difficulties may be noted in the execution of the communistic plan. Nothing is told us of the application of communism to the lower classes; nor is the table of prohibited degrees capable of being made out. It is quite possible that a child born at one hymeneal festival may marry one of its own brothers or sisters, or even one of its parents, at another. Plato is afraid of incestuous unions, but at the same time he does not wish to bring before us the fact that the city would be divided into families of those born seven and nine months after each hymeneal festival. If it were worth while to argue seriously about such fancies, we might remark that while all the old affinities are abolished, the newly prohibited affinity rests not on any natural or rational

principle, but only upon the accident of children having been born in the same month and year. Nor does he explain how the lots could be so manipulated by the legislature as to bring together the fairest and best. The singular expression which is employed to describe the age of five-and-twenty may perhaps be taken from some poet.

In the delineation of the philosopher, the illustrations of the nature of philosophy derived from love are more suited to the apprehension of Glaucon, the Athenian man of pleasure, than to modern tastes or feelings. They are partly facetious, but also contain a germ of truth. That science is a whole, remains a true principle of inductive as well as of metaphysical philosophy; and the love of universal knowledge is still the characteristic of the philosopher in modern as well as in ancient times.

At the end of the fifth book Plato introduces the figment of contingent matter, which has exercised so great an influence both on the Ethics and Theology of the modern world, and which occurs here for the first time in the history of philosophy. He did not remark that the degrees of knowledge in the subject have nothing corresponding to them in the object. With him a word must answer to an idea; and he could not conceive of an opinion which was an opinion about nothing. The influence of analogy led him to invent 'parallels and conjugates' and to overlook facts. To us some of his difficulties are puzzling only from their simplicity: we do not perceive that the answer to them 'is tumbling out at our feet.' To the mind of early

thinkers, the conception of not-being was dark and mysterious; they did not see that this terrible apparition which threatened destruction to all knowledge was only a logical determination. The common term under which, through the accidental use of language, two entirely different ideas were included was another source of confusion. Thus through the ambiguity of (Greek) Plato, attempting to introduce order into the first chaos of human thought, seems to have confused perception and opinion, and to have failed to distinguish the contingent from the relative. In the Theaetetus the first of these difficulties begins to clear up; in the Sophist the second; and for this, as well as for other reasons, both these dialogues are probably to be regarded as later than the Republic.

BOOK VI. Having determined that the many have no knowledge of true being, and have no clear patterns in their minds of justice, beauty, truth, and that philosophers have such patterns, we have now to ask whether they or the many shall be rulers in our State. But who can doubt that philosophers should be chosen, if they have the other qualities which are required in a ruler? For they are lovers of the knowledge of the eternal and of all truth; they are haters of falsehood; their meaner desires are absorbed in the interests of knowledge; they are spectators of all time and all existence; and in the magnificence of their contemplation the life of man is as nothing to them, nor is death fearful. Also they are of a social, gracious disposition, equally free from cowardice and arrogance. They learn and remember

easily; they have harmonious, well-regulated minds; truth flows to them sweetly by nature. Can the god of Jealousy himself find any fault with such an assemblage of good qualities?

Here Adeimantus interposes: – 'No man can answer you, Socrates; but every man feels that this is owing to his own deficiency in argument. He is driven from one position to another, until he has nothing more to say, just as an unskilful player at draughts is reduced to his last move by a more skilled opponent. And yet all the time he may be right. He may know, in this very instance, that those who make philosophy the business of their lives, generally turn out rogues if they are bad men, and fools if they are good. What do you say?' I should say that he is quite right. 'Then how is such an admission reconcileable with the doctrine that philosophers should be kings?'

I shall answer you in a parable which will also let you see how poor a hand I am at the invention of allegories. The relation of good men to their governments is so peculiar, that in order to defend them I must take an illustration from the world of fiction. Conceive the captain of a ship, taller by a head and shoulders than any of the crew, yet a little deaf, a little blind, and rather ignorant of the seaman's art. The sailors want to steer, although they know nothing of the art; and they have a theory that it cannot be learned. If the helm is refused them, they drug the captain's posset, bind him hand and foot, and take possession of the ship. He who joins in the mutiny is termed a good pilot and what not; they have no conception that the true pilot must observe the

winds and the stars, and must be their master, whether they like it or not; – such an one would be called by them fool, prater, star-gazer. This is my parable; which I will beg you to interpret for me to those gentlemen who ask why the philosopher has such an evil name, and to explain to them that not he, but those who will not use him, are to blame for his uselessness. The philosopher should not beg of mankind to be put in authority over them. The wise man should not seek the rich, as the proverb bids, but every man, whether rich or poor, must knock at the door of the physician when he has need of him. Now the pilot is the philosopher – he whom in the parable they call star-gazer, and the mutinous sailors are the mob of politicians by whom he is rendered useless. Not that these are the worst enemies of philosophy, who is far more dishonoured by her own professing sons when they are corrupted by the world. Need I recall the original image of the philosopher? Did we not say of him just now, that he loved truth and hated falsehood, and that he could not rest in the multiplicity of phenomena, but was led by a sympathy in his own nature to the contemplation of the absolute? All the virtues as well as truth, who is the leader of them, took up their abode in his soul. But as you were observing, if we turn aside to view the reality, we see that the persons who were thus described, with the exception of a small and useless class, are utter rogues.

The point which has to be considered, is the origin of this corruption in nature. Every one will admit that the philosopher, in our description of him, is a rare being. But what numberless

causes tend to destroy these rare beings! There is no good thing which may not be a cause of evil – health, wealth, strength, rank, and the virtues themselves, when placed under unfavourable circumstances. For as in the animal or vegetable world the strongest seeds most need the accompaniment of good air and soil, so the best of human characters turn out the worst when they fall upon an unsuitable soil; whereas weak natures hardly ever do any considerable good or harm; they are not the stuff out of which either great criminals or great heroes are made. The philosopher follows the same analogy: he is either the best or the worst of all men. Some persons say that the Sophists are the corrupters of youth; but is not public opinion the real Sophist who is everywhere present – in those very persons, in the assembly, in the courts, in the camp, in the applauses and hisses of the theatre re-echoed by the surrounding hills? Will not a young man's heart leap amid these discordant sounds? and will any education save him from being carried away by the torrent? Nor is this all. For if he will not yield to opinion, there follows the gentle compulsion of exile or death. What principle of rival Sophists or anybody else can overcome in such an unequal contest? Characters there may be more than human, who are exceptions – God may save a man, but not his own strength. Further, I would have you consider that the hireling Sophist only gives back to the world their own opinions; he is the keeper of the monster, who knows how to flatter or anger him, and observes the meaning of his inarticulate grunts. Good is what pleases him,

evil what he dislikes; truth and beauty are determined only by the taste of the brute. Such is the Sophist's wisdom, and such is the condition of those who make public opinion the test of truth, whether in art or in morals. The curse is laid upon them of being and doing what it approves, and when they attempt first principles the failure is ludicrous. Think of all this and ask yourself whether the world is more likely to be a believer in the unity of the idea, or in the multiplicity of phenomena. And the world if not a believer in the idea cannot be a philosopher, and must therefore be a persecutor of philosophers. There is another evil: – the world does not like to lose the gifted nature, and so they flatter the young (Alcibiades) into a magnificent opinion of his own capacity; the tall, proper youth begins to expand, and is dreaming of kingdoms and empires. If at this instant a friend whispers to him, 'Now the gods lighten thee; thou art a great fool' and must be educated – do you think that he will listen? Or suppose a better sort of man who is attracted towards philosophy, will they not make Herculean efforts to spoil and corrupt him? Are we not right in saying that the love of knowledge, no less than riches, may divert him? Men of this class (Critias) often become politicians – they are the authors of great mischief in states, and sometimes also of great good. And thus philosophy is deserted by her natural protectors, and others enter in and dishonour her. Vulgar little minds see the land open and rush from the prisons of the arts into her temple. A clever mechanic having a soul coarse as his body, thinks that he will gain caste by becoming her suitor.

For philosophy, even in her fallen estate, has a dignity of her own – and he, like a bald little blacksmith's apprentice as he is, having made some money and got out of durance, washes and dresses himself as a bridegroom and marries his master's daughter. What will be the issue of such marriages? Will they not be vile and bastard, devoid of truth and nature? 'They will.' Small, then, is the remnant of genuine philosophers; there may be a few who are citizens of small states, in which politics are not worth thinking of, or who have been detained by Theages' bridle of ill health; for my own case of the oracular sign is almost unique, and too rare to be worth mentioning. And these few when they have tasted the pleasures of philosophy, and have taken a look at that den of thieves and place of wild beasts, which is human life, will stand aside from the storm under the shelter of a wall, and try to preserve their own innocence and to depart in peace. 'A great work, too, will have been accomplished by them.' Great, yes, but not the greatest; for man is a social being, and can only attain his highest development in the society which is best suited to him.

Enough, then, of the causes why philosophy has such an evil name. Another question is, Which of existing states is suited to her? Not one of them; at present she is like some exotic seed which degenerates in a strange soil; only in her proper state will she be shown to be of heavenly growth. 'And is her proper state ours or some other?' Ours in all points but one, which was left undetermined. You may remember our saying that some living mind or witness of the legislator was needed in states. But we

were afraid to enter upon a subject of such difficulty, and now the question recurs and has not grown easier: – How may philosophy be safely studied? Let us bring her into the light of day, and make an end of the inquiry.

In the first place, I say boldly that nothing can be worse than the present mode of study. Persons usually pick up a little philosophy in early youth, and in the intervals of business, but they never master the real difficulty, which is dialectic. Later, perhaps, they occasionally go to a lecture on philosophy. Years advance, and the sun of philosophy, unlike that of Heracleitus, sets never to rise again. This order of education should be reversed; it should begin with gymnastics in youth, and as the man strengthens, he should increase the gymnastics of his soul. Then, when active life is over, let him finally return to philosophy. 'You are in earnest, Socrates, but the world will be equally earnest in withstanding you – no more than Thrasymachus.' Do not make a quarrel between Thrasymachus and me, who were never enemies and are now good friends enough. And I shall do my best to convince him and all mankind of the truth of my words, or at any rate to prepare for the future when, in another life, we may again take part in similar discussions. 'That will be a long time hence.' Not long in comparison with eternity. The many will probably remain incredulous, for they have never seen the natural unity of ideas, but only artificial juxtapositions; not free and generous thoughts, but tricks of controversy and quips of law; – a perfect man ruling

in a perfect state, even a single one they have not known. And we foresaw that there was no chance of perfection either in states or individuals until a necessity was laid upon philosophers – not the rogues, but those whom we called the useless class – of holding office; or until the sons of kings were inspired with a true love of philosophy. Whether in the infinity of past time there has been, or is in some distant land, or ever will be hereafter, an ideal such as we have described, we stoutly maintain that there has been, is, and will be such a state whenever the Muse of philosophy rules. Will you say that the world is of another mind? O, my friend, do not revile the world! They will soon change their opinion if they are gently entreated, and are taught the true nature of the philosopher. Who can hate a man who loves him? Or be jealous of one who has no jealousy? Consider, again, that the many hate not the true but the false philosophers – the pretenders who force their way in without invitation, and are always speaking of persons and not of principles, which is unlike the spirit of philosophy. For the true philosopher despises earthly strife; his eye is fixed on the eternal order in accordance with which he moulds himself into the Divine image (and not himself only, but other men), and is the creator of the virtues private as well as public. When mankind see that the happiness of states is only to be found in that image, will they be angry with us for attempting to delineate it? 'Certainly not. But what will be the process of delineation?' The artist will do nothing until he has made a tabula rasa; on this he will inscribe the constitution of a state, glancing

often at the divine truth of nature, and from that deriving the godlike among men, mingling the two elements, rubbing out and painting in, until there is a perfect harmony or fusion of the divine and human. But perhaps the world will doubt the existence of such an artist. What will they doubt? That the philosopher is a lover of truth, having a nature akin to the best? – and if they admit this will they still quarrel with us for making philosophers our kings? 'They will be less disposed to quarrel.' Let us assume then that they are pacified. Still, a person may hesitate about the probability of the son of a king being a philosopher. And we do not deny that they are very liable to be corrupted; but yet surely in the course of ages there might be one exception – and one is enough. If one son of a king were a philosopher, and had obedient citizens, he might bring the ideal polity into being. Hence we conclude that our laws are not only the best, but that they are also possible, though not free from difficulty.

I gained nothing by evading the troublesome questions which arose concerning women and children. I will be wiser now and acknowledge that we must go to the bottom of another question: What is to be the education of our guardians? It was agreed that they were to be lovers of their country, and were to be tested in the refiner's fire of pleasures and pains, and those who came forth pure and remained fixed in their principles were to have honours and rewards in life and after death. But at this point, the argument put on her veil and turned into another path. I hesitated to make the assertion which I now hazard, –

that our guardians must be philosophers. You remember all the contradictory elements, which met in the philosopher – how difficult to find them all in a single person! Intelligence and spirit are not often combined with steadiness; the stolid, fearless, nature is averse to intellectual toil. And yet these opposite elements are all necessary, and therefore, as we were saying before, the aspirant must be tested in pleasures and dangers; and also, as we must now further add, in the highest branches of knowledge. You will remember, that when we spoke of the virtues mention was made of a longer road, which you were satisfied to leave unexplored. 'Enough seemed to have been said.' Enough, my friend; but what is enough while anything remains wanting? Of all men the guardian must not faint in the search after truth; he must be prepared to take the longer road, or he will never reach that higher region which is above the four virtues; and of the virtues too he must not only get an outline, but a clear and distinct vision. (Strange that we should be so precise about trifles, so careless about the highest truths!) 'And what are the highest?' You to pretend unconsciousness, when you have so often heard me speak of the idea of good, about which we know so little, and without which though a man gain the world he has no profit of it! Some people imagine that the good is wisdom; but this involves a circle, – the good, they say, is wisdom, wisdom has to do with the good. According to others the good is pleasure; but then comes the absurdity that good is bad, for there are bad pleasures as well as good. Again, the

good must have reality; a man may desire the appearance of virtue, but he will not desire the appearance of good. Ought our guardians then to be ignorant of this supreme principle, of which every man has a presentiment, and without which no man has any real knowledge of anything? 'But, Socrates, what is this supreme principle, knowledge or pleasure, or what? You may think me troublesome, but I say that you have no business to be always repeating the doctrines of others instead of giving us your own.' Can I say what I do not know? 'You may offer an opinion.' And will the blindness and crookedness of opinion content you when you might have the light and certainty of science? 'I will only ask you to give such an explanation of the good as you have given already of temperance and justice.' I wish that I could, but in my present mood I cannot reach to the height of the knowledge of the good. To the parent or principal I cannot introduce you, but to the child begotten in his image, which I may compare with the interest on the principal, I will. (Audit the account, and do not let me give you a false statement of the debt.) You remember our old distinction of the many beautiful and the one beautiful, the particular and the universal, the objects of sight and the objects of thought? Did you ever consider that the objects of sight imply a faculty of sight which is the most complex and costly of our senses, requiring not only objects of sense, but also a medium, which is light; without which the sight will not distinguish between colours and all will be a blank? For light is the noble bond between the perceiving faculty and

the thing perceived, and the god who gives us light is the sun, who is the eye of the day, but is not to be confounded with the eye of man. This eye of the day or sun is what I call the child of the good, standing in the same relation to the visible world as the good to the intellectual. When the sun shines the eye sees, and in the intellectual world where truth is, there is sight and light. Now that which is the sun of intelligent natures, is the idea of good, the cause of knowledge and truth, yet other and fairer than they are, and standing in the same relation to them in which the sun stands to light. O inconceivable height of beauty, which is above knowledge and above truth! ('You cannot surely mean pleasure,' he said. Peace, I replied.) And this idea of good, like the sun, is also the cause of growth, and the author not of knowledge only, but of being, yet greater far than either in dignity and power. 'That is a reach of thought more than human; but, pray, go on with the image, for I suspect that there is more behind.' There is, I said; and bearing in mind our two suns or principles, imagine further their corresponding worlds – one of the visible, the other of the intelligible; you may assist your fancy by figuring the distinction under the image of a line divided into two unequal parts, and may again subdivide each part into two lesser segments representative of the stages of knowledge in either sphere. The lower portion of the lower or visible sphere will consist of shadows and reflections, and its upper and smaller portion will contain real objects in the world of nature or of art. The sphere of the intelligible will also have

two divisions, – one of mathematics, in which there is no ascent but all is descent; no inquiring into premises, but only drawing of inferences. In this division the mind works with figures and numbers, the images of which are taken not from the shadows, but from the objects, although the truth of them is seen only with the mind's eye; and they are used as hypotheses without being analysed. Whereas in the other division reason uses the hypotheses as stages or steps in the ascent to the idea of good, to which she fastens them, and then again descends, walking firmly in the region of ideas, and of ideas only, in her ascent as well as descent, and finally resting in them. 'I partly understand,' he replied; 'you mean that the ideas of science are superior to the hypothetical, metaphorical conceptions of geometry and the other arts or sciences, whichever is to be the name of them; and the latter conceptions you refuse to make subjects of pure intellect, because they have no first principle, although when resting on a first principle, they pass into the higher sphere.' You understand me very well, I said. And now to those four divisions of knowledge you may assign four corresponding faculties – pure intelligence to the highest sphere; active intelligence to the second; to the third, faith; to the fourth, the perception of shadows – and the clearness of the several faculties will be in the same ratio as the truth of the objects to which they are related…

Like Socrates, we may recapitulate the virtues of the philosopher. In language which seems to reach beyond the horizon of that age and country, he is described as 'the spectator

of all time and all existence.' He has the noblest gifts of nature, and makes the highest use of them. All his desires are absorbed in the love of wisdom, which is the love of truth. None of the graces of a beautiful soul are wanting in him; neither can he fear death, or think much of human life. The ideal of modern times hardly retains the simplicity of the antique; there is not the same originality either in truth or error which characterized the Greeks. The philosopher is no longer living in the unseen, nor is he sent by an oracle to convince mankind of ignorance; nor does he regard knowledge as a system of ideas leading upwards by regular stages to the idea of good. The eagerness of the pursuit has abated; there is more division of labour and less of comprehensive reflection upon nature and human life as a whole; more of exact observation and less of anticipation and inspiration. Still, in the altered conditions of knowledge, the parallel is not wholly lost; and there may be a use in translating the conception of Plato into the language of our own age. The philosopher in modern times is one who fixes his mind on the laws of nature in their sequence and connexion, not on fragments or pictures of nature; on history, not on controversy; on the truths which are acknowledged by the few, not on the opinions of the many. He is aware of the importance of 'classifying according to nature,' and will try to 'separate the limbs of science without breaking them' (Phaedr.). There is no part of truth, whether great or small, which he will dishonour; and in the least things he will discern the greatest (Parmen.). Like the ancient philosopher he

sees the world pervaded by analogies, but he can also tell 'why in some cases a single instance is sufficient for an induction' (Mill's Logic), while in other cases a thousand examples would prove nothing. He inquires into a portion of knowledge only, because the whole has grown too vast to be embraced by a single mind or life. He has a clearer conception of the divisions of science and of their relation to the mind of man than was possible to the ancients. Like Plato, he has a vision of the unity of knowledge, not as the beginning of philosophy to be attained by a study of elementary mathematics, but as the far-off result of the working of many minds in many ages. He is aware that mathematical studies are preliminary to almost every other; at the same time, he will not reduce all varieties of knowledge to the type of mathematics. He too must have a nobility of character, without which genius loses the better half of greatness. Regarding the world as a point in immensity, and each individual as a link in a never-ending chain of existence, he will not think much of his own life, or be greatly afraid of death.

Adeimantus objects first of all to the form of the Socratic reasoning, thus showing that Plato is aware of the imperfection of his own method. He brings the accusation against himself which might be brought against him by a modern logician – that he extracts the answer because he knows how to put the question. In a long argument words are apt to change their meaning slightly, or premises may be assumed or conclusions inferred with rather too much certainty or universality; the variation at each step

may be unobserved, and yet at last the divergence becomes considerable. Hence the failure of attempts to apply arithmetical or algebraic formulae to logic. The imperfection, or rather the higher and more elastic nature of language, does not allow words to have the precision of numbers or of symbols. And this quality in language impairs the force of an argument which has many steps.

The objection, though fairly met by Socrates in this particular instance, may be regarded as implying a reflection upon the Socratic mode of reasoning. And here, as elsewhere, Plato seems to intimate that the time had come when the negative and interrogative method of Socrates must be superseded by a positive and constructive one, of which examples are given in some of the later dialogues. Adeimantus further argues that the ideal is wholly at variance with facts; for experience proves philosophers to be either useless or rogues. Contrary to all expectation Socrates has no hesitation in admitting the truth of this, and explains the anomaly in an allegory, first characteristically depreciating his own inventive powers. In this allegory the people are distinguished from the professional politicians, and, as elsewhere, are spoken of in a tone of pity rather than of censure under the image of 'the noble captain who is not very quick in his perceptions.'

The uselessness of philosophers is explained by the circumstance that mankind will not use them. The world in all ages has been divided between contempt and fear of those

who employ the power of ideas and know no other weapons. Concerning the false philosopher, Socrates argues that the best is most liable to corruption; and that the finer nature is more likely to suffer from alien conditions. We too observe that there are some kinds of excellence which spring from a peculiar delicacy of constitution; as is evidently true of the poetical and imaginative temperament, which often seems to depend on impressions, and hence can only breathe or live in a certain atmosphere. The man of genius has greater pains and greater pleasures, greater powers and greater weaknesses, and often a greater play of character than is to be found in ordinary men. He can assume the disguise of virtue or disinterestedness without having them, or veil personal enmity in the language of patriotism and philosophy, – he can say the word which all men are thinking, he has an insight which is terrible into the follies and weaknesses of his fellow-men. An Alcibiades, a Mirabeau, or a Napoleon the First, are born either to be the authors of great evils in states, or 'of great good, when they are drawn in that direction.'

Yet the thesis, 'corruptio optimi pessima,' cannot be maintained generally or without regard to the kind of excellence which is corrupted. The alien conditions which are corrupting to one nature, may be the elements of culture to another. In general a man can only receive his highest development in a congenial state or family, among friends or fellow-workers. But also he may sometimes be stirred by adverse circumstances to such a

degree that he rises up against them and reforms them. And while weaker or coarser characters will extract good out of evil, say in a corrupt state of the church or of society, and live on happily, allowing the evil to remain, the finer or stronger natures may be crushed or spoiled by surrounding influences – may become misanthrope and philanthrope by turns; or in a few instances, like the founders of the monastic orders, or the Reformers, owing to some peculiarity in themselves or in their age, may break away entirely from the world and from the church, sometimes into great good, sometimes into great evil, sometimes into both. And the same holds in the lesser sphere of a convent, a school, a family.

Plato would have us consider how easily the best natures are overpowered by public opinion, and what efforts the rest of mankind will make to get possession of them. The world, the church, their own profession, any political or party organization, are always carrying them off their legs and teaching them to apply high and holy names to their own prejudices and interests. The 'monster' corporation to which they belong judges right and truth to be the pleasure of the community. The individual becomes one with his order; or, if he resists, the world is too much for him, and will sooner or later be revenged on him. This is, perhaps, a one-sided but not wholly untrue picture of the maxims and practice of mankind when they 'sit down together at an assembly,' either in ancient or modern times.

When the higher natures are corrupted by politics, the lower

take possession of the vacant place of philosophy. This is described in one of those continuous images in which the argument, to use a Platonic expression, 'veils herself,' and which is dropped and reappears at intervals. The question is asked, – Why are the citizens of states so hostile to philosophy? The answer is, that they do not know her. And yet there is also a better mind of the many; they would believe if they were taught. But hitherto they have only known a conventional imitation of philosophy, words without thoughts, systems which have no life in them; a (divine) person uttering the words of beauty and freedom, the friend of man holding communion with the Eternal, and seeking to frame the state in that image, they have never known. The same double feeling respecting the mass of mankind has always existed among men. The first thought is that the people are the enemies of truth and right; the second, that this only arises out of an accidental error and confusion, and that they do not really hate those who love them, if they could be educated to know them.

In the latter part of the sixth book, three questions have to be considered: 1st, the nature of the longer and more circuitous way, which is contrasted with the shorter and more imperfect method of Book IV; 2nd, the heavenly pattern or idea of the state; 3rd, the relation of the divisions of knowledge to one another and to the corresponding faculties of the soul:

1. Of the higher method of knowledge in Plato we have only a glimpse. Neither here nor in the Phaedrus or Symposium, nor

yet in the Philebus or Sophist, does he give any clear explanation of his meaning. He would probably have described his method as proceeding by regular steps to a system of universal knowledge, which inferred the parts from the whole rather than the whole from the parts. This ideal logic is not practised by him in the search after justice, or in the analysis of the parts of the soul; there, like Aristotle in the Nicomachean Ethics, he argues from experience and the common use of language. But at the end of the sixth book he conceives another and more perfect method, in which all ideas are only steps or grades or moments of thought, forming a connected whole which is self-supporting, and in which consistency is the test of truth. He does not explain to us in detail the nature of the process. Like many other thinkers both in ancient and modern times his mind seems to be filled with a vacant form which he is unable to realize. He supposes the sciences to have a natural order and connexion in an age when they can hardly be said to exist. He is hastening on to the 'end of the intellectual world' without even making a beginning of them.

In modern times we hardly need to be reminded that the process of acquiring knowledge is here confused with the contemplation of absolute knowledge. In all science a priori and a posteriori truths mingle in various proportions. The a priori part is that which is derived from the most universal experience of men, or is universally accepted by them; the a posteriori is that which grows up around the more general principles and becomes imperceptibly one with them. But Plato erroneously imagines

that the synthesis is separable from the analysis, and that the method of science can anticipate science. In entertaining such a vision of a priori knowledge he is sufficiently justified, or at least his meaning may be sufficiently explained by the similar attempts of Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and even of Bacon himself, in modern philosophy. Anticipations or divinations, or prophetic glimpses of truths whether concerning man or nature, seem to stand in the same relation to ancient philosophy which hypotheses bear to modern inductive science. These 'guesses at truth' were not made at random; they arose from a superficial impression of uniformities and first principles in nature which the genius of the Greek, contemplating the expanse of heaven and earth, seemed to recognize in the distance. Nor can we deny that in ancient times knowledge must have stood still, and the human mind been deprived of the very instruments of thought, if philosophy had been strictly confined to the results of experience.

2. Plato supposes that when the tablet has been made blank the artist will fill in the lineaments of the ideal state. Is this a pattern laid up in heaven, or mere vacancy on which he is supposed to gaze with wondering eye? The answer is, that such ideals are framed partly by the omission of particulars, partly by imagination perfecting the form which experience supplies (Phaedo). Plato represents these ideals in a figure as belonging to another world; and in modern times the idea will sometimes seem to precede, at other times to co-operate with the hand of the artist. As in science, so also in creative art, there is a synthetical

as well as an analytical method. One man will have the whole in his mind before he begins; to another the processes of mind and hand will be simultaneous.

3. There is no difficulty in seeing that Plato's divisions of knowledge are based, first, on the fundamental antithesis of sensible and intellectual which pervades the whole pre-Socratic philosophy; in which is implied also the opposition of the permanent and transient, of the universal and particular. But the age of philosophy in which he lived seemed to require a further distinction; – numbers and figures were beginning to separate from ideas. The world could no longer regard justice as a cube, and was learning to see, though imperfectly, that the abstractions of sense were distinct from the abstractions of mind. Between the Eleatic being or essence and the shadows of phenomena, the Pythagorean principle of number found a place, and was, as Aristotle remarks, a conducting medium from one to the other. Hence Plato is led to introduce a third term which had not hitherto entered into the scheme of his philosophy. He had observed the use of mathematics in education; they were the best preparation for higher studies. The subjective relation between them further suggested an objective one; although the passage from one to the other is really imaginary (Metaph.). For metaphysical and moral philosophy has no connexion with mathematics; number and figure are the abstractions of time and space, not the expressions of purely intellectual conceptions. When divested of metaphor, a straight line or a square has no

more to do with right and justice than a crooked line with vice. The figurative association was mistaken for a real one; and thus the three latter divisions of the Platonic proportion were constructed.

There is more difficulty in comprehending how he arrived at the first term of the series, which is nowhere else mentioned, and has no reference to any other part of his system. Nor indeed does the relation of shadows to objects correspond to the relation of numbers to ideas. Probably Plato has been led by the love of analogy (Timaeus) to make four terms instead of three, although the objects perceived in both divisions of the lower sphere are equally objects of sense. He is also preparing the way, as his manner is, for the shadows of images at the beginning of the seventh book, and the imitation of an imitation in the tenth. The line may be regarded as reaching from unity to infinity, and is divided into two unequal parts, and subdivided into two more; each lower sphere is the multiplication of the preceding. Of the four faculties, faith in the lower division has an intermediate position (cp. for the use of the word faith or belief, (Greek), Timaeus), contrasting equally with the vagueness of the perception of shadows (Greek) and the higher certainty of understanding (Greek) and reason (Greek).

The difference between understanding and mind or reason (Greek) is analogous to the difference between acquiring knowledge in the parts and the contemplation of the whole. True knowledge is a whole, and is at rest; consistency and universality

are the tests of truth. To this self-evidencing knowledge of the whole the faculty of mind is supposed to correspond. But there is a knowledge of the understanding which is incomplete and in motion always, because unable to rest in the subordinate ideas. Those ideas are called both images and hypotheses – images because they are clothed in sense, hypotheses because they are assumptions only, until they are brought into connexion with the idea of good.

The general meaning of the passage, 'Noble, then, is the bond which links together sight…And of this kind I spoke as the intelligible…' so far as the thought contained in it admits of being translated into the terms of modern philosophy, may be described or explained as follows: – There is a truth, one and self-existent, to which by the help of a ladder let down from above, the human intelligence may ascend. This unity is like the sun in the heavens, the light by which all things are seen, the being by which they are created and sustained. It is the IDEA of good. And the steps of the ladder leading up to this highest or universal existence are the mathematical sciences, which also contain in themselves an element of the universal. These, too, we see in a new manner when we connect them with the idea of good. They then cease to be hypotheses or pictures, and become essential parts of a higher truth which is at once their first principle and their final cause.

We cannot give any more precise meaning to this remarkable passage, but we may trace in it several rudiments or vestiges of

thought which are common to us and to Plato: such as (1) the unity and correlation of the sciences, or rather of science, for in Plato's time they were not yet parted off or distinguished; (2) the existence of a Divine Power, or life or idea or cause or reason, not yet conceived or no longer conceived as in the Timaeus and elsewhere under the form of a person; (3) the recognition of the hypothetical and conditional character of the mathematical sciences, and in a measure of every science when isolated from the rest; (4) the conviction of a truth which is invisible, and of a law, though hardly a law of nature, which permeates the intellectual rather than the visible world.

The method of Socrates is hesitating and tentative, awaiting the fuller explanation of the idea of good, and of the nature of dialectic in the seventh book. The imperfect intelligence of Glaucon, and the reluctance of Socrates to make a beginning, mark the difficulty of the subject. The allusion to Theages' bridle, and to the internal oracle, or demonic sign, of Socrates, which here, as always in Plato, is only prohibitory; the remark that the salvation of any remnant of good in the present evil state of the world is due to God only; the reference to a future state of existence, which is unknown to Glaucon in the tenth book, and in which the discussions of Socrates and his disciples would be resumed; the surprise in the answers; the fanciful irony of Socrates, where he pretends that he can only describe the strange position of the philosopher in a figure of speech; the original observation that the Sophists, after all, are only the

representatives and not the leaders of public opinion; the picture of the philosopher standing aside in the shower of sleet under a wall; the figure of 'the great beast' followed by the expression of good-will towards the common people who would not have rejected the philosopher if they had known him; the 'right noble thought' that the highest truths demand the greatest exactness; the hesitation of Socrates in returning once more to his well-worn theme of the idea of good; the ludicrous earnestness of Glaucon; the comparison of philosophy to a deserted maiden who marries beneath her – are some of the most interesting characteristics of the sixth book.

Yet a few more words may be added, on the old theme, which was so oft discussed in the Socratic circle, of which we, like Glaucon and Adeimantus, would fain, if possible, have a clearer notion. Like them, we are dissatisfied when we are told that the idea of good can only be revealed to a student of the mathematical sciences, and we are inclined to think that neither we nor they could have been led along that path to any satisfactory goal. For we have learned that differences of quantity cannot pass into differences of quality, and that the mathematical sciences can never rise above themselves into the sphere of our higher thoughts, although they may sometimes furnish symbols and expressions of them, and may train the mind in habits of abstraction and self-concentration. The illusion which was natural to an ancient philosopher has ceased to be an illusion to us. But if the process by which we are supposed to arrive at

the idea of good be really imaginary, may not the idea itself be also a mere abstraction? We remark, first, that in all ages, and especially in primitive philosophy, words such as being, essence, unity, good, have exerted an extraordinary influence over the minds of men. The meagreness or negativeness of their content has been in an inverse ratio to their power. They have become the forms under which all things were comprehended. There was a need or instinct in the human soul which they satisfied; they were not ideas, but gods, and to this new mythology the men of a later generation began to attach the powers and associations of the elder deities.

The idea of good is one of those sacred words or forms of thought, which were beginning to take the place of the old mythology. It meant unity, in which all time and all existence were gathered up. It was the truth of all things, and also the light in which they shone forth, and became evident to intelligences human and divine. It was the cause of all things, the power by which they were brought into being. It was the universal reason divested of a human personality. It was the life as well as the light of the world, all knowledge and all power were comprehended in it. The way to it was through the mathematical sciences, and these too were dependent on it. To ask whether God was the maker of it, or made by it, would be like asking whether God could be conceived apart from goodness, or goodness apart from God. The God of the Timaeus is not really at variance with the idea of good; they are aspects of the same, differing only as the

personal from the impersonal, or the masculine from the neuter, the one being the expression or language of mythology, the other of philosophy.

This, or something like this, is the meaning of the idea of good as conceived by Plato. Ideas of number, order, harmony, development may also be said to enter into it. The paraphrase which has just been given of it goes beyond the actual words of Plato. We have perhaps arrived at the stage of philosophy which enables us to understand what he is aiming at, better than he did himself. We are beginning to realize what he saw darkly and at a distance. But if he could have been told that this, or some conception of the same kind, but higher than this, was the truth at which he was aiming, and the need which he sought to supply, he would gladly have recognized that more was contained in his own thoughts than he himself knew. As his words are few and his manner reticent and tentative, so must the style of his interpreter be. We should not approach his meaning more nearly by attempting to define it further. In translating him into the language of modern thought, we might insensibly lose the spirit of ancient philosophy. It is remarkable that although Plato speaks of the idea of good as the first principle of truth and being, it is nowhere mentioned in his writings except in this passage. Nor did it retain any hold upon the minds of his disciples in a later generation; it was probably unintelligible to them. Nor does the mention of it in Aristotle appear to have any reference to this or any other passage in his extant writings.

BOOK VII. And now I will describe in a figure the enlightenment or unenlightenment of our nature: – Imagine human beings living in an underground den which is open towards the light; they have been there from childhood, having their necks and legs chained, and can only see into the den. At a distance there is a fire, and between the fire and the prisoners a raised way, and a low wall is built along the way, like the screen over which marionette players show their puppets. Behind the wall appear moving figures, who hold in their hands various works of art, and among them images of men and animals, wood and stone, and some of the passers-by are talking and others silent. 'A strange parable,' he said, 'and strange captives.' They are ourselves, I replied; and they see only the shadows of the images which the fire throws on the wall of the den; to these they give names, and if we add an echo which returns from the wall, the voices of the passengers will seem to proceed from the shadows. Suppose now that you suddenly turn them round and make them look with pain and grief to themselves at the real images; will they believe them to be real? Will not their eyes be dazzled, and will they not try to get away from the light to something which they are able to behold without blinking? And suppose further, that they are dragged up a steep and rugged ascent into the presence of the sun himself, will not their sight be darkened with the excess of light? Some time will pass before they get the habit of perceiving at all; and at first they will be able to perceive only shadows and reflections in the water; then

they will recognize the moon and the stars, and will at length behold the sun in his own proper place as he is. Last of all they will conclude: – This is he who gives us the year and the seasons, and is the author of all that we see. How will they rejoice in passing from darkness to light! How worthless to them will seem the honours and glories of the den! But now imagine further, that they descend into their old habitations; – in that underground dwelling they will not see as well as their fellows, and will not be able to compete with them in the measurement of the shadows on the wall; there will be many jokes about the man who went on a visit to the sun and lost his eyes, and if they find anybody trying to set free and enlighten one of their number, they will put him to death, if they can catch him. Now the cave or den is the world of sight, the fire is the sun, the way upwards is the way to knowledge, and in the world of knowledge the idea of good is last seen and with difficulty, but when seen is inferred to be the author of good and right – parent of the lord of light in this world, and of truth and understanding in the other. He who attains to the beatific vision is always going upwards; he is unwilling to descend into political assemblies and courts of law; for his eyes are apt to blink at the images or shadows of images which they behold in them – he cannot enter into the ideas of those who have never in their lives understood the relation of the shadow to the substance. But blindness is of two kinds, and may be caused either by passing out of darkness into light or out of light into darkness, and a man of sense will distinguish between them, and will not laugh equally

at both of them, but the blindness which arises from fulness of light he will deem blessed, and pity the other; or if he laugh at the puzzled soul looking at the sun, he will have more reason to laugh than the inhabitants of the den at those who descend from above. There is a further lesson taught by this parable of ours. Some persons fancy that instruction is like giving eyes to the blind, but we say that the faculty of sight was always there, and that the soul only requires to be turned round towards the light. And this is conversion; other virtues are almost like bodily habits, and may be acquired in the same manner, but intelligence has a diviner life, and is indestructible, turning either to good or evil according to the direction given. Did you never observe how the mind of a clever rogue peers out of his eyes, and the more clearly he sees, the more evil he does? Now if you take such an one, and cut away from him those leaden weights of pleasure and desire which bind his soul to earth, his intelligence will be turned round, and he will behold the truth as clearly as he now discerns his meaner ends. And have we not decided that our rulers must neither be so uneducated as to have no fixed rule of life, nor so over-educated as to be unwilling to leave their paradise for the business of the world? We must choose out therefore the natures who are most likely to ascend to the light and knowledge of the good; but we must not allow them to remain in the region of light; they must be forced down again among the captives in the den to partake of their labours and honours. 'Will they not think this a hardship?' You should remember that our purpose in framing the

State was not that our citizens should do what they like, but that they should serve the State for the common good of all. May we not fairly say to our philosopher, – Friend, we do you no wrong; for in other States philosophy grows wild, and a wild plant owes nothing to the gardener, but you have been trained by us to be the rulers and kings of our hive, and therefore we must insist on your descending into the den. You must, each of you, take your turn, and become able to use your eyes in the dark, and with a little practice you will see far better than those who quarrel about the shadows, whose knowledge is a dream only, whilst yours is a waking reality. It may be that the saint or philosopher who is best fitted, may also be the least inclined to rule, but necessity is laid upon him, and he must no longer live in the heaven of ideas. And this will be the salvation of the State. For those who rule must not be those who are desirous to rule; and, if you can offer to our citizens a better life than that of rulers generally is, there will be a chance that the rich, not only in this world's goods, but in virtue and wisdom, may bear rule. And the only life which is better than the life of political ambition is that of philosophy, which is also the best preparation for the government of a State.

Then now comes the question, – How shall we create our rulers; what way is there from darkness to light? The change is effected by philosophy; it is not the turning over of an oyster-shell, but the conversion of a soul from night to day, from becoming to being. And what training will draw the soul upwards? Our former education had two branches, gymnastic,

which was occupied with the body, and music, the sister art, which infused a natural harmony into mind and literature; but neither of these sciences gave any promise of doing what we want. Nothing remains to us but that universal or primary science of which all the arts and sciences are partakers, I mean number or calculation. 'Very true.' Including the art of war? 'Yes, certainly.' Then there is something ludicrous about Palamedes in the tragedy, coming in and saying that he had invented number, and had counted the ranks and set them in order. For if Agamemnon could not count his feet (and without number how could he?) he must have been a pretty sort of general indeed. No man should be a soldier who cannot count, and indeed he is hardly to be called a man. But I am not speaking of these practical applications of arithmetic, for number, in my view, is rather to be regarded as a conductor to thought and being. I will explain what I mean by the last expression: – Things sensible are of two kinds; the one class invite or stimulate the mind, while in the other the mind acquiesces. Now the stimulating class are the things which suggest contrast and relation. For example, suppose that I hold up to the eyes three fingers – a fore finger, a middle finger, a little finger – the sight equally recognizes all three fingers, but without number cannot further distinguish them. Or again, suppose two objects to be relatively great and small, these ideas of greatness and smallness are supplied not by the sense, but by the mind. And the perception of their contrast or relation quickens and sets in motion the mind, which is puzzled by the confused intimations

of sense, and has recourse to number in order to find out whether the things indicated are one or more than one. Number replies that they are two and not one, and are to be distinguished from one another. Again, the sight beholds great and small, but only in a confused chaos, and not until they are distinguished does the question arise of their respective natures; we are thus led on to the distinction between the visible and intelligible. That was what I meant when I spoke of stimulants to the intellect; I was thinking of the contradictions which arise in perception. The idea of unity, for example, like that of a finger, does not arouse thought unless involving some conception of plurality; but when the one is also the opposite of one, the contradiction gives rise to reflection; an example of this is afforded by any object of sight. All number has also an elevating effect; it raises the mind out of the foam and flux of generation to the contemplation of being, having lesser military and retail uses also. The retail use is not required by us; but as our guardian is to be a soldier as well as a philosopher, the military one may be retained. And to our higher purpose no science can be better adapted; but it must be pursued in the spirit of a philosopher, not of a shopkeeper. It is concerned, not with visible objects, but with abstract truth; for numbers are pure abstractions – the true arithmetician indignantly denies that his unit is capable of division. When you divide, he insists that you are only multiplying; his 'one' is not material or resolvable into fractions, but an unvarying and absolute equality; and this proves the purely intellectual character of his study. Note also the

great power which arithmetic has of sharpening the wits; no other discipline is equally severe, or an equal test of general ability, or equally improving to a stupid person.

Let our second branch of education be geometry. 'I can easily see,' replied Glaucon, 'that the skill of the general will be doubled by his knowledge of geometry.' That is a small matter; the use of geometry, to which I refer, is the assistance given by it in the contemplation of the idea of good, and the compelling the mind to look at true being, and not at generation only. Yet the present mode of pursuing these studies, as any one who is the least of a mathematician is aware, is mean and ridiculous; they are made to look downwards to the arts, and not upwards to eternal existence. The geometer is always talking of squaring, subtending, apposing, as if he had in view action; whereas knowledge is the real object of the study. It should elevate the soul, and create the mind of philosophy; it should raise up what has fallen down, not to speak of lesser uses in war and military tactics, and in the improvement of the faculties.

Shall we propose, as a third branch of our education, astronomy? 'Very good,' replied Glaucon; 'the knowledge of the heavens is necessary at once for husbandry, navigation, military tactics.' I like your way of giving useful reasons for everything in order to make friends of the world. And there is a difficulty in proving to mankind that education is not only useful information but a purification of the eye of the soul, which is better than the bodily eye, for by this alone is truth seen. Now, will you appeal

to mankind in general or to the philosopher? or would you prefer to look to yourself only? 'Every man is his own best friend.' Then take a step backward, for we are out of order, and insert the third dimension which is of solids, after the second which is of planes, and then you may proceed to solids in motion. But solid geometry is not popular and has not the patronage of the State, nor is the use of it fully recognized; the difficulty is great, and the votaries of the study are conceited and impatient. Still the charm of the pursuit wins upon men, and, if government would lend a little assistance, there might be great progress made. 'Very true,' replied Glaucon; 'but do I understand you now to begin with plane geometry, and to place next geometry of solids, and thirdly, astronomy, or the motion of solids?' Yes, I said; my hastiness has only hindered us.

'Very good, and now let us proceed to astronomy, about which I am willing to speak in your lofty strain. No one can fail to see that the contemplation of the heavens draws the soul upwards.' I am an exception, then; astronomy as studied at present appears to me to draw the soul not upwards, but downwards. Star-gazing is just looking up at the ceiling – no better; a man may lie on his back on land or on water – he may look up or look down, but there is no science in that. The vision of knowledge of which I speak is seen not with the eyes, but with the mind. All the magnificence of the heavens is but the embroidery of a copy which falls far short of the divine Original, and teaches nothing about the absolute harmonies or motions of things. Their beauty

is like the beauty of figures drawn by the hand of Daedalus or any other great artist, which may be used for illustration, but no mathematician would seek to obtain from them true conceptions of equality or numerical relations. How ridiculous then to look for these in the map of the heavens, in which the imperfection of matter comes in everywhere as a disturbing element, marring the symmetry of day and night, of months and years, of the sun and stars in their courses. Only by problems can we place astronomy on a truly scientific basis. Let the heavens alone, and exert the intellect.

Still, mathematics admit of other applications, as the Pythagoreans say, and we agree. There is a sister science of harmonical motion, adapted to the ear as astronomy is to the eye, and there may be other applications also. Let us inquire of the Pythagoreans about them, not forgetting that we have an aim higher than theirs, which is the relation of these sciences to the idea of good. The error which pervades astronomy also pervades harmonics. The musicians put their ears in the place of their minds. 'Yes,' replied Glaucon, 'I like to see them laying their ears alongside of their neighbours' faces – some saying, "That's a new note," others declaring that the two notes are the same.' Yes, I said; but you mean the empirics who are always twisting and torturing the strings of the lyre, and quarrelling about the tempers of the strings; I am referring rather to the Pythagorean harmonists, who are almost equally in error. For they investigate only the numbers of the consonances which are

heard, and ascend no higher, – of the true numerical harmony which is unheard, and is only to be found in problems, they have not even a conception. 'That last,' he said, 'must be a marvellous thing.' A thing, I replied, which is only useful if pursued with a view to the good.

All these sciences are the prelude of the strain, and are profitable if they are regarded in their natural relations to one another. 'I dare say, Socrates,' said Glaucon; 'but such a study will be an endless business.' What study do you mean – of the prelude, or what? For all these things are only the prelude, and you surely do not suppose that a mere mathematician is also a dialectician? 'Certainly not. I have hardly ever known a mathematician who could reason.' And yet, Glaucon, is not true reasoning that hymn of dialectic which is the music of the intellectual world, and which was by us compared to the effort of sight, when from beholding the shadows on the wall we arrived at last at the images which gave the shadows? Even so the dialectical faculty withdrawing from sense arrives by the pure intellect at the contemplation of the idea of good, and never rests but at the very end of the intellectual world. And the royal road out of the cave into the light, and the blinking of the eyes at the sun and turning to contemplate the shadows of reality, not the shadows of an image only – this progress and gradual acquisition of a new faculty of sight by the help of the mathematical sciences, is the elevation of the soul to the contemplation of the highest ideal of being.

'So far, I agree with you. But now, leaving the prelude, let us proceed to the hymn. What, then, is the nature of dialectic, and what are the paths which lead thither?' Dear Glaucon, you cannot follow me here. There can be no revelation of the absolute truth to one who has not been disciplined in the previous sciences. But that there is a science of absolute truth, which is attained in some way very different from those now practised, I am confident. For all other arts or sciences are relative to human needs and opinions; and the mathematical sciences are but a dream or hypothesis of true being, and never analyse their own principles. Dialectic alone rises to the principle which is above hypotheses, converting and gently leading the eye of the soul out of the barbarous slough of ignorance into the light of the upper world, with the help of the sciences which we have been describing – sciences, as they are often termed, although they require some other name, implying greater clearness than opinion and less clearness than science, and this in our previous sketch was understanding. And so we get four names – two for intellect, and two for opinion, – reason or mind, understanding, faith, perception of shadows – which make a proportion – being: becoming::intellect: opinion – and science: belief::understanding: perception of shadows. Dialectic may be further described as that science which defines and explains the essence or being of each nature, which distinguishes and abstracts the good, and is ready to do battle against all opponents in the cause of good. To him who is not a dialectician life is

but a sleepy dream; and many a man is in his grave before his is well waked up. And would you have the future rulers of your ideal State intelligent beings, or stupid as posts? 'Certainly not the latter.' Then you must train them in dialectic, which will teach them to ask and answer questions, and is the coping-stone of the sciences.

I dare say that you have not forgotten how our rulers were chosen; and the process of selection may be carried a step further: – As before, they must be constant and valiant, good-looking, and of noble manners, but now they must also have natural ability which education will improve; that is to say, they must be quick at learning, capable of mental toil, retentive, solid, diligent natures, who combine intellectual with moral virtues; not lame and one-sided, diligent in bodily exercise and indolent in mind, or conversely; not a maimed soul, which hates falsehood and yet unintentionally is always wallowing in the mire of ignorance; not a bastard or feeble person, but sound in wind and limb, and in perfect condition for the great gymnastic trial of the mind. Justice herself can find no fault with natures such as these; and they will be the saviours of our State; disciples of another sort would only make philosophy more ridiculous than she is at present. Forgive my enthusiasm; I am becoming excited; but when I see her trampled underfoot, I am angry at the authors of her disgrace. 'I did not notice that you were more excited than you ought to have been.' But I felt that I was. Now do not let us forget another point in the selection of our disciples – that they must be young

and not old. For Solon is mistaken in saying that an old man can be always learning; youth is the time of study, and here we must remember that the mind is free and dainty, and, unlike the body, must not be made to work against the grain. Learning should be at first a sort of play, in which the natural bent is detected. As in training them for war, the young dogs should at first only taste blood; but when the necessary gymnastics are over which during two or three years divide life between sleep and bodily exercise, then the education of the soul will become a more serious matter. At twenty years of age, a selection must be made of the more promising disciples, with whom a new epoch of education will begin. The sciences which they have hitherto learned in fragments will now be brought into relation with each other and with true being; for the power of combining them is the test of speculative and dialectical ability. And afterwards at thirty a further selection shall be made of those who are able to withdraw from the world of sense into the abstraction of ideas. But at this point, judging from present experience, there is a danger that dialectic may be the source of many evils. The danger may be illustrated by a parallel case: – Imagine a person who has been brought up in wealth and luxury amid a crowd of flatterers, and who is suddenly informed that he is a supposititious son. He has hitherto honoured his reputed parents and disregarded the flatterers, and now he does the reverse. This is just what happens with a man's principles. There are certain doctrines which he learnt at home and which exercised a parental authority over

him. Presently he finds that imputations are cast upon them; a troublesome querist comes and asks, 'What is the just and good?' or proves that virtue is vice and vice virtue, and his mind becomes unsettled, and he ceases to love, honour, and obey them as he has hitherto done. He is seduced into the life of pleasure, and becomes a lawless person and a rogue. The case of such speculators is very pitiable, and, in order that our thirty years' old pupils may not require this pity, let us take every possible care that young persons do not study philosophy too early. For a young man is a sort of puppy who only plays with an argument; and is reasoned into and out of his opinions every day; he soon begins to believe nothing, and brings himself and philosophy into discredit. A man of thirty does not run on in this way; he will argue and not merely contradict, and adds new honour to philosophy by the sobriety of his conduct. What time shall we allow for this second gymnastic training of the soul? – say, twice the time required for the gymnastics of the body; six, or perhaps five years, to commence at thirty, and then for fifteen years let the student go down into the den, and command armies, and gain experience of life. At fifty let him return to the end of all things, and have his eyes uplifted to the idea of good, and order his life after that pattern; if necessary, taking his turn at the helm of State, and training up others to be his successors. When his time comes he shall depart in peace to the islands of the blest. He shall be honoured with sacrifices, and receive such worship as the Pythian oracle approves.

'You are a statuary, Socrates, and have made a perfect image of our governors.' Yes, and of our governesses, for the women will share in all things with the men. And you will admit that our State is not a mere aspiration, but may really come into being when there shall arise philosopher-kings, one or more, who will despise earthly vanities, and will be the servants of justice only. 'And how will they begin their work?' Their first act will be to send away into the country all those who are more than ten years of age, and to proceed with those who are left…

At the commencement of the sixth book, Plato anticipated his explanation of the relation of the philosopher to the world in an allegory, in this, as in other passages, following the order which he prescribes in education, and proceeding from the concrete to the abstract. At the commencement of Book VII, under the figure of a cave having an opening towards a fire and a way upwards to the true light, he returns to view the divisions of knowledge, exhibiting familiarly, as in a picture, the result which had been hardly won by a great effort of thought in the previous discussion; at the same time casting a glance onward at the dialectical process, which is represented by the way leading from darkness to light. The shadows, the images, the reflection of the sun and stars in the water, the stars and sun themselves, severally correspond, – the first, to the realm of fancy and poetry, – the second, to the world of sense, – the third, to the abstractions or universals of sense, of which the mathematical sciences furnish the type, – the fourth and last to the same abstractions, when

seen in the unity of the idea, from which they derive a new meaning and power. The true dialectical process begins with the contemplation of the real stars, and not mere reflections of them, and ends with the recognition of the sun, or idea of good, as the parent not only of light but of warmth and growth. To the divisions of knowledge the stages of education partly answer: – first, there is the early education of childhood and youth in the fancies of the poets, and in the laws and customs of the State; – then there is the training of the body to be a warrior athlete, and a good servant of the mind; – and thirdly, after an interval follows the education of later life, which begins with mathematics and proceeds to philosophy in general.

There seem to be two great aims in the philosophy of Plato, – first, to realize abstractions; secondly, to connect them. According to him, the true education is that which draws men from becoming to being, and to a comprehensive survey of all being. He desires to develop in the human mind the faculty of seeing the universal in all things; until at last the particulars of sense drop away and the universal alone remains. He then seeks to combine the universals which he has disengaged from sense, not perceiving that the correlation of them has no other basis but the common use of language. He never understands that abstractions, as Hegel says, are 'mere abstractions' – of use when employed in the arrangement of facts, but adding nothing to the sum of knowledge when pursued apart from them, or with reference to an imaginary idea of good. Still

the exercise of the faculty of abstraction apart from facts has enlarged the mind, and played a great part in the education of the human race. Plato appreciated the value of this faculty, and saw that it might be quickened by the study of number and relation. All things in which there is opposition or proportion are suggestive of reflection. The mere impression of sense evokes no power of thought or of mind, but when sensible objects ask to be compared and distinguished, then philosophy begins. The science of arithmetic first suggests such distinctions. The follow in order the other sciences of plain and solid geometry, and of solids in motion, one branch of which is astronomy or the harmony of the spheres, – to this is appended the sister science of the harmony of sounds. Plato seems also to hint at the possibility of other applications of arithmetical or mathematical proportions, such as we employ in chemistry and natural philosophy, such as the Pythagoreans and even Aristotle make use of in Ethics and Politics, e.g. his distinction between arithmetical and geometrical proportion in the Ethics (Book V), or between numerical and proportional equality in the Politics.

The modern mathematician will readily sympathise with Plato's delight in the properties of pure mathematics. He will not be disinclined to say with him: – Let alone the heavens, and study the beauties of number and figure in themselves. He too will be apt to depreciate their application to the arts. He will observe that Plato has a conception of geometry, in which figures are to be dispensed with; thus in a distant and shadowy

way seeming to anticipate the possibility of working geometrical problems by a more general mode of analysis. He will remark with interest on the backward state of solid geometry, which, alas! was not encouraged by the aid of the State in the age of Plato; and he will recognize the grasp of Plato's mind in his ability to conceive of one science of solids in motion including the earth as well as the heavens, – not forgetting to notice the intimation to which allusion has been already made, that besides astronomy and harmonics the science of solids in motion may have other applications. Still more will he be struck with the comprehensiveness of view which led Plato, at a time when these sciences hardly existed, to say that they must be studied in relation to one another, and to the idea of good, or common principle of truth and being. But he will also see (and perhaps without surprise) that in that stage of physical and mathematical knowledge, Plato has fallen into the error of supposing that he can construct the heavens a priori by mathematical problems, and determine the principles of harmony irrespective of the adaptation of sounds to the human ear. The illusion was a natural one in that age and country. The simplicity and certainty of astronomy and harmonics seemed to contrast with the variation and complexity of the world of sense; hence the circumstance that there was some elementary basis of fact, some measurement of distance or time or vibrations on which they must ultimately rest, was overlooked by him. The modern predecessors of Newton fell into errors equally great; and Plato can hardly be

said to have been very far wrong, or may even claim a sort of prophetic insight into the subject, when we consider that the greater part of astronomy at the present day consists of abstract dynamics, by the help of which most astronomical discoveries have been made.

The metaphysical philosopher from his point of view recognizes mathematics as an instrument of education, – which strengthens the power of attention, developes the sense of order and the faculty of construction, and enables the mind to grasp under simple formulae the quantitative differences of physical phenomena. But while acknowledging their value in education, he sees also that they have no connexion with our higher moral and intellectual ideas. In the attempt which Plato makes to connect them, we easily trace the influences of ancient Pythagorean notions. There is no reason to suppose that he is speaking of the ideal numbers; but he is describing numbers which are pure abstractions, to which he assigns a real and separate existence, which, as 'the teachers of the art' (meaning probably the Pythagoreans) would have affirmed, repel all attempts at subdivision, and in which unity and every other number are conceived of as absolute. The truth and certainty of numbers, when thus disengaged from phenomena, gave them a kind of sacredness in the eyes of an ancient philosopher. Nor is it easy to say how far ideas of order and fixedness may have had a moral and elevating influence on the minds of men, 'who,' in the words of the Timaeus, 'might learn to regulate their

erring lives according to them.' It is worthy of remark that the old Pythagorean ethical symbols still exist as figures of speech among ourselves. And those who in modern times see the world pervaded by universal law, may also see an anticipation of this last word of modern philosophy in the Platonic idea of good, which is the source and measure of all things, and yet only an abstraction (Philebus).

Two passages seem to require more particular explanations. First, that which relates to the analysis of vision. The difficulty in this passage may be explained, like many others, from differences in the modes of conception prevailing among ancient and modern thinkers. To us, the perceptions of sense are inseparable from the act of the mind which accompanies them. The consciousness of form, colour, distance, is indistinguishable from the simple sensation, which is the medium of them. Whereas to Plato sense is the Heraclitean flux of sense, not the vision of objects in the order in which they actually present themselves to the experienced sight, but as they may be imagined to appear confused and blurred to the half-awakened eye of the infant. The first action of the mind is aroused by the attempt to set in order this chaos, and the reason is required to frame distinct conceptions under which the confused impressions of sense may be arranged. Hence arises the question, 'What is great, what is small?' and thus begins the distinction of the visible and the intelligible.

The second difficulty relates to Plato's conception of

harmonics. Three classes of harmonists are distinguished by him: – first, the Pythagoreans, whom he proposes to consult as in the previous discussion on music he was to consult Damon – they are acknowledged to be masters in the art, but are altogether deficient in the knowledge of its higher import and relation to the good; secondly, the mere empirics, whom Glaucon appears to confuse with them, and whom both he and Socrates ludicrously describe as experimenting by mere auscultation on the intervals of sounds. Both of these fall short in different degrees of the Platonic idea of harmony, which must be studied in a purely abstract way, first by the method of problems, and secondly as a part of universal knowledge in relation to the idea of good.

The allegory has a political as well as a philosophical meaning. The den or cave represents the narrow sphere of politics or law (compare the description of the philosopher and lawyer in the Theaetetus), and the light of the eternal ideas is supposed to exercise a disturbing influence on the minds of those who return to this lower world. In other words, their principles are too wide for practical application; they are looking far away into the past and future, when their business is with the present. The ideal is not easily reduced to the conditions of actual life, and may often be at variance with them. And at first, those who return are unable to compete with the inhabitants of the den in the measurement of the shadows, and are derided and persecuted by them; but after a while they see the things below in far truer proportions than those who have never ascended into

the upper world. The difference between the politician turned into a philosopher and the philosopher turned into a politician, is symbolized by the two kinds of disordered eyesight, the one which is experienced by the captive who is transferred from darkness to day, the other, of the heavenly messenger who voluntarily for the good of his fellow-men descends into the den. In what way the brighter light is to dawn on the inhabitants of the lower world, or how the idea of good is to become the guiding principle of politics, is left unexplained by Plato. Like the nature and divisions of dialectic, of which Glaucon impatiently demands to be informed, perhaps he would have said that the explanation could not be given except to a disciple of the previous sciences. (Symposium.)

Many illustrations of this part of the Republic may be found in modern Politics and in daily life. For among ourselves, too, there have been two sorts of Politicians or Statesmen, whose eyesight has become disordered in two different ways. First, there have been great men who, in the language of Burke, 'have been too much given to general maxims,' who, like J.S. Mill or Burke himself, have been theorists or philosophers before they were politicians, or who, having been students of history, have allowed some great historical parallel, such as the English Revolution of 1688, or possibly Athenian democracy or Roman Imperialism, to be the medium through which they viewed contemporary events. Or perhaps the long projecting shadow of some existing institution may have darkened their vision. The Church of the

future, the Commonwealth of the future, the Society of the future, have so absorbed their minds, that they are unable to see in their true proportions the Politics of to-day. They have been intoxicated with great ideas, such as liberty, or equality, or the greatest happiness of the greatest number, or the brotherhood of humanity, and they no longer care to consider how these ideas must be limited in practice or harmonized with the conditions of human life. They are full of light, but the light to them has become only a sort of luminous mist or blindness. Almost every one has known some enthusiastic half-educated person, who sees everything at false distances, and in erroneous proportions.

With this disorder of eyesight may be contrasted another – of those who see not far into the distance, but what is near only; who have been engaged all their lives in a trade or a profession; who are limited to a set or sect of their own. Men of this kind have no universal except their own interests or the interests of their class, no principle but the opinion of persons like themselves, no knowledge of affairs beyond what they pick up in the streets or at their club. Suppose them to be sent into a larger world, to undertake some higher calling, from being tradesmen to turn generals or politicians, from being schoolmasters to become philosophers: – or imagine them on a sudden to receive an inward light which reveals to them for the first time in their lives a higher idea of God and the existence of a spiritual world, by this sudden conversion or change is not their daily life likely to be upset; and on the other hand will not many of their old prejudices and

narrownesses still adhere to them long after they have begun to take a more comprehensive view of human things? From familiar examples like these we may learn what Plato meant by the eyesight which is liable to two kinds of disorders.

Nor have we any difficulty in drawing a parallel between the young Athenian in the fifth century before Christ who became unsettled by new ideas, and the student of a modern University who has been the subject of a similar 'aufklarung.' We too observe that when young men begin to criticise customary beliefs, or to analyse the constitution of human nature, they are apt to lose hold of solid principle (Greek). They are like trees which have been frequently transplanted. The earth about them is loose, and they have no roots reaching far into the soil. They 'light upon every flower,' following their own wayward wills, or because the wind blows them. They catch opinions, as diseases are caught – when they are in the air. Borne hither and thither, 'they speedily fall into beliefs' the opposite of those in which they were brought up. They hardly retain the distinction of right and wrong; they seem to think one thing as good as another. They suppose themselves to be searching after truth when they are playing the game of 'follow my leader.' They fall in love 'at first sight' with paradoxes respecting morality, some fancy about art, some novelty or eccentricity in religion, and like lovers they are so absorbed for a time in their new notion that they can think of nothing else. The resolution of some philosophical or theological question seems to them more interesting and important than any

substantial knowledge of literature or science or even than a good life. Like the youth in the Philebus, they are ready to discourse to any one about a new philosophy. They are generally the disciples of some eminent professor or sophist, whom they rather imitate than understand. They may be counted happy if in later years they retain some of the simple truths which they acquired in early education, and which they may, perhaps, find to be worth all the rest. Such is the picture which Plato draws and which we only reproduce, partly in his own words, of the dangers which beset youth in times of transition, when old opinions are fading away and the new are not yet firmly established. Their condition is ingeniously compared by him to that of a supposititious son, who has made the discovery that his reputed parents are not his real ones, and, in consequence, they have lost their authority over him.

The distinction between the mathematician and the dialectician is also noticeable. Plato is very well aware that the faculty of the mathematician is quite distinct from the higher philosophical sense which recognizes and combines first principles. The contempt which he expresses for distinctions of words, the danger of involuntary falsehood, the apology which Socrates makes for his earnestness of speech, are highly characteristic of the Platonic style and mode of thought. The quaint notion that if Palamedes was the inventor of number Agamemnon could not have counted his feet; the art by which we are made to believe that this State of ours is not a dream only; the

gravity with which the first step is taken in the actual creation of the State, namely, the sending out of the city all who had arrived at ten years of age, in order to expedite the business of education by a generation, are also truly Platonic. (For the last, compare the passage at the end of the third book, in which he expects the lie about the earthborn men to be believed in the second generation.)

BOOK VIII. And so we have arrived at the conclusion, that in the perfect State wives and children are to be in common; and the education and pursuits of men and women, both in war and peace, are to be common, and kings are to be philosophers and warriors, and the soldiers of the State are to live together, having all things in common; and they are to be warrior athletes, receiving no pay but only their food, from the other citizens. Now let us return to the point at which we digressed. 'That is easily done,' he replied: 'You were speaking of the State which you had constructed, and of the individual who answered to this, both of whom you affirmed to be good; and you said that of inferior States there were four forms and four individuals corresponding to them, which although deficient in various degrees, were all of them worth inspecting with a view to determining the relative happiness or misery of the best or worst man. Then Polemarchus and Adeimantus interrupted you, and this led to another argument, – and so here we are.' Suppose that we put ourselves again in the same position, and do you repeat your question. 'I should like to know of what constitutions you were speaking?' Besides the perfect State there are only four of any

note in Hellas: – first, the famous Lacedaemonian or Cretan commonwealth; secondly, oligarchy, a State full of evils; thirdly, democracy, which follows next in order; fourthly, tyranny, which is the disease or death of all government. Now, States are not made of 'oak and rock,' but of flesh and blood; and therefore as there are five States there must be five human natures in individuals, which correspond to them. And first, there is the ambitious nature, which answers to the Lacedaemonian State; secondly, the oligarchical nature; thirdly, the democratical; and fourthly, the tyrannical. This last will have to be compared with the perfectly just, which is the fifth, that we may know which is the happier, and then we shall be able to determine whether the argument of Thrasymachus or our own is the more convincing. And as before we began with the State and went on to the individual, so now, beginning with timocracy, let us go on to the timocratical man, and then proceed to the other forms of government, and the individuals who answer to them.

But how did timocracy arise out of the perfect State? Plainly, like all changes of government, from division in the rulers. But whence came division? 'Sing, heavenly Muses,' as Homer says; – let them condescend to answer us, as if we were children, to whom they put on a solemn face in jest. 'And what will they say?' They will say that human things are fated to decay, and even the perfect State will not escape from this law of destiny, when 'the wheel comes full circle' in a period short or long. Plants or animals have times of fertility and sterility, which the intelligence

of rulers because alloyed by sense will not enable them to ascertain, and children will be born out of season. For whereas divine creations are in a perfect cycle or number, the human creation is in a number which declines from perfection, and has four terms and three intervals of numbers, increasing, waning, assimilating, dissimilating, and yet perfectly commensurate with each other. The base of the number with a fourth added (or which is 3:4), multiplied by five and cubed, gives two harmonies: – the first a square number, which is a hundred times the base (or a hundred times a hundred); the second, an oblong, being a hundred squares of the rational diameter of a figure the side of which is five, subtracting one from each square or two perfect squares from all, and adding a hundred cubes of three. This entire number is geometrical and contains the rule or law of generation. When this law is neglected marriages will be unpropitious; the inferior offspring who are then born will in time become the rulers; the State will decline, and education fall into decay; gymnastic will be preferred to music, and the gold and silver and brass and iron will form a chaotic mass – thus division will arise. Such is the Muses' answer to our question. 'And a true answer, of course: – but what more have they to say?' They say that the two races, the iron and brass, and the silver and gold, will draw the State different ways; – the one will take to trade and moneymaking, and the others, having the true riches and not caring for money, will resist them: the contest will end in a compromise; they will agree to have private property, and

will enslave their fellow-citizens who were once their friends and nurturers. But they will retain their warlike character, and will be chiefly occupied in fighting and exercising rule. Thus arises timocracy, which is intermediate between aristocracy and oligarchy.

The new form of government resembles the ideal in obedience to rulers and contempt for trade, and having common meals, and in devotion to warlike and gymnastic exercises. But corruption has crept into philosophy, and simplicity of character, which was once her note, is now looked for only in the military class. Arts of war begin to prevail over arts of peace; the ruler is no longer a philosopher; as in oligarchies, there springs up among them an extravagant love of gain – get another man's and save your own, is their principle; and they have dark places in which they hoard their gold and silver, for the use of their women and others; they take their pleasures by stealth, like boys who are running away from their father – the law; and their education is not inspired by the Muse, but imposed by the strong arm of power. The leading characteristic of this State is party spirit and ambition.

And what manner of man answers to such a State? 'In love of contention,' replied Adeimantus, 'he will be like our friend Glaucon.' In that respect, perhaps, but not in others. He is self-asserting and ill-educated, yet fond of literature, although not himself a speaker, – fierce with slaves, but obedient to rulers, a lover of power and honour, which he hopes to gain by deeds of arms, – fond, too, of gymnastics and of hunting. As he advances

in years he grows avaricious, for he has lost philosophy, which is the only saviour and guardian of men. His origin is as follows: – His father is a good man dwelling in an ill-ordered State, who has retired from politics in order that he may lead a quiet life. His mother is angry at her loss of precedence among other women; she is disgusted at her husband's selfishness, and she expatiates to her son on the unmanliness and indolence of his father. The old family servant takes up the tale, and says to the youth: – 'When you grow up you must be more of a man than your father.' All the world are agreed that he who minds his own business is an idiot, while a busybody is highly honoured and esteemed. The young man compares this spirit with his father's words and ways, and as he is naturally well disposed, although he has suffered from evil influences, he rests at a middle point and becomes ambitious and a lover of honour.

And now let us set another city over against another man. The next form of government is oligarchy, in which the rule is of the rich only; nor is it difficult to see how such a State arises. The decline begins with the possession of gold and silver; illegal modes of expenditure are invented; one draws another on, and the multitude are infected; riches outweigh virtue; lovers of money take the place of lovers of honour; misers of politicians; and, in time, political privileges are confined by law to the rich, who do not shrink from violence in order to effect their purposes.

Thus much of the origin, – let us next consider the evils of oligarchy. Would a man who wanted to be safe on a voyage take

a bad pilot because he was rich, or refuse a good one because he was poor? And does not the analogy apply still more to the State? And there are yet greater evils: two nations are struggling together in one – the rich and the poor; and the rich dare not put arms into the hands of the poor, and are unwilling to pay for defenders out of their own money. And have we not already condemned that State in which the same persons are warriors as well as shopkeepers? The greatest evil of all is that a man may sell his property and have no place in the State; while there is one class which has enormous wealth, the other is entirely destitute. But observe that these destitutes had not really any more of the governing nature in them when they were rich than now that they are poor; they were miserable spendthrifts always. They are the drones of the hive; only whereas the actual drone is unprovided by nature with a sting, the two-legged things whom we call drones are some of them without stings and some of them have dreadful stings; in other words, there are paupers and there are rogues. These are never far apart; and in oligarchical cities, where nearly everybody is a pauper who is not a ruler, you will find abundance of both. And this evil state of society originates in bad education and bad government.

Like State, like man, – the change in the latter begins with the representative of timocracy; he walks at first in the ways of his father, who may have been a statesman, or general, perhaps; and presently he sees him 'fallen from his high estate,' the victim of informers, dying in prison or exile, or by the hand of

the executioner. The lesson which he thus receives, makes him cautious; he leaves politics, represses his pride, and saves pence. Avarice is enthroned as his bosom's lord, and assumes the style of the Great King; the rational and spirited elements sit humbly on the ground at either side, the one immersed in calculation, the other absorbed in the admiration of wealth. The love of honour turns to love of money; the conversion is instantaneous. The man is mean, saving, toiling, the slave of one passion which is the master of the rest: Is he not the very image of the State? He has had no education, or he would never have allowed the blind god of riches to lead the dance within him. And being uneducated he will have many slavish desires, some beggarly, some knavish, breeding in his soul. If he is the trustee of an orphan, and has the power to defraud, he will soon prove that he is not without the will, and that his passions are only restrained by fear and not by reason. Hence he leads a divided existence; in which the better desires mostly prevail. But when he is contending for prizes and other distinctions, he is afraid to incur a loss which is to be repaid only by barren honour; in time of war he fights with a small part of his resources, and usually keeps his money and loses the victory.

Next comes democracy and the democratic man, out of oligarchy and the oligarchical man. Insatiable avarice is the ruling passion of an oligarchy; and they encourage expensive habits in order that they may gain by the ruin of extravagant youth. Thus men of family often lose their property or rights of citizenship;

but they remain in the city, full of hatred against the new owners of their estates and ripe for revolution. The usurer with stooping walk pretends not to see them; he passes by, and leaves his sting – that is, his money – in some other victim; and many a man has to pay the parent or principal sum multiplied into a family of children, and is reduced into a state of dronage by him. The only way of diminishing the evil is either to limit a man in his use of his property, or to insist that he shall lend at his own risk. But the ruling class do not want remedies; they care only for money, and are as careless of virtue as the poorest of the citizens. Now there are occasions on which the governors and the governed meet together, – at festivals, on a journey, voyaging or fighting. The sturdy pauper finds that in the hour of danger he is not despised; he sees the rich man puffing and panting, and draws the conclusion which he privately imparts to his companions, – 'that our people are not good for much;' and as a sickly frame is made ill by a mere touch from without, or sometimes without external impulse is ready to fall to pieces of itself, so from the least cause, or with none at all, the city falls ill and fights a battle for life or death. And democracy comes into power when the poor are the victors, killing some and exiling some, and giving equal shares in the government to all the rest.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.