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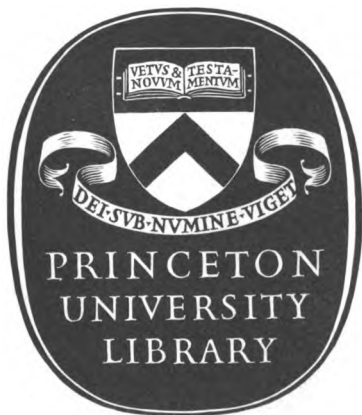
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THE  
PLATONIC DIALOGUES

FOR ENGLISH READERS.

BY

WILLIAM WHEWELL, D.D.

VOL. I.

*DIALOGUES OF THE SOCRATIC SCHOOL,  
AND DIALOGUES REFERRING TO THE TRIAL  
AND DEATH OF SOCRATES.*

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## PREFACE.

**T**HE object of the following Translations and Remarks is to make the Dialogues of Plato intelligible to the English reader. But I would not have it understood from this that I have altered the substance or the drama of these Dialogues with a view of rendering them more popular. I have given both the matter and the manner with all fidelity, except in so far as I have abridged several parts, in order to avoid prolix and obscure passages. And I can venture to say that my task (including translations of most of the other Platonic Dialogues as well as of those given in this volume) has not been lightly executed. It has been a labour of many years; each part has been gone over again and again; and if I have been led in many cases to views of the purport of these Dialogues different from the views which have been put forth by modern Translators and Commentators, I have tried to give my reasons for my interpretation, and have discussed the interpretations proposed by others. To those who have been accustomed to the usual style of commenting upon the Platonic Dialogues, I shall probably appear, especially in the earlier

Dialogues of this series, to see in Plato a less profound philosophy than has been commonly ascribed to him. But I hope the reader will find in the Dialogues themselves, as here presented, and in their connexion with each other, a justification of my views as to the purpose and object of the arguments used. In every part my rule has been to take what seemed the direct and natural import of the Dialogue as its true meaning. Some of the Commentators are in the habit of extracting from Plato doctrines obliquely implied rather than directly asserted: indeed they sometimes seem to ascribe to their Plato an irony so profound, that it makes no difference, in any special case, whether he asserts a proposition or its opposite. I have taken a different course, and have obtained, as I think, a more consistent result.

Among the Commentators from whom I have derived most assistance, I must mention Socher, many of whose views and arguments I have adopted without special acknowledgment.

The reader may desire to have some notice how far the process of abridgment has been allowed to interfere with full translation. I think that the usual marks of quotation which accompany the translation, compared with their absence, and with the *numbers* of the abridged Sections which are placed in the margin, will give sufficient indications on this point.

Three or four of the Dialogues here given have been asserted to be spurious by some modern Commentators. I have, in the appended Remarks, given my reasons for thinking that doubts of the genuineness of these Dialogues have been raised in many cases without any good foundation, and sometimes with great levity. At any rate, the Dialogues so attacked are parts of the Platonic literature which has delighted the world for ages; and it seems a very wild process to assume a plurality of Platos without strong reasons.

In the Translation of the *Phædo* and in the accompanying Remarks I have considered the force of the arguments as well as the drama of the Dialogue. That great subject, the immortality of the human soul, cannot be approached without calling up thoughts too serious to be dealt with as mere points of scholarship; and some recently published remarks on the subject appeared to require notice.

If the present volume should find favour in the eyes of the public, I shall be tempted to publish others of the Platonic Dialogues in the same manner.



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**LACHES.**  
**OF COURAGE**  
**(ANDRIA).**

**PLAT.**

**B**

THE title of this Dialogue in the common Manuscripts and Editions is; *Λαχης ἢ περὶ ἀνδρίας, Laches, or concerning Courage.* Most of the Platonic Dialogues have in this way a second title indicating the subject of the Dialogue; but this indication is of no authority, and is often founded in mistake. In the present instance, the second title describes pretty accurately the moral quality of which Definitions are discussed in the Dialogue; but perhaps a more important question in the eye of the writer was the possibility, selection, and consequences of such ethical Definitions.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE LACHES.

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EVERY one that has any tinge of literature has heard of Socrates and of Plato, who lived at Athens at the time of its greatest glory, when philosophy had its birth there. To Socrates is ascribed on all hands the peculiar and important office of having set many other persons a-thinking in such a way that what is especially called *philosophy* then began to be prosecuted; a way of thinking which has gone on from that time to this. To Plato we owe copious records of the conversations of Socrates, in a series of Dialogues which Plato wrote and which have come down to us. And yet in truth it is tolerably evident on the face of these Dialogues, that they are not so much records of real conversations as pictures of Socrates's manner of conversing, and of its effect on other persons; and yet again, that they are, in a great measure not even this, but Imaginary Dialogues, exhibiting the way in which Plato thought that philosophical subjects might be discussed, Socrates being almost always made a leading person in the discussion, and being generally represented as having the best of the argument. And it is these Platonic Dialogues which we are now to attempt to bring before the reader.

The Platonic Dialogues contain many references to the history of Socrates and of Athens; and an explanation of the points thus referred to is often requisite for the understanding of the Dialogues; but we shall for the present explain these points as they occur, rather than delay the reader by any long preliminary narrative or description. Moreover, the subject of philosophy includes a vast multiplicity of trains of thought, of the most different kinds, reaching from the first questions asked by an intelligent and inquisitive child, to subtle inquiries which task the intellects of the wisest man, and which often bewilder the clearest heads. The Platonic Dialogues present to us specimens of these different kinds of inquiries; and in order to understand the Dialogues we must, in presenting them to the English reader, mark them as belonging to one or another of these classes, according as they really do so. Where the discussion runs into subtleties which are now of no philosophical interest, we may abridge or omit them, in order that the general reader may not be repelled from that which has really a general interest. On the other hand, where the conversation is really concerning difficulties which belong to the infancy of systematic thinking,—concerning ambiguities of words and confusions of notions which may perplex children but which any thoughtful man can see through,—we must take care not to mislead our readers by speaking as if these juvenile exercises of thought had some profound and philosophical meaning. We shall find that this caution is by no means unneeded.

Since the Platonic Dialogues are of such various kinds, they may on this ground be separated into different classes; as they may also on

other grounds, for instance, their relation to the fate of Socrates the main character of their drama; or their connexion with the progress of opinion in the mind of Plato their author. But the present volume will contain a single class of them, which may on all these grounds be regarded as the earliest, and which we shall call *Dialogues of the Socratic School*.

In this designation one main fact implied is that Socrates in his conversation had some prevailing and habitual ways of thinking and talking, which are prominent in some of the Platonic Dialogues, while in others the train of thought and speculation appears to belong rather to Plato himself than to Socrates. And that this was so, we have abundant evidence. Besides Plato's Dialogues, we have other accounts, and especially Xenophon's *Memorials of Socrates*. In them we have, as in reading them we cannot doubt, the actual conversations of Socrates, reported with the accuracy of a Boswell, and without the colours and metamorphoses which the more independent and creative genius of Plato bestowed upon the picture of their common friend and master. The account which Xenophon gives of Socrates's discussions with the persons about him agrees, on the whole, with the general tenour of Plato's Dialogues of the Socratic School; though even in these, there is a vivacity of drama which belongs especially to Plato, as the reader will soon have an opportunity of judging.

We may, by the help of the accounts which have come to us, form a very complete idea of the manner and person of Socrates. Though we speak of his hearers and disciples, he was not a teacher in a lecture-room, with an official aspect and demeanour, expounding in measured tones,

to a surrounding body of pupils assembled for that purpose, a system which he had framed in his own mind. Socrates was a private Athenian citizen, who like other citizens had served in various public offices; served too as a soldier, and served well; and whose favourite and constant employment it was to spend his time in the streets, in the market-place, in the open shops, wherever the Athenians lounged and gossiped. There he got hold of one person after another, and questioned and cross-questioned him, and argued with him in the most pertinacious and unsparing manner. His appearance gave point to his copious and eager speech. His countenance was plain, amounting to grotesque, but vigorous, vivacious and good-humoured in a striking degree; his nose was flat, his mouth wide, his lips large, his forehead broad, with strong arches of wrinkles over each eye-brow, giving him a look of humorous earnestness; his figure solid but ungraceful, and his dress of the plainest materials. Why should the elegant and fastidious gentlemen of Athens care to listen to the talk of such a garrulous oddity of the streets? Why they should, we must learn by learning what that talk was, which we shall attempt to shew according to the representation given of it by his admirers. But that many of the brightest spirits of the time were wrought upon in a wonderful manner by these conversations, we have proof in this;—that they employed themselves in after life mainly in following out the notions which they had caught from him, and in impressing them upon others. Among the principal of these was Plato; and as I have said, he published, that is, circulated among his friends and followers, many written Dialogues, in all of which Socrates is the principal character. So

strong was the conviction among his friends, that he was a person of extraordinary insight respecting truth, that one of them, Chærophon, proposed to the Oracle at Delphi the question whether Socrates was not the wisest of men; and the oracle answered that he was. When this was told him, he said in explanation, that he supposed the oracle declared him wise because he knew nothing, and knew that he knew nothing; while other people knew as little as he, and thought that they knew a great deal. Every one is familiar with allusions to this story: such for instance as that in Lord Byron's verses:

“Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son;  
All that we know is, Nothing can be known.”

I must however remark, that the poet's representation of this skepticism (a representation congenial to his own mind) is exaggerated and therefore erroneous. “Athena's wisest son” did not say that nothing could be known; but that he, Socrates, at that time, in his then present state of mind, knew nothing. He did not say even that those about him knew nothing; though certainly he implied it in his remark on the oracle; and the general tendency of his conversation was to prove that it was so—that those with whom he talked knew as little as he did. But he did not say that he might not come to know something; far less did he assert or teach that nothing can be known:—that neither he nor any one else could, at any time, by any discipline, exertions, or advantages, come to know any thing—come into the possession of any knowledge which could truly be called knowledge.

This he did not say or mean. On the contrary, he was so far from meaning or believing



that knowledge was unattainable, that his life was spent in efforts to attain it. He was so far from teaching or leading his hearers and disciples to believe that true knowledge was unattainable, that his principal disciple, Plato, constantly employs himself in his writings in explaining the difference between true and false knowledge. Plato not only attempted to shew in a general way how true knowledge differed from false, but also to shew how it is that true knowledge is possible—what the nature of the mind must be to make it so. And acting upon this conviction, Plato both accepted large portions of the knowledge of his time as real and true, and attempted to augment such knowledge. I speak especially of the sciences of geometry and theoretical astronomy. Plato always assumes that the geometry which was then beginning to be known as a science among the Greeks, was firm and solid knowledge. It has proved itself so, for it has lasted from that time to this unchanged, and is still the object of undiminished admiration to all intelligent persons. And Plato repeatedly exhorts his countrymen and contemporaries to study and cultivate theoretical astronomy; promising them a vast progress in true knowledge if they did so. His exhortations were attended to, and his promises were fulfilled: for the theoretical astronomy of which we trace the first suggestions and attempts in the Platonic Dialogues, produced the theories which were not destroyed, only transformed and corrected, in all the subsequent stages of the science;—which produced the theories of Hipparchus and of Ptolemy; and from these indispensable steps of progress, the theories of Copernicus, Kepler and Newton.

Plato then certainly could not consistently teach that nothing can be known. Nor, as I have

said, did his master Socrates. What then did he teach on this subject?

He taught that he was seeking for knowledge which he had not yet obtained. He taught that when he examined and scrutinized the pretensions of other persons to such knowledge, he found that they could not bear the examination. They turned out worthless. The knowledge which they professed to have was not really knowledge. He was wise enough to find out that, and so far he was wiser than they.

But what was the knowledge which Socrates thus sought: which he could not find for himself, and which his neighbours could not help him to find? We have no difficulty in discerning this. Even in the very matter-of-fact reports which his other disciple Xenophon gives us of his conversation, we can easily trace his leading thoughts—his cardinal points. But still more in the writings of Plato, where those leading thoughts—those cardinal points are made the subject of highly dramatic Dialogues, we can, especially in one large class of the Dialogues which seem most to bear the impress of Socrates's influence on his scholar, trace these leading thoughts and mark these cardinal points very clearly. And in another class of Plato's Dialogues, when he appears to have made further progress in his own special line of thinking, and consequently is not so merely Socratic, we can see the kind of answer which he was then inclining to give to the Socratic questions.

What then were these cardinal Socratic questions? What was this knowledge which Socrates sought in vain, and which Plato thought he had found? What could the questions be which stimulated so long, so anxious, so persevering

an inquiry? Do these questions possess the same interest still? If so, the story of their investigation may still have its interest too; and it is under this persuasion that I have attempted to make Plato's Dialogues intelligible to English readers.

Most persons will acknowledge that the Socratic questions do possess their interest still. They are very simple questions, but questions of very enduring importance. People are still asking them day by day; and pretending to be very anxious, and doubtless many are very anxious, about the answers to them.

“What is right? What is wrong? What is good? or what is bad? What advantage has right over wrong? good over bad?”

These are questions, as all will allow, which have not yet lost their interest or importance.

But perhaps the reader may think they are not practical enough to interest him. These questions however are, it would seem, necessary preliminaries to other questions which are practical enough; and indeed so practical, that they turn up in every family, year by year, many times in every generation—questions such as these:

How are we to teach men—men, young men, young women, children—what is right and what is wrong? How are we to make them good? prevent their being bad?

And it was in point of fact with especial reference to these practical questions that Plato, and that Socrates, asked the previous more abstract questions. They wanted,—Socrates especially, wanted—to establish a better basis for the education of the young people of his time than then existed. He was a great educational Reformer. Plato was a still bolder Reformer in the same department.

I shall not enter into this question with any reference to our own time—except so far as on such a large and fundamental question of human social life, the thoughts of those who with pure purposes and clear intellects aimed at great Reforms must be interesting to all times: but I wish to shew how this subject is treated in Plato's Dialogues; which representation will be the less wearisome because the bare question is there clothed in a highly dramatic garb of historical and ethical circumstances, and is in many places, as the phrase is, as good as a play.

One of the questions then which occupied the mind of Socrates and of Plato—rather, I might say, *the* question,—was, How are we to make men good? and as a step to this, how are we to teach children Virtue?

Here was the question? How was any step to be made towards answering it?

A suggestion which occurred at the time of Socrates was this. Can we make any way by substituting the plural for the singular: *Virtues* for *Virtue*? How are we to teach children the Virtues?

This suggestion seemed to the Athenians of that time a hopeful one; for there were some things which they knew they could teach in separate portions—particular divisions of learning and knowledge. They knew that they could teach children and young persons arithmetic, and teach them geometry. If the separate Virtues were a particular kind of knowledge like geometry and arithmetic, they might be taught like geometry and arithmetic. But was this so?

I do not know whether this question will appear to many readers so easy, and the answer so obvious, that any long discussion of it must be frivolous and wearisome. Plainly it did not seem

so to the Greeks, for a considerable number of Plato's Dialogues are employed in the discussion of it in various forms. And one of these discussions forms the Dialogue which I shall first give, the *Laches*.

The question, as I have said, was, How are we to teach young persons the Virtues? and then, as preliminary to this, Is Virtue divisible into Virtues? and if so, what are the Virtues?

A long list of names describing qualities which commonly pass among men as Virtues, naturally forthwith offered itself to the mind: Temperance, Modesty, Justice, Discretion, Courage, and many others were familiar enough to men's ears. But still the question recurred, Are all of these really distinct? How do they differ one from another? Can we have definitions of each by which their distinctions and relations are marked? Who will undertake to define Temperance, Justice, Discretion, Courage, so that his definition will bear a searching examination?

This is the point of the inquiry at which it is taken up by several of the Platonic Dialogues. And I am now to give an account of a Dialogue in which the matter discussed is, the Definition of Courage. What is Courage? It being understood that Courage (including in the meaning Firmness, Energy, and the like) is one of the Virtues: so that the Definition is to give such an account of it as shall make it always laudable and always good. It is to be remembered also that the purpose—one purpose at least—of this separation of one Virtue from the others, was that it might be taught separately like a separate science; and therefore the thought that was uppermost in the mind of the inquirer, though not always expressed, was, what *kind* of Knowledge that Virtue

was? And with this preparation the reader will understand the progress of the Dialogue.

The discussion is, in the dialogue, invested with historical circumstances, as well as with the play of character and manners. The historical events here supposed are easily called to mind. The reader will recollect the great epoch of Greek history, the repulse of the Persian invasion, and the leaders of the Greeks of that day, Themistocles the Wise, and Aristides the Just. Contemporary with Aristides was another statesman, Thucydides, not the historian, but a man of an earlier generation, the rival of the great Pericles. These statesmen, Aristides and Thucydides, had each a son, Lysimachus and Melesias. These two, again, had each a son, called, as the custom of Athens was, by the names of their grandfathers: and thus we have a new Aristides and a new Thucydides, young men at the time of Socrates. Their fathers, Lysimachus and Melesias, are undistinguished country gentlemen, ashamed of their own insignificance. They wish to give their sons a good education, and with this view they consult two eminent military men at Athens, Nicias and Laches. Nicias was a favourite general of the Athenians; and after some successful campaigns, was the leader in the disastrous Sicilian expedition which ended in his death and the destruction of his army, B.C. 415. Laches was another Athenian general, who was killed at the battle of Mantinea, three years earlier. He is here represented as a blunt, impetuous soldier, somewhat puzzleheaded, and impatient of subtle discussion.

The particular virtue which is brought under discussion in the Laches is Courage, *Andria*, as the Greeks called it. The Dialogue begins between

the persons whom I have mentioned, Lysimachus and Melesias on the one side, Nicias and Laches on the other. The two fathers have been recommended to let their children take lessons of a master who teaches a sort of military gymnastics, a sword-exercise in heavy armour. The master has been exhibiting before Nicias and Laches, whom they had brought to see him; the Dialogue begins from this incident, and Socrates is introduced afterwards.

## LACHES.

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**L**YSIMACHUS. “Well, Nicias and Laches, you have seen this man’s performances; but the reason why I and my friend Melesias here wished you to see them in company with us, I have not yet told you, and I proceed to do so. We think that we may speak frankly to you, as we hope that you will to us. There are some persons, we are aware, who only laugh in their sleeves when people seek advice from them; and try to hit the fancy of persons who consult them, though they themselves think differently. But we think that you are persons who are judges of such matters, and who will tell us plainly your opinion; and so we have taken the liberty of asking your counsel about a matter that I shall now tell you of.

“This, after so much preface, is the point. Here are our two sons:—this, the son of my friend, and called Thucydides after his grandfather; this other, mine, and he too bearing his grandfather’s name, Aristides. Now we want to do all that we can for these lads; and not, as most do, leave them to do as they like while they are children; we want, young as they are, to do something in the way of educating them. Now we know that you also have sons; and we have concluded that



you must have been thinking about them, how they may be made good for something. And if you have not thought much about this matter, we beg you to recollect that it is not a thing to be neglected; and we invite you to deliberate with us about the education which we are to give our sons. And what has especially prompted us to do this, Nicias and Laches, I hope you will allow me to tell you, though I may seem tedious in doing so.

2\* “Melesias here and I live together, and our two boys with us. As I said at first, you will allow us to speak freely. Well. Each of us can tell the youths many notable good things which his own father did: what deeds they performed in war, what in peace; administering the affairs both of our allies and of Athens herself. But we have no deeds of our own to tell of; and this makes us ashamed; and we blame our fathers as being the cause of it. For when we were children, they left us to do as we liked, and attended to other people’s business. And this we represent to the boys; telling them that if they take no pains with themselves, and do not obey our directions, they will never come to be famous men; but if they attend to their studies, they may come to be worthy of the names that they bear. And they say that they will do as we tell them. And so we have got to consider what they are to learn or to study, so as to be good for as much as may be. And then some one told us of this new invention, that it is a good thing for a youth to learn the heavy-armed sword exercise, as making them good and brave soldiers; and recommended the person whose performance you have just seen; and directed us where to see him. So we thought we could not do better

\* These Sections are those of Bekker’s edition of Plato.

than come to see the sight and to get you to come and see it with us, and to advise us; or to consult with us, if you will, about the best way of educating youth. This is what we wanted to tell you: and now you have to give us your advice about this kind of exercise, whether boys should learn it or not, and about any other accomplishment or study which you can recommend for a young man; and you will tell us what you do, being in the same case with ourselves."

NICIAS. "As for my part, Lysimachus and Melesias, I applaud your views, and I am ready to act upon them in conjunction with you; and so, I think, is Laches here."

LACHES. "You think rightly, Nicias. Indeed what Lysimachus has just said about his father and Melesias's appears to me to be very truly said, with reference both to them, and to us, and to everybody who employs himself about the public business of Athens; their children and their private affairs in general are set aside and neglected. As to that matter, you are quite right, Lysimachus.

"But I am surprised that you ask us to be your advisers about the education of your boys, and do not apply to Socrates who stands here: in the first place, because he is your neighbour and belongs to the same parish as yourself; and in the next place, as a person who has paid special attention to such subjects, and is curious about all new exercises and new studies for young men."

LYS. "How say you, Laches? Does Socrates who is here pay attention to such matters?"

LAC. "Very particularly, Lysimachus."

NIC. "That I can answer for, as well as Laches. He lately provided me a teacher of music for my son, Damon the disciple of Agathocles;

a man not only extraordinarily accomplished in music, but in almost every subject fit to be entrusted with the care of young men like these."

4 LYS. "I must acknowledge, Socrates, and Nicias, and Laches, that people of my standing are little acquainted with younger men; seeing that old age makes us mostly stay at home. But if, O son of Sophronicus, you can give me, your fellow-parishioner, good counsel, pray do. You have some call to do it, for your father was a friend of our family. Your father and I were companions and friends, and I never had a dispute with him to the day of his death.

"And now I have a sort of floating memory to have heard something of this before. These lads, in their talk at home, often speak of Socrates, and praise him much; but I never asked them if they meant Socrates the son of Sophronicus. Tell me, boys, is this the Socrates you are always talking of?"

THE BOYS. "Yes, father, it is he."

LYS. "By my faith, Socrates, I am glad that you do credit to your father, that excellent man; and especially on this account, that as we are so connected, we shall have a claim to what is yours, and you to what is ours."

LAC. "By all means, Lysimachus, keep a good hold of the man. He is worth keeping: for I have seen him when he did credit, not only to his father, but to his country. In the retreat from Delium, he and I were side by side; and I can tell you that if the rest had behaved as he did, this city of ours would have kept her standing, and would not have had such a sad fall as she has had."

5 LYS. "Socrates, such praise is worth having; for it comes from those whose word is unquestion-

able, and who themselves deserve praise. I assure you, I rejoice to hear that you have so good a reputation. You may depend upon me as one of your fast friends. But you ought to have come to see us before, and to have reckoned upon us as people belonging to you. That would have been the right way. But now for the future, as we have become acquainted, you must do so. You must be friends with us and with these lads, and we will be friends with you. You will do this, and I will put you in mind of it hereafter. But now what do you say on the matter which we were talking about? Do you think this is a good exercise for boys, this heavy-armed sword play?"

Socrates is thus introduced into the Dialogue, and in some degree characterized by reference to the battle of Delium, on which occasion his friend Alcibiades also served in the cavalry and helped to protect Socrates in the retreat. And thus, as Mr Grote observes\*, Socrates was exposing his life for Athens, at nearly the same time at which Aristophanes at Athens was exposing him to derision in the comedy of the Clouds, as a dreamer alike morally worthless and physically incapable.

We see that the battle of Delium is here spoken of as followed by the fall of Athens. It is true that this battle was the beginning of the Athenian reverses; but the fall of Athens, that is, the capture of the city by the enemy, did not take place till twenty years later. But this fall was after the death of Nicias and Laches, and therefore cannot be the event here referred to; unless we suppose great carelessness on such subjects in the writer.

Socrates being thus introduced, immediately takes the lead in conversation. He pleads at first

\* *Hist. of Greece*, Vol. VI. p. 541.

that he is younger and more inexperienced than the others, and that it is reasonable he should first hear what they have to say; and then give his counsel, if he has anything to add to theirs. And he calls upon Nicias to speak first.

6. Nicias, in rather a formal way, gives his opinion in favour of the new gymnastic exercise, as he says, for several reasons. It keeps young men out of worse employments of their leisure, gives them strength and agility, is a preparation for actual war, both in the rank and in single affrays; and is likely to set young men upon learning other parts of the art of war. It would also, he says, make a man braver and bolder than he would otherwise be; and, a thing he says not to be despised, would give him a military carriage which would inspire awe. "So that," he says in conclusion, "I think, and for these reasons, that it is a good thing to teach the young men this exercise. But I should be glad to hear what Laches says."

7. Laches is altogether on the other side. He says, "Of course it is difficult to say of any art that it is not worth while learning it. If this exercise be an Art, as the Professors of it say, and as Nicias assumes, let it be learnt. But if it be no art but only a trick, or if it be a frivolous art, why should any body learn it? I judge by this. I think that if it had been worth anything, it would not have escaped the notice of the Lacedæmonians, who care for no arts but such as promote success in war. Or if they had not found it out, any one who had done so might have gone to them and would have been sure of being received with honour and rewarded: as a man who writes good tragedies is honoured among us Athenians. A man who thinks he has composed fine tragedies does not roam about Greece on the outside of At-

tica, exhibiting his compositions in other cities; he naturally comes here and exhibits them here. Now I see that these military gymnasts seem to look upon Lacedæmon as a sacred spot by human foot not to be trod, and they never touch the soil. They go round about that state and exhibit in cities which do not pretend to be first rate in military matters.

“Moreover, Lysimachus, I have seen many inventions of this kind, and I never knew any practical good come of them. Those who have studied these special exercises, by some curious fatality, never get any credit in real fighting. There was Stesileos, whom you, as well as I, have seen exhibiting before large audiences, and with vast pretensions: but I saw him make another exhibition of a more real kind without intending it. He had got a spear with a sickle at the end, a special contrivance for such a special person as himself; and when the ship on which he was came to close quarters with one of the enemy’s ships, I must tell you what came of this contrivance of his. He stuck it into the rigging of the adverse ship, and pulled hard, but could by no means get it loose: the ships then went opposite ways passing side along side; and he had to run along his ship to keep hold of his spear; and when the ships parted, the shaft of the spear glided through his hands till he had only hold of the butt-spike of it; his plight produced laughter and cheering in the enemy’s crew, till some one threw a stone which fell near his feet on the deck, and he let go his spear; and then the people in our ships could no longer refrain from laughing, when they saw that sickle-spear of his sticking out of the enemy’s vessel.

“And so these inventions may be worth something, as Nicias says; but all that ever came in my way, were of this kind. So that, as I said at

first, if it be either a worthless art, or a trick and no art at all, it is not worth learning. If a man who is not brave learns it, he will be more sure to expose himself; and if a brave man learns it, he will be all the more a mark for fault-finding; for people are offended with the assumption of extraordinary science; so that if a man do not justify it by doing something extraordinary, he gets himself laughed at. This is my opinion, Lysimachus, of this exercise. But as I said at first, you must not let Socrates off; but must make him tell us his opinion about this matter."

- 10 Lys. "Indeed I beg you will do so, Socrates, for we want some one to give a casting voice. If these two had agreed, it would have been less necessary; but, as you hear Laches and Nicias are of opposite opinions, which of the two do you agree with?"

Socrates then suggests that the question is not properly to be decided by a mere majority, but by the judgment of a person who has a special knowledge of the subject. And when he has obtained the assent of Melesias to this, he asks further,

- 11 "But what is the subject?" Nic. "Why, Socrates, are we not talking about this heavy-armed exercise, and considering whether young men ought to learn it?"

Socrates then inquires, after his inductive manner, whether there is not a distinction of seeking things as *means*, and as *ends*. If we consider about a medicine for the eyes, we are to consider not so much the medicine, as the eyes. If we consider about a bit for a horse's mouth, we consider not about the bit, but about the horse. We want an adviser who has a special knowledge of that on *account of which* we make the inquiry. Now to apply this: we make this inquiry for the sake of

forming the character of these boys; we want an adviser therefore who is specially skilful as to the formation of character, and who has been instructed by good teachers in this art.

Laches asks him, if he has not known persons who were skilful in an art without having had teachers. He replies, "Certainly; but then you would not believe that they were good workmen except they shewed you some specimen of their work."

Socrates then proposes that they shall state 12 who have been their teachers in this art, or what performances of their own they can refer to. He says that he himself has no pretensions of this kind; and advises Lysimachus not to let the two 13 generals off, as Laches had advised him not to let *him* off. Lysimachus accepts this as good advice. But Nicias says:

"It appears, Lysimachus, that the fact is as 14 you say: you are not personally acquainted with Socrates, though you have a family connexion with him. You never can have been in company with him, except perhaps at some service in the temple of your district, or some meeting of your neighbourhood, when he was a boy. You have never met him since he was grown up."

Lys. "Why do you say so?"

Nic. "You do not seem to know that when 15 any one comes to converse with Socrates, whatever be the point from which the conversation starts, he conducts it so as to make the person give an account of himself, past and present; and does not let him go till he has examined him to the bottom. I am accustomed to this; I know it will be my lot; but I like the man's conversation. I do not think it a bad thing to be made to recollect whatever one may have done not quite right,



and so to be led to try to avoid committing the same error in future: according to Solon's maxim, to be always learning something as you grow older, and not to think that old age will bring wisdom of itself. So it will not be disagreeable to me to pass an examination by Socrates. I knew beforehand that it would be so, and that, with Socrates here, we should have to talk more about ourselves than about our sons. But, as I have said, I have no objection to Socrates turning the conversation as he chooses. You must ask Laches what he thinks of such a proceeding."

- 16 LAC. "My feeling about these discourses is simple, Nicias; or rather, it is not simple, but twofold. I like them, and I do not like them. When I hear a man talking about virtue or wisdom who is himself a man worthy of the subject, I enjoy it much. The agreement between the person who speaks and the matter about which he speaks, makes to my ear the finest harmony. The man then sings of virtue in the true Dorian mood, the simple and solid strains of ancient rural Greece, not with the Ionic subtleties, still less with the corrupt and enervated modulations of the Phrygian and Lydian mood. Such a man delights me, and I then think that I am fond of moral discourses. But if the man be not of this kind, he disgusts me, and all the more, the better he speaks; and then I become a hater of such discourses. As for Socrates here, I know nothing about his way of talking, but I know that he can do deeds, and I judge him to be a man worthy to talk of virtue with all freedom. And this being so, I am quite willing to be examined by the man, and shall not think it disagreeable to learn. I am willing to adopt Solon's maxim (to go on learning), only adding one condition; I have no objection, as I

grow old, to go on learning, *from good men*. The teacher must be a good man, that I may not be a dull scholar. As for his being younger or older, that is a matter which gives me no concern. So, Socrates, I give you leave to teach me and to prove me wrong as you like, and to make out what I know. Such account do I make of you, ever since the day when we were in the battle-field together, and you shewed yourself a good man, as a man ought to be who pretends to teach. So say what you please, and do not heed any difference of age."

SOC. "It appears then that there is no objection on your part to our consulting and considering."

Lysimachus again exhorts Socrates to undertake the discussion, saying that he himself is old and has forgotten the little he ever knew. Socrates promises to obey. "But," he says, "we are trying to find who can teach certain things and thus can improve young men; and for this purpose we must know what these things are. If we know that sight is an improvement upon eyes, we must know what sight is. If we know that hearing is a benefit to the ears, we must know what hearing is. So as we want to improve these young men's characters by giving them Virtue, we must know what Virtue is."

And thus, after this preamble, we are brought to the general question of the Socratic Dialogues, "What Virtue is." This question is, in various Dialogues, made to branch off into others; as, whether it is divisible into Virtues and the like. In this case, however, it is taken for granted at first that it may be divided. Socrates says, "Let us not inquire about the whole of Virtue at present, but about a part of it; the part of it which

is concerned with warfare,—*Andria*—Courage. Let this be our question: What is courage?"

Laches, who is unpractised in the requirements of definitions, begins by saying, "Why of course, Socrates, that is easily answered: if a man stands steady in the rank and beats off the attacking enemy, depend upon it he is a brave man."

Socrates suggests, very deferentially, that he may have failed to make his question intelligible; for that this answer does not meet it; a man who stands in his place and fights is brave, no doubt; but there are combatants who run, and yet fight bravely: and Homer praises the horses of Æneas for their rapid change of place; and speaks of Æneas himself as the Master of Flight.

Laches says, "Of course this is the proper praise  
19 of war-chariots and horse-soldiers." And Socrates then explains that he did not merely ask what courage is in the hoplites, the full-armed infantry, but in every class of soldiers: and not only in war, but in every kind of danger, as by sea; and against diseases and poverty and political dangers; who are brave against these? And not only against pain, but against desire, and pleasure, who can resist and repel them? for there are some who are brave in this way. Laches assents to this.

SOC. "All these then are brave; but some manifest their courage against pleasures, some, against pains; some, against desires; some, against fears; and those who are not brave, but on the contrary, cowardly, faint-hearted, base-spirited, shew their disposition in the same cases." Laches assents.

SOC. "Well now, what is each of these dispositions? That was my question. Where is that *courage* which is the same quality in all these

cases? Do you yet understand me?" Laches  
 "Not quite."

Socrates then gives an example of a definition. 20  
 He says there is such a quality as Velocity, which appears in many different forms; a man may run quickly, or play the lyre quickly, or speak quickly, or learn quickly. Now what is that Quickness or Velocity which appears in all these cases? If any one were to ask me, I should say that it is the power of doing much in a short time. Laches says, "This would be right."

Soc. "Now try in the same way, Laches, to tell me what power Courage is; which is the same against pleasure and pain and the other things which we mentioned; and which is the same because in all the cases we call it Courage."

Laches is now induced to attempt a definition of Courage so explained. It is, he says, a certain Strength of Mind\*.

Socrates forthwith proceeds to pick a hole in this definition. I am sure, he says, that you think Courage an excellent thing: to which Laches emphatically assents. "But," says Socrates, "though Strength joined with Wisdom or Prudence is an excellent thing, Strength joined with Folly is a mischievous and dangerous thing. And therefore strength cannot be that excellent thing Courage."

Laches assents to this; and Socrates then proceeds to mend his definition for him. "You now 21 hold," says he, "that Courage is Strength with Prudence.

"But let us see with what sort of Prudence:—with prudence which regards all results? As if a man have strength of mind which makes

\* *κατρεπτα τις τῆς ψυχῆς.*

him give his money prudently, knowing that he shall get more in return, do you call him Courageous?" LAC. "Truly no."

Soc. "Or if a physician, when his patient is sick and yet wants to eat and drink what is bad for him, has strength of mind to refuse him, do you call the physician courageous?" LAC. "By no means."

Soc. "Or in war, if a man is steady in his place knowing that he will be well supported by others and that he has the advantage of the ground, do you call him the braver, or the man who resists him on the opposite side?"

LAC. "The man on the opposite side."

Soc. "And yet his strength has less prudence joined with it than that of the other. And if a horse-soldier who is a skilful rider fights boldly, do you say that he is braver than one who has not that skill? Or if a man jumps into a pond, who cannot swim, do you say that he is braver than a man who does the same who can swim?" To these questions Laches answers in the affirmative. Socrates then resumes: "And yet here we have Boldness without Prudence; and therefore we have that Strength without Wisdom which, we agreed, is a bad thing, and therefore cannot be the same with Courage, which is a good thing. And so," Socrates goes on to say, "we have not hit upon that genuine Dorian mood of which you, Laches, spoke; for our deeds do not agree with our words. Any one who should hear us would think that though we may have courage in our actions, we have it not in our discourse."

It is plain that at this stage of the discussion, Laches is merely an instrument in the hands of the Socrates of the Dialogue, used for the purpose of bringing out his meaning. The argument which

is spread through this series of questions and answers we might express very briefly. It being assumed that *Andria*, Courage, is a Virtue always to be admired, it cannot be mere Boldness, for Boldness may be combined with mere Folly, and be no Virtue at all; and if it be Boldness combined with Prudence, the Prudence may make the Courage cease to be courage. Laches is represented as exhibiting indignation at himself for being unable to get out of this puzzle, or to express what he feels that he knows. Socrates tells him that they must not lose Courage in hunting down Courage\*, and proposes to engage Nicias in the chase. Laches assents, and Socrates calls upon Nicias for aid <sup>24</sup> to his friends who, he says, are at sea with cross winds and cannot get onwards. "So do you tell us what you hold Courage to be." Nicias does not refuse the invitation, and begins by questioning Socrates, and reminding him of his own fundamental principles. "I have often heard you say, Socrates, that all virtue is a kind of knowledge." Laches does not like this beginning, but Socrates allows that it is so. And proceeding from this point he begins to ask Nicias, What kind of knowledge True Courage is. Socrates proceeds in his usual inductive way; "Is it the knowledge of flute-playing? No. Or of harp-playing? No. Of what, then?" Nicias says it is the knowledge of what is dangerous and what is safe, in war, and elsewhere.

This account of the nature of True Courage is forthwith attacked by Laches with some contempt. "How absurd!" he says. "How so?" asks

\* We have here the same kind of personification of an abstraction which we shall have to note in other places. We must go on, he says, that *Courage* may not laugh at us for not pursuing her *courageously*.

Socrates. "Do not," he adds, "let us revile him, but let us set him right if he is wrong."

Nicias says, "Laches wants to make out that I am talking nonsense, because it was proved that he was doing so."

25 Laches says, "Well, Nicias; but I will prove that you *are* talking nonsense. You say that Courage is the knowledge of what is safe and what is dangerous. It follows that physicians are the most courageous of men; for they have the most of *this* knowledge—the knowledge of what is safe and what is dangerous."

Nicias says, "No; physicians know whether a man will recover of a disease or not; but whether it is more dangerous to recover or not to recover—do you think, Laches, that they know that? Do you not think that in many cases it is better for men not to recover? Do you not think that in many cases death is better than life? And to such persons is it not recovery from disease which is dangerous?" This Laches does not deny. But he says, "At this rate, the soothsayers—the prophets who can foresee the future, are the only brave men; for they alone can know whether it is better for any particular person to die or to live." And he turns somewhat fiercely upon Nicias, and says: "Do you call yourself a prophet? or do you allow that you are no prophet, and therefore not brave?" Nicias is not daunted, even by this application of his principles: he says, with assumed surprise, "What? Do you think that even a prophet can know what is dangerous and what is safe?" LAC. "Why if they do not, who does?" NIC. "Why the persons of whom I speak; the truly brave. The prophet might know the future by his knowledge of omens; whether it shall be loss or gain, defeat or victory, life or death; but which of

them is best for any man, he knows no more than another."

Laches is here so indignant at Nicias's mode of treating this subject that he does not speak to him in reply, but turns to Socrates. "This courageous man of his," he says, "who knows what is dangerous and what is safe, he will not allow to be a physician, nor even a prophet: I do not know who he can be, except he be some god. But the fact is, that Nicias will not candidly allow that he is talking nonsense; he twists this way and that to conceal his being beaten. You and I might have done the same, but we were resolved not to contradict ourselves. If we were pleading before a court of judges, it might be of some use. But in a conversation like ours it is absurd for a man to take shelter in vague expressions."

SOC. "I agree with you, Laches; but let us consider whether Nicias has not really some meaning. Let us ask him what he does mean; and if it is sense, let us accept it, and if nonsense, set him right."

LAC. "Question him yourself, if you like; 27 I *have* questioned him."

SOC. "Very good. I will question him on the part of both of us."

He then begins to bring out in the usual interrogative manner, an argument against Nicias's definition of courage by shewing that it does not include what is commonly called *courage* in animals. "Courage is, you say, the knowledge of what is dangerous and what is safe: and this is a knowledge not possessed by every man, not even by physicians and prophets: and therefore (using a Greek proverb) it is not every pig that knows so much: and not even the celebrated Krommyonian swine (a legendary boar



of noted fierceness) would be courageous according to you. And I say this, not in jest but seriously. For according to your account, either we must say that brute animals have not courage, or we must say that they have reason; and indeed that the lion and the tiger have more knowledge than most men: and further, by defining courage as you define it, the lion and the deer, the bull and the monkey, have the same amount of courage."

- 28 Laches is delighted with this attack on his brother general, and enforces it somewhat tauntingly. "Yes," he says, "answer this fairly, Nicias; these animals which we all allow to be courageous, have they this knowledge that you speak of? Are they wiser than man; or will you contradict everybody, and say that they are not courageous?"

Nicias, however, is not to be moved by such taunts. He says, "No, Laches, I do not call animals courageous which do not fear danger, because they know nothing about danger; I call them fearless and foolish. Do you suppose I call infants courageous, which fear nothing because they know nothing? Fearlessness and courage are not the same thing. Courage with Prudence is the gift of few. Boldness, fearlessness with imprudence, is the attribute of many men, women, children and brutes. What you and most people call courage, I call mere boldness. I call only those creatures courageous which have reason."

Laches is very severe upon this mode of treating the subject. He says, "You see, Socrates, what a great man he makes himself; while he takes away the honour of being courageous from those whom all acknowledge to deserve it."

NIC. "Not I, Laches: be not afraid. But I say that you and Lamachus, and many other Athenians are *wise*, if you *are* courageous."

(Lamachus was an Athenian general who perished with Nicias in the Syracusan expedition.)

Laches is still unpacified; but Socrates says, "Do you not perceive that this is the philosophy which he has learned of my friend Damon? Now Damon is almost as clever as Prodicus in distinguishing the meanings of words."

LAC. "Yes, such quibbling is fitter for a sophist than for a man to whom the state commits important trusts."

SOC. "But it is proper, my good friend, that a man to whom great interests are committed should have great wisdom: and therefore should know such things as well as others."

Socrates then enters upon another argument 29 which is frequently used in the Dialogue, and which adds little to the reasoning or the drama of this. I shall therefore state it briefly. "Courage, you allow," Socrates says to Nicias, "is only a part of Virtue, the other parts being Temperance, Justice and the rest. But Courage, you say, is the knowledge of what is dangerous and what is safe. Now what do you mean by danger? You mean coming evil. The fear of danger is the apprehension of future evil. Therefore Courage involves the knowledge of future evil. But the know- 30 ledge of future evil must involve the knowledge of evil generally, past, present or future. Therefore 31 Courage must be the knowledge of good and evil generally. But this being so, how can Courage be anything less than the whole of Virtue? What is any Virtue, (Temperance, Justice, Purity, for instance) but the knowledge of good and evil? And so we have not found what we were seeking, the nature and definition of the virtue Courage, in particular.

Nicias is represented as assenting to this; and 32

Laches jeers him still more roughly than before. He says,

“Why, my dear Nicias, I thought that you were going to find it out, when you laughed at my answers to Socrates. I thought that the philosophy which you had derived from Damon could not fail to carry you through.”

NIC. “Well said! It seems that you care not for being exposed as ignorant what Courage is, provided I too seem as ignorant as you. It does not concern you that you are with me in a state of ignorance of that which every man who would be anything ought to know. You seem to follow the very common way of looking at others and not at yourself. For my part, I intend to return to this question and reconsider what has been said, with the help of Damon (whom you ridicule without ever having seen him) and of other sensible men. When I have made the matter out clearly, I will not grudge my instructions to you; and in truth, you appear to want them very much.”

LAC. “You are doubtless a wise man, Nicias: but nevertheless I advise these men Lysimachus and Melesias not to consult you or me about the education of their sons, but Socrates here, and, as I said before, not to let him go. That is what I should do.”

Nicias says that he had already tried to engage Socrates to instruct his son Niceratus, but in vain. Lysimachus still hopes to prevail with him; but Socrates says that he conceives they have all need to learn themselves, before they can teach others. He says he is not afraid of the ridicule of taking a master if he can find one, and refers to the same verse of Homer which is quoted in the Char-mides:

Modesty is not a good for a man that is needy and craving.

Lysimachus says that he, old as he is, is still willing to learn; and begs Socrates to visit him on the morrow. "That," says Socrates, "I will do, God willing:" and so the Dialogue ends.

## REMARKS ON THE LACHES.

THE somewhat rough expressions of Laches have by some commentators been considered so indecorous as to form an argument against the genuineness of this Dialogue; though, as seems to me, Plato in other Dialogues has several characters who are as rude as Laches; and it is somewhat bold to assume some unknown author of the Dialogue, since he must be a writer quite as eminent as Plato in dramatic liveliness.

The question naturally occurs to us, what is the result of this Dialogue? the conclusion at which Plato supposed he had arrived by the arguments here used? And to this question, the reply seems to me to be, that the result was to bring into view the arguments for and against the doctrine that Courage is a kind of Knowledge. The argument against the doctrine is that so frequently occurring in Plato, and is rather a puzzle than an argument.—If Courage be a kind of knowledge, it must be the knowledge of good and evil; but every other Virtue also is the knowledge of good and evil. Therefore Courage does not differ from other Virtues. The arguments for the doctrine (that true Courage resides in the knowledge of what is really dangerous and really safe) have more the air of sincerity: for when Nicias says that though a physician may know whether his patient will die or live, he does not know whether his death is a good or an evil, the sentiment may appear overstrained, and yet it is nothing more than what Socrates himself on his trial said to his judges, and acted out in his prison, when his own life was concerned. When his judges had condemned him, his address to them ended with the memorable words: "And now, O Judges, we separate: I go to die, you remain to live: but which is the

better path, only the Powers who are above us know." And when escape from prison, in the interval between his condemnation and execution, was offered him by his friends, he rejected the offer, as an evasion of the laws which he was bound to respect.

The distinction which Nicias draws between mere animal boldness and rational courage is not overthrown by anything said against it; and certainly Prodicus, who was noted for distinguishing synonyms, could not be justly charged with over-fine subtleties, if his distinctions were all as real as this. But Plato, who was seeking a general ethical system, would not be content with a distinction, however true, which he could not generalize; and thus leaves this distinction unaccepted by Socrates.

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I will offer a remark or two on the opinions of the Commentators on Plato.

Schleiermacher makes this Dialogue a supplement to the Protagoras; while Ast rejects it, and holds it to be no work of Plato, because it is inconsistent with the Protagoras. It cannot justly be said to be inconsistent with any Dialogue, for no conclusion is drawn. And though in the Protagoras, Socrates takes the side that Courage is Knowledge, while in the Laches he opposes that doctrine when propounded by Nicias; in both Dialogues he uses the argument that if it be knowledge, it is a knowledge of good and evil; and thus identical with every other virtue. In both Dialogues he uses this argument to disprove the partibility of *Virtue* into *Virtues*. But the Laches is in no way a supplement to the Protagoras; for the doctrine that Courage is a kind of Knowledge is not carried any further, or at all more clearly explained, or freed from any more difficulties in the Laches than in the Protagoras. Rather the Laches may be regarded as a detached and partial essay, including a part of the same train of thought which was afterwards presented in another form in the Protagoras.

We learn from Xenophon (*Mem.* iv. 6. 9) that Socrates did really use the arguments which are here assigned to Nicias.

“Do you reckon Courage, Euthydemus, an excellent thing? Most excellent. And a useful? Useful in the highest degree. Is it useful to be ignorant of what is dangerous and what is safe? Very far from it. Those then who do not fear danger because they do not know it are not courageous? Certainly; otherwise many madmen and many cowards might be called courageous.” And the conclusion arrived at is, that those who know how to deal rightly with danger are brave, and those who do not know this, are feeble-minded.

And in another place Xenophon tells us (*Mem.* III. 9) how he discussed the effect of military knowledge upon Courage.

“Being asked whether Courage were acquired by education or given by nature, he replied, that undoubtedly there was, in this endowment, a difference of original characters in different persons, not arising entirely from national education; as appears from this, that different citizens of the same state have courage in very different degrees; but yet that training might do much, and would greatly influence the result. The Lacedæmonians with their spears and shields are braver soldiers than the Persians with their bows and arrows. But it is not the arms that make all the difference. Give the Scythians and Persians shields and spears, and still they will not dare to face the Spartans. And yet the arms make some difference. Take away from the Spartans their heavy weapons, and give them weak bucklers and light lances, and they will not stand against the Thracians. Give them bows and arrows only, and they will not be able to fight against the Scythians. Nature does something; art and teaching do something.”

These are the points which Socrates really discussed, and Plato makes him discuss the same points in the Laches. The skill and boldness which Plato has shewn in investing this plain Socratic matter with a lively dramatic form are remarkable enough. But the matter is so Socratic, that I conceive we must assign the Dialogue to that early period when Plato had not yet advanced from his master's point of view to speculations and doctrines of his own, and thus I arrange it as one of the *Dialogues of the Socratic School*.



CHARMIDES.  
OF SOUND-MINDEDNESS  
(*SOPHROSYNE*).



THE second title of the *Charmides*, ἡ περὶ σωφροσύνης, is appropriate enough, for the whole Dialogue is employed in discussing Definitions of *Sophrosyne*, some of which are introduced as parts of the drama, while others appear to have been already proposed by other persons, and to be taken up here as matters of controversial criticism. But the meaning of *Sophrosyne* is so widely varied in the course of the Dialogue, that I have renounced all attempt to express it by a single English word. In the title I take that which comes nearest etymologically, *sound-mindedness*.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARMIDES.

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IN the Introduction to the Laches I have endeavoured to explain how Socrates, and Plato as his disciple, were led to give so much importance to the business of framing precise Definitions of particular virtues, such as Courage, Temperance and the like. In the Laches various attempts to define *Andria*, one of the Virtues, were brought forward in a dramatic manner. In the Charmides we have a like dramatic attempt to define another of the Virtues, *Sophrosyne*; but here there is a difficulty of translation which was not much felt in the former Dialogue. *Andria* may throughout the Laches be translated *Courage*, though both the English and the Greek word include, in their ordinary application, qualities of different kinds, ranging from the fearless rage of brutes, to the calm energy of the brave man, as appears in the Dialogue. But *Sophrosyne* was a word of still more varied use; and it does not seem possible to find an English word which shall follow it through all its alterations of practical and popular usage; for these appear to range from the temper which we enjoin upon children when we tell them to be *good*, to the disposition at which philosophers aim when they study to be *wise*. Perhaps we may make a sort

of parallel to the play of the Dialogue, if we imagine it to be held in French, and that, beginning by questioning a boy who had been exhorted to be *sage*, it were to end in a discussion about *sagesse* in its most philosophical sense. Every well educated Athenian boy was enjoined to be *Sophrôn*; and when the boy Charmides is first interrogated by Socrates, he naturally explains the word as he had been led to understand it on such occasions.

In order that I may the better convey what an Athenian boy at that time was likely to understand when he was enjoined to be "*Sophrôn*," "good," "*sage*," I may notice for a moment another celebrated Athenian writer, whose writings, particularly one remarkable piece, also bear upon the history of Socrates: I mean Aristophanes, whose drama, "*The Clouds*," had for its purpose to turn into ridicule the new Professors of Education at Athens, and especially Socrates, as the representative of them. In this curious extravaganza, the opposition of the old traditional Athenian education and the new fashion is exhibited in a dramatic form, with a homely plainness of person-making which may remind an English reader of John Bunyan's "*Pilgrim's Progress*." Two abstract characters, *Good Old Cause*, and *Bad New Cause* (*Logos Dikaios*, and *Logos Adikos*) are introduced on the stage as persons, and argue against each other. *Good Old Cause* describes what had been, in earlier and better times, the education of the Athenian youth. "I will tell," he says, "the old kind of education, how it was settled by use, when I was in my prime, and virtue was practised." He then goes on to give details, which are curious as well as characteristic. "In the first place, you never heard a boy utter a murmur on any occasion. Then they went in an orderly

manner along the streets to school, neighbours' sons going together in troops, without great coats, even if it snowed. Then their master gave them their lesson in singing, while they sat in a decorous attitude, good plain old Athenian songs.... They sat and rose, and moved, and took care of their persons according to careful rules of modesty. They never took the dainties which were brought to table, or helped themselves before their seniors."—"But what obsolete antediluvian nonsense is this!" says his opponent. "Aye," rejoins Good Old Cause, "but those who were so brought up were the men who fought at Marathon." The debate goes on in a very lively manner; but this part is sufficient to illustrate the early portion of the Charmides, to which I now proceed.

## CHARMIDES.

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I SHALL begin by translating the opening of the Charmides at length; though afterwards, when the state of the Dialogue allows it, I shall abridge considerably Plato's narration; not only by omitting parts in our view irrelevant or superfluous, but also by simplifying the style; for the Attic elegance of Plato often tends to prolixity and repetition. Several of the attempts to translate Plato appear to me to be nearly unintelligible to the English reader, in consequence of translating every phrase of the original.

The Dialogue held between Socrates, Charmides, and Critias, which forms the principal part of the composition, is preceded by an introduction in which Socrates describes the occasion on which the Dialogue took place. This is a very common kind of opening in the series of Platonic Dialogues; but generally, this description of the occasion is given in a Dialogue between Socrates and some new person to whom the narration is made, and thus we have the principal Dialogue enclosed in another Dialogue, as a picture in a decorated frame; a practice which has been followed by many writers: and especially in our own time, by Walter Scott, in his various series of Tales. In the present

instance, Socrates tells his story; but there is no mention of any particular person to whom it is told; though the time mentioned, "the day before yesterday," at once gives it a dramatic air. The time supposed, is when the Athenians were carrying on the siege of Potidæa.

"The day before yesterday," says Socrates, "in the evening, I came from the camp at Potidæa; and as was natural for a man who had been for a long time away from the city, I went to the customary places of resort; and especially to the Palæstra, or Exercising Room of Taureas, opposite to the chapel in the King's Portico\*: and there I found a considerable number of persons, some of whom were unknown to me, but the greater part were persons whom I knew. And these, when they saw me come in quite unexpectedly, nodded their salutations to me at a distance on all sides; but Chærephon jumped out of the middle of the crowd as if he were mad, ran to me, and took me by the hand, and cried, 'O Socrates, are you safe from the battle?' for there had been a battle at Potidæa, and they had just heard of it. I replied, 'Even as you see.' 'The report which came 2 here,' said he, 'is that the battle was a very bloody one, and that several of our acquaintance are killed.'—'That,' I said, 'is about the truth.' 'And were you,' he said, 'in the battle?'—'I was in the battle.'—'Come here,' said he, 'and let us sit down together; and tell me about it: for I have heard no particulars as yet.' So he led me to Critias the son of Callæschrus, to make me sit down there. And I, taking a seat, saluted

\* The second of the nine annual Archons or Governors at Athens was called *the King*, in connexion with certain religious offices which he had to perform.

Critias and the others, and told them the news of the army, in answer to their various questions."

Chærephon was the zealous friend of Socrates, and Critias a frequenter of his society. The mention of the battle of Potidæa in this introduction of course fixes the date of the *drama* to B. C. 432. I shall afterwards consider how this bears on the date of the *writing*. The transition is soon made to the especial subject of the piece. Socrates goes on to say:—

"When we had had enough of this, I asked them about matters at home, how philosophy went on, and whether, among the youths of the time, there were any that were distinguished for good parts, or for good looks, or for both. (We must bear in mind the Athenian love of beauty.) On 3 this, Critias looking towards the door, where he saw some youths coming in, wrangling with one another, and a crowd of others following them, said: 'As for the good looks, Socrates, you may judge for yourself: for these who have just entered are the admirers of him who is reckoned the handsomest young man now going: no doubt they are now his precursors, and he himself will be here soon.'—'And who, and whose son is he?' said I. 'You know him,' said he; 'but he was a child when you went away. It is Charmides, the son of our uncle Glaucon, and my cousin.'—'Certainly I knew him,' said I: 'even then he was not ill-favoured as a boy: but he must be now quite a young man.' 'You will soon know,' said he, 'how big he is, and how well-favoured.' And as he spoke, Charmides entered.

4 "Now I, my friend," Socrates goes on to say to his unnamed companion, "am not at all a sharp critic of such matters. I am a very favourable judge; for almost all young persons at that age appear to me

handsome. But certainly he did seem to me wonderfully tall and beautiful, and all his companions appeared to be in love with him; such an impression and commotion did he make when he came into the room: and other admirers came in his suite. And that we men looked at him with pleasure was natural enough. But I remarked that the boys, even the smallest, never took their eyes off him; but all looked at him like persons admiring a statue.

“So Chærephon addressing me in particular, said: ‘Well, Socrates, what do you think of the youth? Is he not good looking?’ ‘He is,’ said I, ‘perfectly admirable.’ ‘And yet,’ said he, ‘if you were to see him undressed for his exercises, you would say that his face is the worst part about him, he is so handsome every way.’ And they all said the same. ‘Bless me,’ said I, ‘he is a wonderful creature, if he have only one small matter in addition to what yet appears.’ ‘What is that?’<sup>5</sup> said Critias. ‘If,’ said I, ‘the quality of his mind be as good as that of his body. And we may suppose, Critias, that this is so; since he is of your family.’—‘In that respect too,’ said he, ‘he is good: he has a beautiful soul.’—‘And why,’ said I, ‘should we not strip his soul rather than his body, and look at that? He is old enough, I think, to sustain a conversation.’—‘Certainly,’ said Critias; ‘he has a turn for philosophy, and as he thinks, and as others think likewise, for poetry also.’—‘This good quality, Critias,’ said I, ‘your family have from your ancestor Solon.’

“‘But could you not call the young man hither and let me make acquaintance with him? Though he is very young, it cannot be improper for me to talk with him in your company, you being his guardian and his cousin.’ ‘By all means,’ said<sup>6</sup>



he; 'we will call him:' and turning to his attendant, 'Boy,' said he, 'call Charmides here: tell him that I want to let a doctor see him about that pain which he yesterday said he felt.' And then Critias said to me, 'He complained when he arose in the morning, that he had a headache. Why should not you pretend that you know a remedy for such a pain?'—'I know no reason why,' said I: 'Only let him come.'—'He will come,' said he."

The conversation repeated in this exact and minute detail is in Plato's common manner; when such a dialogue is very long continued, it becomes, to our apprehension, somewhat tiresome. I shall therefore hereafter abridge a portion of this conversation, giving only the more essential parts. In this instance however, Plato himself interrupts the dialogue with a little touch of narrative pleasantry: he goes on to say,

"The young man accordingly came to us, and his coming occasioned some laughter: for to make room for him, each of us pushed his neighbour sideways, wanting to have Charmides next to himself, so that the persons at the end of the form were pushed off, and either had to stand up, or tumbled  
7 over. He came and sat between me and Critias. And then to tell you the truth, my friend, I felt grievously embarrassed, and all the confidence which made me think it an easy matter to talk with him, was gone. But when Critias said that I was the person who had a cure for the headache, and the youth looked me in the eyes in a peculiar manner as if he were going to ask me a question, and those who were in the room came and stood round in a circle; then I almost lost my self-possession. He asked me, if I knew a cure for the headache, and I was hardly able to reply, that I did.

“‘And pray sir what is it?’ said he.—I told 8 him that it was a certain leaf, but that there was a set of words in the way of a charm which must go along with the medicine: and that if any one repeated the charm and applied the medicine at the same time, it would make him quite well; but that without the charm the medicine was of no use. ‘Well,’ said he, ‘you shall tell me the charm and I will write it down from your telling.’—‘But,’ said I, ‘will you have my leave to do that, or will you do it without?’—‘O,’ said he, laughing, ‘of course I must have your leave, Socrates.’—‘Good,’ said I; ‘and so you know my name too?’—‘I think I do,’ said he; ‘for my companions talk no little about you; and I recollect your coming to Critias once when I was a boy.’—‘I am glad you do,’ said I; ‘I shall be the more bold in telling you about this charm, what it is.

“‘I hardly know at first how to explain to you its efficacy: for its virtue is such that it not only cures the head, but does a great deal more. Perhaps you have heard the doctors talk in this way. If a man goes to them with bad eyes, they tell him that they cannot cure his eyes, without mending his head at the same time; and again, that it is absurd to try to mend the head, without improving the health of the whole body: and so they diet 9 the whole body, and in this way cure a part by curing the whole. Do not you know,’ said I, ‘that this is their way?’—‘Certainly,’ said he. ‘And do you not think it is a good and reasonable way?’—‘Very much so,’ said he.

“So seeing that he was of my opinion, I recovered my courage, and got a little confidence again, and became brisk once more. ‘Well,’ I said, ‘Charmides, this charm that I tell you of, works in something of the same way. I learnt it in my

campaigns in Thrace from one of the physicians of Zamolxis (the Thracian king and priest), who are said to have the power of making men live for ever. This Thracian said that the Greek physicians who talk in the way of which I have been speaking, talk very rightly. But Zamolxis, our king, he said, who is a god, tells us more:—that as we ought not to try to mend the eyes without the head, nor the head without the body; so too, not the body without the soul: and that this was the reason why the greater part of diseases baffled the Greek physicians; that they did not know enough about the whole man, body and soul together, which they had to do with; and which  
10 they must put in a good condition, before they could mend any part. The soul, he said, is the source of all the evil and all the good which happen to the body; it makes the body well or ill, as the head does the eyes. And so, youth, he said that we must cure the soul, as the first and main thing, to do any good to the head or the body or anything else.

““ Now the soul is to be cured, he said, by certain charms: and these charms are wise and good sayings. By the operation of such sayings, the soul gets that kind of wisdom and goodness which we call *Sophrosyne*; and when the soul has got that, it is easier to make both the head and the body sound and healthy. And when he gave me the medicine and the charm, You must not, he said, let any body persuade you to try to cure his head who will not let you have access to his soul that you may cure it with the charm. For this, he said, is the great mistake that men make; they try to play the physician to one of the two sepa-  
11 rately. And he gave me strict injunctions that I was not to let any one, however rich, or noble,

or handsome, persuade me to go aside from his rule. And I must and shall do as he said: for I took an oath to him that I would. So if you will conform to the rule which this stranger gave, and let me have your soul first, that I may work on it with the Thracian's charms, I will let you have, besides this, a cure for the headache. But if not, I can do nothing for you, my dear Charmides.'

"When Critias heard me speak thus, he said, 'The youth is in great luck to have a headache, Socrates, if it is to make him have his mind set right as well as his head. I must however tell you, that Charmides is not only superior to his companions in his good looks, but in the very thing for which your charm is effective; the goodness which is called *Sophrosyne*: that is the point, is it not?' 'Certainly,' said I. 'Well, let me assure you then, that he is, in that way, the best of his contemporaries, as he is inferior to them in nothing.'

"'Well,' said I, 'it is reasonable, Charmides, 12: that you should have these good qualities; for you are descended from two excellent Athenian families, one noted for its beauty, and the other for its wisdom. I see that you are worthy of them in your exterior, and if you are, in your inner man also, proportionally gifted, why, a happy mother's child are you.'"

This last expression *μακάριόν σε ἡ μήτηρ ἔτικτεν*, "a happy man your mother bore you," is an imitation of Homeric phrase, such as is very common in the Platonic Dialogues; and such allusions enlivened a conversation at Athens, very much as a Shakespearian phrase does with us. The description of the Athenian relationships of Charmides I have abridged, since the interest of the

personal descriptions could be felt only by contemporaries. The point which we have especially to note is, the manner in which the Dialogue gradually converges to its main object, namely, to inquire, what is *Sophrosyne*\*? The next turn is pleasantly dramatic. Socrates goes on to say to Charmides:

13 “The matter stands thus: if, as Critias here says, you have *Sophrosyne*, and are good in that way, you have no occasion for the charms, either of Zamolxis the Thracian, or of Abaris the Hyperborean. In that case I may give you my cure for the headache at once. But if you have not got this gift, I must use the charm before giving the remedy. Tell me then yourself, whether you confirm what he asserts, and say that you are properly provided with this goodness, *Sophrosyne*, or that you have not got it.’ At this Charmides blushed, which made him look handsomer still; his modesty became his years. And then he answered with some spirit, that it was difficult for him at once either to acknowledge or to deny what he was asked: ‘For,’ said he, ‘if I say that I have not this kind of goodness, it is absurd for a person to say such things against himself, and also I shall contradict Critias and many others, who say that I have it; and if I say I have this goodness, and so praise myself, it will perhaps appear presumptuous: so that I cannot answer you.’

14 “I replied,” Socrates goes on, “‘You speak very reasonably, Charmides. And it seems to me

\* I am obliged to leave the term untranslated because it changes its meaning in the course of the conversations, in a manner which I have already attempted to illustrate. *Sound-mindedness* is perhaps near the etymological sense; but as I have said, we must bear in mind the different use of terms for children and for philosophical critics.

that we must examine together, whether you have or have not got the quality I inquire about: that you may not be forced to say what you dislike, and I may not have recourse to physic too inconsiderately. If it is agreeable to you, therefore, I would make this examination with you; but if not, we will leave it alone.' 'It is perfectly agreeable,' said he; 'and as far as that goes, pray pursue your examination in the way you think best.'

" 'This seems to me,' said I, 'the best way of examining the point. If you have this *Sophrosyne*, you will be able to give some opinion about it; for if it is in you, it must produce some feeling, which will produce an opinion concerning it, what *Sophrosyne* is, and what it is like. Do you not think so?' 'I think so,' said he. 'And,' said I, 'since you can speak Greek, you will be able to say what you think, as it seems to you; will you not?' 'Perhaps,' said he.

" 'Then,' said I, 'in order that we may make a conjecture whether this quality is in you or is not, what do you say that *Sophrosyne* is, in your opinion?'

" At first he hesitated and was very unwilling to reply. But at last he said the *Sophrosyne* seemed to him to be, Doing everything in an orderly and quiet way: both walking in the streets, and talking, and other things. 'And in short,' he said, 'that which you ask about appears to me to be a sort of quietness.' "

We are here reminded at once of the account which in the *Clouds* Good Old Cause gives of the behaviour of the Athenian youth while *Sophrosyne* was the established rule\*, "that no boy was ever heard to murmur, and

\* See the Introduction to this Dialogue.

that they went through the streets to school in an orderly manner." Charmides defines *Sophrosyne* so that the adjective *Sophron* means *good*, in the sense in which young people are exhorted to be *good*. And Socrates has now to set about shewing that this account of *goodness* is not tenable, as a general definition: a task which might seem somewhat below the office of philosophy; but that we must recollect, as I have said, that exact notions of the meaning of abstract moral terms, and still more, exact definitions of them, were as yet, very uncommon at Athens.

"The game of Definitions," which appears to have had such attraction for Socrates and his contemporaries, is now fairly entered upon. It is sometimes not easy to give, in an intelligible form, the arguments with which Socrates attacks the Definitions proposed. These arguments will often, I think, become more intelligible by being abridged, than they would be if expanded into the multiplied questions and answers by which they are conveyed in the original. Sometimes they may appear frivolous, and sometimes fallacious to us; but they are not the less interesting, as steps in the early history of Moral Philosophy.

Charmides had said, as a general way of giving his notion of *Sophrosyne*, that it was a sort of quietness. Socrates, as I have said, fastens upon this as professing to be an exact definition, and pulls it in pieces. 'Let us see,' he says, 'whether this will hold together. *Sophrosyne* is a sort of quietness, you say, in doing every thing. But *Sophrosyne* is a good thing, is it not?'—'Certainly.'—'Now in writing, if we write equally well, is it better to write fast or slow?'—'Fast.'—'And so in reading, and in boxing, and in wrestling, and in running, and in all bodily exercises, quickness, not quietness

and slowness, is the best thing. So that if *Sophrosyne* 17 be goodness in general, *Sophrosyne* must be quickness rather than slowness. And so in other things. Quickness in learning is better than slowness: so is quickness in recollecting: quickness in guessing: quickness in understanding: quickness in giving good counsel. So that *Sophrosyne*, which we agree is always a sort of goodness, cannot be a quality which implies slowness.' Charmides is of course obliged to confess that this is so, and to give up his first definition.

He is then encouraged by Socrates to try again, 18 and examining his own inward condition more carefully and boldly, to give another definition of *Sophrosyne*, considering what effect this kind of good quality produces upon him. Charmides is probably inwardly blaming himself for presumption in having ventured his former definition; and under the influence of this feeling, he says, with some hesitation, but with a frank and manly reference to himself, that *Sophrosyne* is the quality which makes a man bashful and ashamed of himself; it is Modesty. Socrates does not directly contest this, but proceeds very deliberately to shew that it cannot stand. "*Sophrosyne*," he says, "we agree," is a good thing. But what does Homer say of *Modesty*; in speaking of Ulysses, under his assumed character of a beggar\*, he says,

Modesty is not a good for a man that is needy and craving: so that modesty is a good and not a good. *Sophrosyne* then, which is always a good, cannot be modesty."

Charmides allows the force of this argument; 19 and forthwith gives another definition of *Sophrosyne*; not, however, as his own, but as one which

\* *Odys.* XVII. 347.



he had heard from another person. Probably, from the play of the drama, the definition had been propounded by Critias; and Plato wished to shew that it was untenable.

‘Consider,’ says Charmides, ‘if this will do as a definition of *Sophrosyne*. I lately heard a person say that *Sophrosyne* is the doing what belongs to one’s self—doing one’s own work.—Consider whether that seems to you to be rightly said.’ Socrates jestingly scolds him for having been to secret sources of information. ‘O you rogue,’ said I, ‘you have heard this from Critias, or some other of the wise men.’ ‘It must be some other,’ said Critias; ‘he certainly did not hear it from me.’ ‘But what difference,’ said Charmides, ‘does it make, Socrates, from whom I heard it?’—‘None at all,’ said I; ‘for we are by all means to consider, not who said it, but whether it is truly said.’—‘Now,’ said he, ‘you speak well.’—‘I believe so,’ said I; ‘but I wonder whether we shall find what the meaning of this saying is; for it sounds like a riddle.’—‘How so?’ said he.—‘Because,’ said I, ‘the person who said that *Sophrosyne* was the doing what belongs to one’s self, did not really mean what the words which he uttered do mean.’ And he then goes on with his exposure of the absurdity which the words involve, in that which he takes as the obvious meaning. The argument will appear a comical one in English, and yet I do not see that it is much better in the Greek.

‘Has the schoolmaster, when he writes, or when he reads, no *Sophrosyne*? Now does he, when he writes, write and read nothing but his own name, and teach you boys to do the like? or did you write and read the names of enemies, as well as your own and those of friends?’ Of course, the answer is obvious; but this interpretation of “doing

what belongs to one's self," as meaning "writing one's own name, and not that of another," is extravagant enough. It is however carried on and pursued still further. Socrates says, 'Building, and weaving, and any other art which produces material things, is a sort of *doing*, is it not? And do you think that that would be a good law for a city which should require all the citizens to *do* the *things* which belong to themselves? That every one should make his own coat, and his own shoes, and his own cap, and his own scrip\*, and nobody make those of other people? Of course not. And yet this would, according to your definition, be a city where *Sophrosyne* reigned. So that *Sophrosyne* 21 cannot be the doing what belongs to one's self in this sense; and he that gave the definition did not mean this. He was not so foolish. Or did you hear it of some very foolish person, Charmides?'—'By no means,' said he, 'he was thought a very wise man.'—'Then,' said I, 'I suppose he proposed his definition as a riddle, that we might have to find out the meaning of this hard saying, "doing what belongs to one's self."'" 'Perhaps,' said he. 'Well then,' said I, 'What may this mean, this doing what belongs to one's self?' 'Indeed,' said he, 'I do not know. But perhaps even the person who said this saying did not know what he meant.' And as he said this, he smiled and looked aside at Critias.

The very sarcastic mode in which this definition is dealt with, leads us to suppose that it had been propounded by some contemporary of Plato; and I will add, to suppose also that the author was living at the time. The byplay of the Dialogue as

\* I purposely alter the implements of bathing here mentioned in the Greek, as being unfamiliar to us.

just cited, naturally points to Critias as this author; and the making him lose his temper in the argument, as Plato forthwith proceeds to do, confirms the conviction that it was a personal controversy. Such representations of his opponents are common in Plato's works: and did not, I conceive, imply any settled contempt or dislike of the person so represented, but merely an assumption of superiority in argument. Critias was a relation and friend of Plato\*. He goes on to say:

“Critias had been for some time evidently in a state of extreme excitement, looking with great anxiety at Charmides, and at the persons present; he had so far restrained himself with difficulty, but could hold no longer: for it seems to me highly probable, as I had suspected, that Charmides had heard this definition of *Sophrosyne* from Critias.

22 So Charmides, desirous not to undertake the defence of the definition himself, but to put it upon him, looked as if he were beaten, and left Critias to come to the rescue. This he could not bear: he grew angry with Charmides, as it seemed to me, like a dramatic poet enraged with an actor for spoiling his play. Looking at him, he said: ‘And so, Charmides, you think that because you do not know what the person meant who said that *Sophrosyne* is doing what belongs to one's self, that *he* also did not know!’ ‘Well my good friend Critias,’ said I, ‘it is no wonder that he, at his years, does not know: but from your years and your attention to the subject, you probably know. If then you agree that *Sophrosyne* is what he says, and if you will undertake the discussion, I should much prefer to examine, with you, whether it is

\* I note these circumstances, because they seem to me to bear upon the question of the time when this Dialogue was composed.

truly said or no.' 'Well,' said he, 'I agree to the definition, and I undertake the business.' 'You do well,' said I: 'and do you also agree to what I said, that all artisans are employed in making something?' 'I agree to that,' said he. 'And 23 do they make their own things only, or things of other people?'—'Of other people also.'—'Have they then *Sophrosyne*, are they good men, since they do not make their own things only?'—'What hinders us from saying so?' said he. 'Nothing hinders *me*,' said I; 'but consider whether there is not something which should hinder him who first says that *Sophrosyne* is doing one's own things; and then says that those who make other people's things have *Sophrosyne*.'—'Pray,' said he, 'did I acknowledge that those who *do* other people's things have *Sophrosyne*, or those who *make* other people's things?'—'But pray,' said I, 'are not *doing* and *making* the same?'—'Not at all,' said he; and hereupon he goes on to explain, on the authority of Hesiod, (who says, No work is a disgrace,) that *doing* and *working* are dignified words; Hesiod would not have applied such terms to shoe-making, or selling pickled fish. 'To make things may be a disgrace, if it is an ignoble business. But noble work is no disgrace. Such kind of work is meant, when we talk of doing our own work: things which are ignoble are not our business.'"

Critias is here, as we see, running from his definition of *Sophrosyne*, to other terms which still more want defining, *noble* and *ignoble*, and the like. Socrates notices this, in a manner which may be regarded as summing up the result of this part of the discussion. He says:

" 'I knew, Critias, as soon as you began to speak, that you call *good things*, "one's own things," and

“ones’s proper business,” and you used “doing” of such things. I have heard a thousand such subtleties from Prodicus. You make *doing good things* therefore really the definition of *Sophrosyne*. He who does evil things has not *Sophrosyne*.—‘But,’ said he, ‘do you hold that it is not so?’—‘Stay;’ said I; ‘the question is not what *I* hold, but what  
 25 you say.’—‘Well,’ said he, ‘I say that he who does what is good has *Sophrosyne*, and he who does what is bad has it not.’”

I conceive the conclusion at which the Dialogue really here arrives is this; that whereas Critias had undertaken to define what particular kind of goodness *Sophrosyne* is, he had ended by making it merely goodness in general, with no special distinction; and therefore his attempt was a manifest failure. And accordingly, from this point, though more obscurely, begins the discussion of another definition of *Sophrosyne*. The account of it, that it was goodness in general, was not satisfactory to Plato, because the term was felt as including intellectual qualities, as well as mere goodness of the affections and disposition. Indeed, according to the real Socrates, (as we read in Xenophon,) *Sophrosyne* was so far an intellectual quality, that it might be identified with *Sophia*, wisdom; and if Plato did not agree in this, still, looking at the matter from a Socratic point of view, he would ask what kind of *knowledge* is *Sophrosyne*? Accordingly the next definition proposed relates to a description of *Sophrosyne* of this kind. Socrates proposes arguments to Critias, to the effect that *Sophrosyne* must involve knowledge as well as goodness. And Critias is so far from refusing to follow this lead, that he says, “if I have said anything to the contrary, I am willing to retract it.” He then goes on to say, that the celebrated injunction of the in-

scription at Delphi, KNOW THYSELF, appears to him a good definition of the kind of wisdom which is called *Sophrosyne*. And he remarks, prettily 27 enough, that this seems to have been intended as a kind of salutation, by the god, to those who entered the temple; differing from ordinary salutations, as the divine may be supposed to differ from the human; and that, as men welcome each other by saying *Be happy*, the god welcomes men by saying *Know thyself*, which is equivalent to saying *Be wise*.

Critias declares himself quite willing to begin the discussion afresh from this point. "Do you agree," he says, "that *Sophrosyne* is knowing one's self?"

Socrates immediately puts himself on the de- 28 fensive, in his usual manner. 'You ask me,' he says, 'if I agree; as if I knew already what *Sophrosyne* is. But that is not the case. I am inquiring, because I do *not* know. You must wait till I have considered.' 'Well, consider,' said he. 'I am considering,' he replies. 'If then *Sophrosyne* be knowing something, it must be a kind of science.' 'It is,' he said; 'it is a science of one's self.'

Socrates then proceeds to examine this doctrine by his favourite process of induction, which I must somewhat abridge, and in order to follow the argument, we must recollect that, according to the views of Socrates, Sciences and Arts were necessarily connected. He says, "Let us look at 29 other Arts and Sciences. They each produce some work. The Science of Medicine produces health. The Science of Architecture produces houses. Now what does that Science produce which you call *Sophrosyne*?"

Critias tells Socrates that he is wrong in

expecting this science to be like other sciences. They differ from each other. They do not all produce works. Arithmetic and Geometry are Sciences which do not produce works, as Architecture produces houses, or weaving produces cloth.

Socrates admits this; but at least, he says, 'I can tell you *of what* each of these Sciences is a knowledge. Arithmetic is a knowledge of numbers. Geometry (he might have added) is a knowledge of the properties of space. And the Science of Arithmetic is a different thing from Number, which is the object of the Science; and in like manner, Geometry is different from Space.

30 Now of what is *Sophrosyne* the knowledge? of what object different from *Sophrosyne* itself?

Critias replies, that this is precisely the point in which *Sophrosyne* differs from other kinds of science. They are all the knowledge of some other object, not of themselves; *Sophrosyne* alone is the knowledge of other knowledges, the science of sciences, and of itself. 'You know this very well,' he adds; 'but you put it out of sight; you do what you profess not to do; you leave the subject and try to prove me to be in the wrong.'

Socrates answers: 'If I try to prove you to be in the wrong, I do so, only as I examine my own opinions, to discover whether they are right: that I may not be misled by thinking that I know something when I do not know it. This is what I am doing now: it is a course useful for me, and may be so, I hope, for others. Do you not think that the discovery of truth is a common good

31 to mankind?' Critias assents.—'Then,' Socrates continues, 'Go on boldly and reply to my questions, and never mind whether Socrates or Critias be proved to be in the wrong: but look at the matter itself, and say how *that* is right or wrong.'

Critias agrees that this is reasonable, and they again proceed to discuss the matter.

Socrates now, with great professions of being in 32 a state of ignorance and doubt, and desiring to be taught better, proceeds to argue that it is impossible that there should be such a science of sciences, such a knowledge of knowledge and of ignorance, as Critias has described *Sophrosyne* to be. Here he again has recourse to induction for his proofs. You will find, he says, that in other cases there 33 cannot be anything of this kind. We have a faculty of Vision which sees Colours, but we have not a faculty which sees this faculty;—we have not a Vision of Vision, a sight of sight, and also a vision of sightlessness. In like manner, we have not, besides the faculty of Hearing of sounds, a Hearing of Hearing. We have no sense which is, not a sense of external impressions, but a sense of the sense itself. And is not the same the case with the Affections? We have a Desire of Pleasure, but have we a Desire of Desire? We have *yes* not. We will this and that, but we have not a Will of Will; a volition of volition. We have a Love of the lovely, but not a Love of Love. We *yes* have a Fear of the terrible, but not a Fear of *yes* Fear. We have an Opinion of this and that, but *yes* 34 not an Opinion of Opinion. Can we then have a Science or knowledge, which is not a knowledge of any knowable object, but a knowledge of knowledge?

It is evident that this is somewhat abstruse and subtle reasoning; and the fact that Plato thought it necessary to pursue so recondite a line of argument, makes it probable (I think) that the doctrine here ascribed to Critias, was current, and needed refuting, and was held by Critias and others. The argument is pursued, in a still more 35



abstract manner; but the part which has been given may shew how difficult it is to make such reasoning intelligible.

36 Socrates concludes by addressing Critias in an assumed rhetorical vein. 'Do you then: O son of Callæschrus—you who tell us that *Sophrosyne* is a knowledge of knowledge and of ignorance—shew us first that such a knowledge is possible, and next that it is valuable; and then you will have little difficulty in persuading me that you know what *Sophrosyne* is.'

37 Plato himself must have felt that his reasoning was abstruse and difficult to follow, and acknowledges this, rather oddly, in the next occurrence. "Critias hearing this discourse, and seeing me in this state of perplexity, was like persons who stand opposite to those that yawn, and are seized with a fit of yawning: he was seized with a fit of perplexity, by the influence of my perplexity. But as being a person who was generally regarded with respect, he was ashamed to appear puzzled before the company, and would not confess that he could not give me the proof I asked for; and talked vaguely, in order to conceal that he was really at a loss what to say."

Socrates, however, sets the discussion a-going again; it being assumed, here as elsewhere, that an Athenian auditory was insatiable in its love of such disquisitions. But as I cannot assume the same of English readers, I must abridge this part  
39 of the Dialogue, and hasten to the end. Socrates argues thus, in order to shew that a knowledge of knowledge and of ignorance, such as Critias had contended for, could be of little use. This *Sophrosyne*, this knowledge of knowledge, he says, is to tell you whether a man have knowledge or not: but have knowledge *of what?* Of medicine, for

instance. But no knowledge can tell you that, except there go along with it a knowledge of medicine. You cannot detect the impostor who 40 pretends to know medicine, except by testing him on matters of health and disease. It is a know- 41 ledge of medicine which must stand you in stead in this case; not a knowledge of knowledge; *Iatrike* not *Sophrosyne*. What then is the use of *Sophro- 42 syne*? If it enabled us to discern what especial subject each man knew, we might set him to work at that, to the great benefit of the State: but it does not appear that it can give us this knowledge.

Critias makes no stand here; and Socrates soon goes on to dispute his own arguments. "We have 44 been granting," he says, "that *Sophrosyne* would be a good thing, if it enabled us to set each man to do what he best knew. But was not this a 45 rash concession? I have had a dream that it was. Whether this dream came through the gate of horn or of ivory, (that is, whether it was true or false,) I say not. If every body did what they have 46 most the science of, we should, no doubt, have every thing done most scientifically: but would that make us really do well, and live happily? That is what I am not clear about, Critias."

Critias replies, very consistently, "You will not easily find any thing which can be called *doing well*, if you think lightly of proceeding according to principles of science. You cannot name any end in life superior to knowledge." We here come again upon the question of the difference or identity of Good and Knowledge, which we have already had referred to, and which runs through the Socratic class of Plato's Dialogues. And the argument with which the question is here treated, is a common argument in these Dialogues.

Socrates says, very submissively: "You say that knowledge is the end of life: pray have the goodness to tell me, knowledge of *what?* know-  
 47 ledge of shoemaking?—No.—Of brass-founding?—No.—Of wool? of wood?—No.—Not every kind of knowledge then. Or if a man have every kind of knowledge combined: a knowledge of the past, and the present, and (in virtue of the soothsayer's art) of the future, will he be happy?—Yes.—And which of his sciences, which of his kinds of knowledge, makes him happy? or do they all alike contribute?—Not all *alike*.—Then which most? Chess-playing?—Nonsense!—Arithmetic?—No.—  
 48 Medicine?—More.—But which most?"

Critias is at last obliged to answer, "Knowledge of what is good."

Socrates then turns upon him with some playful triumph, as might be expected. "Ah, rogue," says he, "you have been leading me a long dance round this circle: and all the while, you would not tell me that it was not living according to knowledge which made us live well and happily, not even if you put all other knowledges together; but according to that one knowledge, the knowledge of *good and evil*. If you take away that knowledge, the other knowledges may still remain, but they will be of small use to us. And if *Sophrosyne* be the knowledge of knowledges, the valuable thing is not that, but the knowledge of good and evil."

49 Critias still makes a short fight for his *Sophrosyne*; but this is really the conclusion of the argument.

50 Socrates then sums up the result of the discussion, employing for that purpose a curious personification of the inquiry in which they had been engaged. "Here we are," he says, "defeated at every point; and unable to find what the word-

maker meant by *Sophrosyne*; and this, though we made many concessions for the sake of letting the discussion go on. We allowed that there might be a science of sciences, and that this science might know the things belonging to other sciences, in order that the man who had *Sophrosyne* might know that he knew and what he knew, and that he did not know and what he did not know. We proceeded, in this very accommodating way, with our Inquiry, and in spite of our good nature, the Inquiry now turns round upon us, and laughs in our faces; we cannot find what the truth is; and that quality which we made up our minds and agreed to take as *Sophrosyne*, turns out upon our hands a thing worth nothing, which is very insulting."

He then turns to Charmides, and there is some- 51  
thing very Platonic and very pleasing in the light irony and dramatic urbanity with which the Dialogue ends; while at the same time, we see what a piece of good fortune it is reckoned (in the Platonic Dialogue, at least) to enjoy the conversation of Socrates habitually. Socrates says:

"For my own part, I can bear this very well; but I am very sorry for you, Charmides, that you, with your good looks, and having *Sophrosyne* besides, are to get no good from this possession of yours. And I am still more sorry about the charm which the Thracian taught me, that, after I had taken so much pains to learn it, that is worth nothing too. But really, I cannot believe such to be the case. I believe it is I that am a bad seeker; and that, after all, *Sophrosyne* is a very admirable thing, and that you are happy in having it. Examine whether you have it, and so, do not need my charm. If you have it, I recommend you to look upon me as a bungler, incapable of pursuing

an inquiry in an effectual manner; and to think of yourself as being all the happier the more *Sophrosyne* you have.'

Charmides replied, 'Upon my word, Socrates, I do not know whether I have it or not. Indeed how should I know, when men like you cannot find out what it is, as you say? But in truth I do not quite believe you; and I think, Socrates, that I do need the charm; and I should like to have it repeated over me every day till you think it has done its work.'

52 Critias said, 'Good: but, Charmides, this will be a proof to me that you *have Sophrosyne*, if you go to Socrates to have the charm applied, and never quit his side.'

Charmides replied, 'I shall stick to him, and never let him leave me. It would be very wrong if I did not do what you my guardian bid me.'

'I bid you,' said he.—'Then I shall do as I say, beginning from this day.'

Socrates here breaks in—'Ho, good people,' he says, 'what are you planning to do?'—'Nothing,' said Charmides; 'we *have* planned.'

'But am I to be under compulsion? will you not give me a choice?'

'You are to be under compulsion, since my guardian orders me. So you must consider what you will do.'

'There is nothing left to consider. No man can resist compulsion:' said I.—'Then do not you resist,' said he.

'Well I resist not,' said I.'

And so the Charmides ends.

## REMARKS ON THE CHARMIDES.

AS I have said, the result of this Dialogue, so far as there is any definite result, may be regarded to be this; that the proposed Definitions of *Sophrosyne*, as some particular kind of knowledge, fail; and that it cannot be anything narrower than the knowledge of good and evil. And this is nearly the same conclusion which was arrived at in the *Laches*; where another Virtue, *Andria*, appeared to be, in its essence, a knowledge of good and evil. And thus all the Virtues have the same definition, and there is no distinction of one Virtue and other. The question, "Can Virtue be philosophically divided into Virtues?" which is one of the leading problems of Plato in the Socratic Dialogues, is answered in the negative.

But this was not Plato's ultimate result. At a later period of his life in a maturer stage of his philosophy he arrived at another view. In the *Republic*, where his final scheme of Morality is given, *Andria* and *Sophrosyne* are two separate Virtues. *Andria* is the right direction of the energetic and pugnacious Affections; and in like manner, *Sophrosyne* is the due control of the Bodily and Mental Desires. *Andria* is Courage, *Sophrosyne* is Temperance, two of the four Cardinal Virtues. *Andria* consists in the virtuous aggressive movements of the heart, *Sophrosyne* is the suppression of its vicious craving impulses.

Such definitions of Virtues must needs appear dry and unprofitable, unless the analysis of what virtue is could be used as a help towards making men virtuous; which, as I have said, was the object of the Socratic inquiry. And this at least we are able to say, that in the case of Socrates himself, his inquiries, What is Temperance? What is Courage? were accompanied by the practice of Temperance and of Courage, according to the best light which he could obtain. Of his Courage, as shewn in meeting death calmly, we have spoken in the *Laches*. His Temperance was no less real. The scantiest provision for the wants and comforts of the body sufficed for him. Of his habitual temperance in this way, Xenophon notices a curious

evidence. After the fatal battle of *Ægos Potamos*, in which the fleet of Athens was destroyed, Lysander, the Spartan general, besieged Athens, and reduced its inhabitants to a state of famine. During this period, while others were pining, and complaining from bad and indifferent food, Socrates, who had no occasion to make any change in his diet, was robust and cheerful. And other examples of the like habits are given both by Xenophon and by Plato.

In the *Memorabilia* we find Socrates discussing this term *Sophrosyne*: and both there, and in the *Charmides*, and in the *Protagoras*, we see strong evidence that it had been found very difficult to affix to this term any steady and distinct meaning. In the discussion related by Xenophon indeed\*, the antithesis which the expressions imply cannot be rendered so well in any other way, as by making the term imply Virtue in general. "Socrates," says Xenophon, "refused to recognize a distinction between *Sophia* and *Sophrosyne*—between Wisdom and Virtue. For he said that he who knew what was good and knew how to do it, he who knew what was vile and avoided it, was wise and was virtuous." The same qualities which made him the one made him the other. "And when the conversation was continued in the way of an opposing argument, and he was asked whether those who knew what was right and did the reverse, were wise and virtuous, he replied that they were unwise and vicious; for the evidence of what men know is what they do. If their wisdom do not appear in their acts, they are no more wise than they are virtuous."

Here, as before, I shall notice some of the commentators' opinions.

Socher, whose arguments for and against the genuineness of the various Platonic dialogues have generally appeared to me far more clear and solid than those of Schleiermacher or Ast, rejects the *Charmides*, as not being by Plato. He holds, however, that it is probably by some other disciple of Socrates, a contemporary of Plato. And his objections are of such a kind that they cannot, I think, justify us in this rejection; considering how entirely Platonic, as I have said, the dialogue is in its

\* *Mem.* iii. 9.

composition. Socher's main objection is, that the word which describes the subject here discussed, *Sophrosyne*, is taken in a different sense here and in the Republic. And this may, I think, be very truly said; for after the various attempts at a definition made by the boy Charmides; as, that *Sophrosyne* is doing everything in an orderly way, and walking and talking in a quiet manner; and that it is modesty; and then that it is doing one's own things;—when at last that part of the dialogue falls into the hands of Critias, the definition that he upholds is that it is the knowledge of one's self, and especially the knowledge of what one does know and what one does not know. Whereas, in the Republic, *Sophrosyne* is the virtue which arises from the Reason governing the Desires; and consistent with this are the Phædo, Phædrus, Gorgias. We may conceive these two senses to be included in the term *Discretion*, for a young person might be termed *discreet* who was quiet and orderly, as Charmides at first takes *sophrôn*; and again *discretion* might be used for a due estimate of one's self, which is nearly the notion of Critias; and also for the power of moderating the Desires and Appetites, which is the sense in the Republic. The two senses, however, may be distinguished broadly as Wisdom and Temperance; or more especially as Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint; and in the latter words we see (in the word *Self*), the attempt to analyse these qualities shewing itself in language.

But does this difference disprove the opinion that the one Dialogue as well as the other is Plato's? Is it not possible that he, trying to assign an exact meaning to an ethical word, should at one time have tried one classification, and at another another? Even if the two meanings be essentially different, still originally the word may have been capable of both applications, as so many words of moral import in our own as in other languages are capable of different meanings at one period, and are afterwards confined to one (*Wit, Naughtiness, High-minded, Fine, Nice*). And especially may this subsequent limitation and fixation of the meaning have taken place in Plato's writings, when he had formed a system of ethical arrangement in which *Sophrosyne* had a definite place, and a definition determined by its place. The different sense of *Sophrosyne* then, in the Charmides and in the Republic, need not disturb our belief that Plato was the



author of the former as well as the latter. Plato was at first merely an inquirer, with varying views, or at least with varying experimental essays, as to the meaning of this word; afterwards he was a systematic teacher with a settled opinion upon the subject. In the first stage, he might deviate from the subsequent Plato as far as the disciple of Socrates to whom Socher ascribes the Charmides, without ceasing to be Plato.

But the opinion which is refuted in the Charmides, is that the virtue in question is a Knowledge of Knowledge, or a Science of Science, the form into which Critias' opinion is traced. Now to seek such knowledge is, says Socher, a leading tendency of the Platonic philosophy. For that philosophy is employed in many prominent parts (in the *Meno*, *Phædo*, *Theætetus*, *Philebus*, *Republic*) in determining what Science is; and in the *Philebus* he expressly says that the Science at which he aims is that which tries all other Sciences. And we may still reply, that the doctrine that there is such a Science, and that the possession of it is a necessary part of virtue, may have been preceded by a stage of opinion in which the author doubted or had not attained to this doctrine; or, at least, thought it proper to point out the difficulties of it; which is what he does in the Charmides. Still, therefore, we see nothing in the Charmides but what is quite consistent with its being the work of that Plato who afterwards wrote the *Philebus* and the *Republic*.

Socher mentions two or three other arguments which, however, cannot, I think, be considered very weighty. They are these: when Socrates and others, who are sitting on a form, call up Charmides to them, all are so ready to have him near them that in trying to make a place they push off the persons who are at the ends of the form, so that some stand up and some tumble down: this is, says Socher, a coarse jest. To which we may reply, that there are in Plato several very coarse jests. Again, he says, that in the Charmides much stress is laid upon high descent, whereas the pride of nobility is ridiculed in the First Alcibiades and the *Theætetus*. But the dignity of descent from the persons of the heroic times is certainly, in jest or in earnest, repeatedly dwelt upon in Plato as something highly important. And finally, the way in which Socrates speaks of the beauty of Charmides' person is alleged to be unbecoming. This

however it may be according to our notions without being un-Platonic.

Indeed the general dramatic grace and spirit of the Dialogues are so striking, that I cannot understand what Dialogue is to be Platonic, if this is not. Even Socher, who thinks its doctrine un-Platonic, thinks that it must have been written by a fellow-disciple and friend of Plato. But if so, why not by Plato before he became the Plato of the Republic, which at an earlier period he certainly was not ?

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The internal grounds on which I regard the Charmides as a Dialogue belonging to an early period of Plato's philosophy have appeared in what I have had to say of it. The variety and instability of the significations assigned to the abstract moral term which is the subject of discussion, imply a period when ethical phraseology was as yet unfix'd. A more definite fixation of the meaning of such terms took place in the course of, and partly in consequence of, Plato's writing and teaching, as we shall see in the sequel. The mode in which the discussion is carried on with Critias implies, as I have remarked, that the Dialogue was circulated while the controversy about the relation of *Sophrosyne* and *Gnôthi Seauton*, was a living and current dispute. I conceive it impossible that the Charmides should have been written after the Protagoras, in which an entirely different meaning is given to the term *Sophrosyne*; and in which the question discussed is entirely different. Schleiermacher indeed supposes the Charmides and the Laches to have been composed as supplements to the Protagoras, to complete the ethical scheme there contained. But to this I reply that the Charmides and the Laches do not complete the scheme of the Protagoras, nor any scheme, being mere attempts to fix the meaning of ethical terms;—that the assumption, that in writing the Protagoras, Plato had an ethical scheme in his mind, more complete than is there expounded, appears to be quite baseless;—that it is more in the way of progressive writers, which Plato was, to write detached and partial essays, before they compose their larger works; and that Plato's writings can most easily and probably be arranged on the suppo-

sition that he did this. I therefore consider it likely that these smaller Dialogues, the Charmides, Lysis, Laches, &c. belong to Plato's earlier productions,—a supposition which many circumstances confirm.

With regard to the external indications of the period to which the Charmides belongs, they are not many; but such as they are, they agree with the supposition of its being of early date; that is, during the lifetime of Socrates. Critias was more ambitious than philosophical;—indeed, he is said to have frequented the company of Socrates, to learn the art of popular argumentation. He became one of “the Thirty Tyrants,” the hateful domination set up in Athens by the Spartans after the fatal battle of Ægos Potamos. He was one of the most truculent actors in the Reign of Terror which then prevailed. He fell, resisting the Restoration of the Republic by Thrasybulus, and left a name so unpopular, that its evil repute was one of the instruments used for the destruction of Socrates four years later. It is not likely, that after Critias had appeared in this odious political position, he would have been selected by Plato as one of the characters of a calm philosophical Dialogue in which playful irony is the hardest treatment which any one is supposed to merit. We must therefore, I conceive, place the publication of the Charmides before the Rule of the Thirty, B. C. 404.

Also I conceive that we are led to place it early, by the connexion of the dramatic date with the battle of Potidæa, B. C. 402, the year before the Peloponnesian war. For though it was easy to refer to this battle even after the Peloponnesian war, that war must have extinguished in a great measure the interest of previous warfare. Plato was, I think, more likely to refer to Socrates's real campaigns while Socrates himself was alive. In the same way, we see that in others of this class which I call the Socratic Dialogues, he refers to the generals and other characters of the time, Nicias, Laches, Pericles, and the like; but in the next class of Dialogues, composed, as I conceive, after Plato had himself begun to teach in the Academy, the principal characters are the celebrated Sophists, whose successors were Plato's rivals.

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**LYSIS.**  
**OF FRIENDSHIP**  
**(*PHILIA*).**

THE second title of the *Lysis*, ἡ περὶ φιλίας, agrees with the professed object of the conversation : but the Definition of Friendship which is arrived at is very poor and unsatisfactory ; and is far from being the main object of the Dialogue, as I shall try to explain.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE LYSIS.

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IN the Charmides, we saw Socrates in a position which is described by the idiomatic English phrase, *setting his wits against a child's*; that is, while seeming to play with him, and assuming the superiority which age bestows, really trying to perplex him, even at the expense of perplexing himself. This was, I conceive, the character of the early part of that Dialogue, where Socrates asks the boy what is *Sophrosyne*, and tries to refute his answers, rather than to make the best of them. Such Dialogues with boys may seem to us below the standard of philosophical discussion; but they were not below the standard of the discussions in which Plato at first presented his speculations. And if these Dialogues appear to us now puerile, and somewhat after the fashion of children's books, we may recollect that such books were not unsuited to the infancy of moral philosophy, when principles were as yet to seek, and even the most common ethical terms had not had their meaning settled. It need not surprise us then if we have another Dialogue of the same kind. I believe the purport of the Lysis will become plain and simple by being regarded as such a Dialogue; and I shall translate it in this spirit. I may afterwards say a

few words respecting other views which have been entertained as to the meaning of this Dialogue.

As in the Charmides (and in the Rivals which I shall next give), Socrates goes into a school and talks to the young persons whom he finds there; and the composition is supposed to be his own account of the conversation. It is as follows.

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## LYSIS.

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“ I WAS going from the Academia to the Lyceum, the road that runs outside the city wall close to the wall; and when I came to the little gate where is the fountain of Panopeus, there I fell in with Hippothales the son of Hieronymus, and Ctesippus the Pæanian, and a knot of other young men standing together. Hippothales, when he saw me coming said, ‘Ha, Socrates, whence and whither?’ ‘From the Academia,’ said I, ‘straight to the Lyceum.’—‘But,’ said he, ‘will you not turn aside to us here? It is worth your while.’—‘Where do you mean,’ said I, ‘and what *us*?’—‘Hither,’ said he, pointing to an enclosed court with an open door which was opposite the wall. ‘There,’ said he, ‘we resort, and with a many other good fellows.’—‘But what sort of place is it, and what do you do?’—‘It is a public school,’ said he, ‘lately built; and our employments there are various, some of which I should like you to share in.’—‘You are very good,’ said I; ‘but who teaches there?’—‘Your companion and admirer Miccos,’ said he. ‘Faith,’ said I, ‘a good man and a competent teacher.’—‘Will you come in then,’ said he, ‘that you may see the scholars?’

“‘I should first like to know,’ said I, ‘what I am to find there, and who is the handsomest boy 2



in the school,'—'One person admires one,' he said, 'and another another.'—'But whom do you admire, Hippothales? tell me that.'—He blushed at this question. I said, 'You need not answer. I can see plainly that you are a great admirer of some one.' At which he blushed still more.

"Ctesippus then interposed and said, 'It is comical enough, Hippothales, that you blush, and will not tell Socrates the name of the youth whom you admire. If he stay in your company a little while, you will tire him to death by talking of the object of your admiration. I assure you, Socrates, he has deafened our ears with the name of Lysis. If he get a little elevated with wine, he fills our heads with the name to such an extent that when we wake again we think we hear it still. And while he merely talks, though it is bad enough, it may be borne. But—when he comes to deluge us with his compositions in prose and verse which he sings in a wonderful voice, and which we must hear patiently, it is too bad. And now, when you ask him about it he blushes!'"

Socrates says, "This Lysis is very young I suppose, I do not recollect the name."—"He is not often called by his name," said he, "but spoken of as the son of his father, who is a very well known person. I am sure you know him by sight; he is very easy to know that way."

4 "But say at once whose son he is,' said I. He replied, 'Democrates, the Aixonean, his eldest son.'—'Good,' said I: 'your taste, Hippothales, does you credit. Now let me hear some of the compositions which you utter to your comrades.'—'Do you, Socrates,' he said, 'give any weight to what he says?'—'Do you deny,' said I, 'that you admire this boy?'—'No,' said he, 'but I deny that I make verse and prose about him.'—'It is

out of order,' said Ctesippus; 'he has lost his wits.'—I said, 'Well, Hippothales, I do not want to hear your poetry, but I want to know what turn your admiration takes.'—'This gentleman here,' he said, 'can tell you, since his ears have been stunned by hearing me.'—'That I can,' said Ctesippus, 5 'and absurd enough it is. Is it not ridiculous that with all his admiration for this boy, he can find nothing to say which any boy in the streets could not say: about Democrates his father and Lysis his grandfather, and ancestors further up still; and about their wealth, and their studs, and their victories in games Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean, won by chariots and by racers?—this is what he speaks of in prose and verse: and of matters older still. The other day he was telling us how that they had an ancient connexion with Hercules, in virtue of which one of their ancestors had received Hercules as a guest; he himself being descended from Jupiter and from Aixoneë the patron goddess of his district; stories which the old women sing in ballads; and much of the same kind of stuff. This is what he utters and what we have to hear.'

"On hearing this I said, 'It is very absurd, 6 Hippothales, to expect to make Lysis respect you by these inappropriate and extravagant encomiums. He will merely become more proud and more 7 haughty in consequence of your praises, and will have nothing to say to you.'—'Can you,' he said, 'advise me of any better way? Pray do if you can. What must one do to make such a boy regard one as a friend?'—Soc. 'It is not easy to say; but if you would bring me into his company, perhaps I could shew you in what way one ought to talk with him, instead of such things as you say

and sing, according to the account of your companions here.'

8 "That," said he, 'is not difficult. If you go into the school with Ctesippus here, and sit down, and begin talking, I think it likely that he will come to you, for he is very fond of listening to conversation: and as it is a half-holiday in honour of Hermes, the boys and young men will be together. He will be sure to come to you, and if not, Ctesippus' cousin Menexenus is his most intimate friend, so he knows Ctesippus well, and he can call him, if he does not come of himself.'—So I took Ctesippus and went into the school, the other following.

"When we went in we found that they had finished the ceremonies of the festival, and were playing at  
9 marbles in their holiday dresses. The greater part were playing in the court, but some of them were in the room, in a corner, playing at odd or even with handfuls of marbles which they pulled out of little bags; and others stood round these, looking on. Among them was Lysis: he stood among the boys and youths, with a garland on his head in honour of the festival, very distinguished in his appearance; not only remarkably good-looking but also looking so good. We went to the opposite side of the room and sat down there, for there it was quiet, and began to talk to one another. At this Lysis turned round and often looked at us, and obviously was wishful to come to us. At first he was bashful and did not venture; but soon Menexenus came out of the court between his games, and when he saw me and Ctesippus, he came  
10 to sit down by us. Lysis, when he saw him do this, came and sat down by us along with Menexenus: and others also came; and Hippothales too, when he saw a crowd standing round, glided in

under its shadow, and stood where he could look at Lysis without being seen by him, being afraid of offending him; and stood there listening.

“Then I, looking at Menexenus, said, ‘Son of Demophon, which of you is the elder?’—‘We dispute about that,’ said he.—‘And also I suppose you dispute which is of the better family?’ said I.—‘Even so,’ said he.—‘And do you dispute which is the better looking?’ said I; at which they both laughed.—‘I will not ask,’ said I, ‘if you dispute which is the richer; for you are friends, are you not?’—‘Very much,’ they said.—‘And what belongs to friends they have in common, so that in this respect neither will have any superiority, if what people say about friendship is true.’—To this they agreed.

“I then began to ask which was the more virtuous, and which was the more wise. But meanwhile some one came for Menexenus, telling him his schoolmaster wanted him: he was, I believe, performing a religious ceremony. So he went away. I then asked Lysis: ‘Your father and 11 mother love you very much, do they not?’—‘Very much,’ he said.—‘And they wish you to be very happy, do they not?’—‘Certainly.’—‘Do you think that a person is happy who is kept in slavery, and is not allowed to do anything that he would like.’—‘Truly, no,’ said he.—‘And if your father and mother love you and desire that you should be happy, do they try every way to make you happy?’—‘Certainly,’ said he. ‘Then do they let you do what you like, and never scold you, never prevent your doing what you like?’—‘Oh indeed, Socrates, they prevent my doing a great many things.’—‘How do you say?’ I asked. ‘Though they wish you to be happy do they prevent you doing what you like? Now just tell me.

If you wanted to get into one of your father's chariots, and drive it, holding the reins yourself, when he has to run a race, would they permit you or prevent you?'—'They would not permit me,' he said.—'Then whom would they permit?'—'My father has a charioteer to whom he pays wages.'

- 12 " 'How do you say? Do they let a hired servant do what he likes with the horses rather than you, and give him money besides?'—'To be sure they do,' said he.—'But the mule-team, they permit you to drive that; and if you liked to flog them they would let you.'—'Would they let me!' said he.—'What,' said I, 'is nobody allowed to flog them?'—'O yes,' he said, 'the muleteer.'—'Is he a slave or freeman?' said I.—'A slave,' he said.—'And so, it seems, they hold a slave to be better than you their son, and entrust their things to him rather than to you, and permit him to do what he likes, and prevent you. Tell me one thing more. Do they let you manage yourself, or do they not even entrust you with so much?'—'How do they entrust me with that?' said he.—'Why who manages you?' said I.—'This walking companion, my Tutor,' said he.—'And is he a slave?'—'Yes, he is our slave,' said he. 'What a sad thing,' said I, 'that a free person should be under the control of a slave. And in what way does this Tutor control you?'—'He brings me to the school,' said he. 'And the schoolmasters, do they
- 13 control you?'—'Completely,' said he. 'Well; your father seems bent upon giving you a great number of masters and governors. But when you go home to your mother, does she let you do what you like, to make you happy, and let you meddle with her wool and her work? Of course she lets you take hold of her shuttle and her other implements that she works with.'—He laughed and

said, 'Indeed, Socrates, not only does she prevent me, but she would beat me if I touched any of those things.'—'Bless me,' said I, 'have you offended your father and mother?'—'No indeed,' said he.—'Then why do they constrain you so sadly, and prevent your being happy and doing what you like; and keep you all day long always in subjection to one person or another; and never let you do anything that you wish to do? So that, it seems, you are never the better for being of a wealthy family. Every body is allowed to use this wealth more than you: and you are none the better for your person, which is so handsome; but even this is managed and governed by another; and you are not allowed to manage anything, nor to do anything which you wish to do.'

"'It is because I am not of age, Socrates,' he 14 said. 'Do not make any difficulty of that, son of Demophon,' said I; 'for as to that, your father and mother commit some things to you, and do not wait till you are of age. When they want a person to read to them or write for them, they set you to do it rather than any other person in the house, do they not?'—'Certainly,' said he.—'And then you may write and read as you like, putting one letter first and another second, according to your own judgment. And when you play the lyre, your father and your mother do not prevent you tightening one string and slackening another, and fingering them and pinching them as you think best: do they?'—'No, certainly.'—'Then what is the reason that in these things they do not prevent your acting, but do prevent it in the other cases of which we spoke?'—'I suppose,' he said, 'because I know these things, but not the others.'

"'Very well then, my good friend,' said I; 'so 15 then your father does not wait for your being of

age, in order to give you leave to act. On the very first day that he thinks you are wiser than he is, he will commit to your management all that he has and himself into the bargain.'—'I think so too,' said he.—'Well,' said I, 'but will not the same rule hold with your neighbour as with your father? Do you not think that he too would give you the management of his house, when he thinks that you understand the management of a house better than he does?'—'I suppose he would.'—'And do you think that the Athenians will give you the management of their affairs when they think that you are wise enough to manage them?'—'I think so.'—'Truly! and about the great king of Persia? Whether do you think he would trust his eldest son who is the heir of all Asia, or us, to season his roast meat for him, if we were to go to him and let him see that we understand seasoning better than his son?'—'Us, plainly,' said he.—

16 'And he would not let him put a pinch of salt on the meat, and would let us pepper and salt it at our discretion.'—'Of course.'—'And if his son had a disorder in his eyes, would he let him handle his own eyes, knowing nothing of surgery, or would he prevent him?'—'He would prevent him.'—'But if he understood us to be good oculists, he would let us handle them, and even pull them open and stuff them with ashes, and would suppose we knew what we were about.'—'You say truly.'—'And would he let us manage everything rather than do it himself or commit it to his son,—everything in which he supposed us to be wiser than them?'—'He could not help it,' said he.—'And so you see, my dear Lysis,' said I, 'that things which we understand, every body will allow us to manage, whether Greeks or Barbarians, men or women; and with regard to such matters

we may do what we please, and no one thinks of binding us. In such matters, we are free to act, and we even have command over others, and the things are ours, and we have the good of them. But as to things which we do not understand, no 17 body will let us do what we like with them; and not only strangers, but even father and mother and the nearest friends. In such matters we must be subject to others, and the things do not belong to us, and we get no good of them. Can we be friends to any one, and make any one love us by meddling with things in which we can be of no use?—‘No, certainly,’ said he.—‘No; neither his father nor any one loves a person with regard to things in which he is useless.’—‘So it seems,’ said he.—‘Then if you come to be a wise man, my boy, all will be friends to you, all will care for you. For you will be useful and good. But if not, not even your father, nor your mother, nor your relations will care for you. How then can any body think great things of himself when he does not know how to think wise things?’—‘How indeed?’ said he.—‘And if you still need a schoolmaster, you have not yet learnt to be wise.’—‘It is true,’ said he.— 18 ‘If you are unthinking, you ought not to have big thoughts.’—‘Indeed I think not, Socrates,’ said he.

“At this, I looked at Hippothales, and hardly checked myself in time,—I was on the point of saying, ‘See, Hippothales, how one ought to talk to a boy; taking him down and bringing him to reason, not blowing him up with conceit and spoiling him, as you do.’ But I looked and saw that he was in pain and trouble at what was said; and I recollected that he did not wish Lysis to see him; so I restrained myself and said nothing.”

The purport of the Dialogue so far is obvious



enough, and is here very plainly expressed; that the way to win a boy's regard and respect is to talk to him so as to set his mind to work; and that he will like this better than high-flown praises and literary turns of expression. The colloquy with the boy by which this is illustrated is much after the fashion of those which occur even now in children's books, resembling them not only in its general manner, and in the induction from examples by which the moral is illustrated, but in the exaggeration with which the moral is stated, that if we are wise, everybody will entrust us with everything; and in the strokes of jocoseness introduced for the sake of liveliness, as in talking of peppering the Great King's roast meat, and putting ashes in the eyes of his son: and also in the play on words involved in the opposition of *unthinking* and *big thinking*, viz.: —*aphron* and *megalophron*.

It may seem that this is too narrow and trifling a purpose for a Dialogue of Plato; but I think it will be difficult for any one reading this part of the Dialogue, to interpret it otherwise. We must recollect that the primary importance of knowledge as the basis and essence of all virtue, was a leading feature in the Socratic doctrine; and therefore was held by Plato, in the earlier period of his speculations, to be a valuable lesson for men as well as for boys.

When the colloquy with Lysis is thus brought to a close, a conversation with the other boy, Menexenus, is entered upon; and this seems to me to be of the same character as the former part; that is, its purport consists in the way in which it sets the boy's mind to work, not in the importance of the doctrines introduced into the conversation; which doctrines indeed are such as it would be absurd to discuss with a boy; and absurd to dis-

cuss with any one in so brief and fragmentary a way, if any philosophical result were aimed at. The account goes on thus:

“And now Menexenus came back, and sat down by Lysis, where he was before. And Lysis in a child-like and kindly way looking at me said, so that Menexenus might not hear, ‘Socrates, tell Menexenus what you have been telling me.’—And I said, ‘That you shall tell him, Lysis, for you paid great attention to it.’—‘That is true,’ said he. ‘Try then,’ said I, ‘to recollect all that I said, that you may tell it all to him. And if there is any part which you cannot recollect, ask me when you see me again.’—‘I will do so, Socrates,’ said he, 19 ‘very carefully, you may depend upon it. But say something else to him that I may listen till it is time for me to go home.’—‘Well,’ said I, ‘I must do as you bid me; but mind you must come and help me if Menexenus tries to wrangle me down. Don’t you know that he is a great wrangler?’—‘O yes,’ he said, ‘that is why I like you to talk with him.’—‘Ha,’ I said, ‘that I may be laughed at.’—‘No,’ said he, ‘that you may put him down.’—‘How am I to do that?’ said I; ‘it is no easy matter; he is a formidable fellow, and a pupil of Ctesippus: and he has got a person to back him you see—Ctesippus himself.’—‘Never you mind, Socrates,’ he said, ‘but talk with him.’—‘Well, I must talk,’ said I.

“As Lysis and I thus talked to one another, ‘Why do you two,’ said Ctesippus, ‘entertain one another and nobody else? Why do you not let us have a share in your conversation?’—‘We must do so,’ said I; ‘for my friend here does not understand, but he says he thinks that Menexenus knows it, and bids me ask him.’—‘Why then,’ said he, 20 ‘do you not ask?’—‘I will ask,’ said I.

“ ‘Tell me, then, Menexenus, what I shall ask. There is a certain thing which I have been longing for ever since I was a boy, as one man desires one thing and another another. One man wants to have horses, another, dogs, another, gold, and another honours. Now about these matters I care little; but I have a vehement desire to get a friend. I should like to have a good friend, rather than the best fighting cock or quail that ever was seen; yes, upon my word, rather than a horse and a dog. (We cannot overlook here the purposely puerile turn of thought.) Yea, as I live, I had rather have a companion than all the wealth of Darius, and Darius himself to boot; so companionable a person am I. So when I see you two, you and Lysis, I am struck with admiration and think you immensely happy; in that, young as you are, you have so soon and so early got this thing of which I speak. You have got him for a friend, and he has got you: while I am so far from having got this treasure that I do not know how a man becomes the friend of another man; and this is the very thing which I want to ask you, as a person who knows the thing by experience.

- 21 “ ‘And tell me this: when one person loves another, which is the friend of the other? Is the person loving the friend of the person loved? or is the person loved the friend of the person loving? or is there no difference?’—‘There seems to me,’ he said, ‘to be no difference.’—‘How do you mean?’ said I.—‘Are they both friends of one another, if only one of them love the other?’—‘So it seems to me,’ he said.—‘Well, but let us see. May it not happen that the person who loves another is not loved by him in return? Some people love others very much and yet are not loved in return, or are even hated. Or do you not think that

this is true?'—'Very true indeed,' he said.—'There is such a case,' I said; 'one loves and one is loved.' 'Yes.'—'Now which is the friend of the other? the person loving of the person loved? whether he be loved in return or hated; or the person loved of the person loving? or in such a case is neither of them the friend of the other, except they both love one another?'—'It seems to be so.'

“‘Then it seems now different from what it did 22 before: for then if one of them loved the other, they were both friends; but now except both love neither of them is a friend.’—‘I am afraid it is so,’ said he.—‘Nothing is a friend to him that loves it, except it love in return.’—‘So it seems.’—‘Then those are not friends of horses whom horses do not love; nor friends of dogs whom dogs do not love. We call friends or lovers of anything *philo* so and so. Friends or lovers of horses are *philippi*, lovers of dogs are *philocynes*, lovers of quails are *philortyges*, lovers of wisdom are *philosophi*; but they are not properly philosophers, friends of wisdom, except wisdom love them in return. Then when the poet says

Happy the man who has friends in his children and horses  
and dogs,

he is wrong, because the horses and dogs do not reciprocate his love. Is that so?'—'I do not think it is,' said he.—'Then the poet speaks truth.'—'Yes.'—'Then the thing loved may be called a friend to the person loving it, Menexenus, whether it love in return or not. For example, little children when they are very young, and before they have learnt to love any body or even though they hate their father or their mother who controls and chastises them, still, though they do hate them, are at the same time, the greatest friends of their parents, because most dear to them.'—'It seems to me to be

23 so,' said he. 'So then he is not called friend who loves, but who is loved.'—'So it seems.' 'And consequently, he is called enemy who is hated, not he who hates.'—'So it appears.'—'So that many persons are loved by their enemies and hated by their friends; and are friends of their enemies, and enemies of their friends. And yet this seems very absurd, my friend, or rather impossible, to be the friend of an enemy and the enemy of a friend.'—'You seem to say true, Socrates.'—'Well, but if this is impossible, the thing which loves must be the friend of the thing loved.'—'So it appears.'—'And the thing hating, the enemy of that which is hated.'—'Necessarily.'—'But then we shall be obliged to confess as before, that often a thing is the friend of that which is not *its* friend, or even of that which is its enemy.'—'I am afraid we must,' said he.—'But what are we to think,' said I, 'if neither those who love are friends, nor those who are loved, nor those who love and are loved? Can we think of any body being friends but these?'—'No, truly,' said he; 'but in fact I am rather puzzled.'"

This process of playing against each other the different meanings and usages of the term friend, *philos*, might very well puzzle even a clever boy; and Menexenus is not represented as shewing any cleverness beyond attention, and a very ready assent to the different and opposite propositions propounded to him. It would not readily occur to a reader, I think, that any light was thrown upon the nature of friendship by this kind of catechism. It is, like the preceding part, a child's Dialogue, serving to fix attention on the use of words; and might be of use to men while in an early stage of mental progress on speculative subjects. But according to a manner of regarding Plato's Dialogues

which has prevailed and still prevails, this Dialogue is supposed to contain profound and important speculations on the subject of friendship. The discussion of Menexenus, however, is not held to contain the most important of these speculations, but only the beginning of them. They come into view when the conversation is again thrown into the hands of Lysis, the boy.

Lysis tells them that he thinks they are not <sup>24</sup> going the right way to work, and then blushes at having put himself forward; he had spoken without intending to speak, so completely had he been absorbed by the conversation. "So," says Socrates, "I thought I would give Menexenus a rest, and, delighted with the intelligent curiosity of the other, I addressed myself to Lysis, and said, 'Lysis, you appear to me to have said very truly that if we had gone the right way to work, we should not have gone so far astray. So let us go that road no further—it seems to be a rough one—but I think we ought to follow a turn that we took a little while ago, when we made the poets our guides. For really the poets are the fathers and leaders of wisdom. Now in one place they deliver a sound doctrine about friends, telling us what they are; they say that God makes people friends and brings them together. And they have got somewhere this maxim:

Thus evermore the like to the like God leads in his guidance.

Have you not met with such a passage?'—'I have,' said he.—'And have you not met with learned treatises that say the same thing; that the like must be friendly to the like, like is drawn to like? This is what those say who speak and who write about nature, that is, about physical principles.'—'You say true,' said he."

This principle, that like attracts like, was propounded by some of the early physical philosophers, as a mode of explaining some features in the constitution of the universe; especially by Empedocles, the philosopher, whose doctrine of four elements, Earth, Air, Fire and Water, obtained so much currency. As a physical proposition, the principle that like attracts like was one of those large ambitious conjectures which naturally occur in the history of science, but which are really worthless. But when the maxim was supposed, as it is here, to be applicable at the same time to physical and ethical matters, it became so vague and ambiguous, as to be no better than a rhetorical flourish. Socrates in this Dialogue, however, (that is, Plato,) taking the maxim in this loose and shifting sense, proceeds to bring out the various difficulties and perplexities to which the maxim may be made to lead; this he does, *as I suppose*, to exercise the intellect and excite the curiosity of his young auditors. They are nearly passive listeners to his exposition of the consequences to which his reasonings lead, saying only to each sentence, "Yes" or "No;" "So I think;" "You seem to me to say rightly;" while Socrates goes on propounding in rapid succession the most diverse and opposite opinions: and at intervals talks of his being at a loss,—his seeing a defect in the reasoning they have all assented to,—and the like. The arguments used are in many cases abstruse; indeed we may often say that they are difficult to follow because they are mere verbal generalizations, of no real value. I shall not attempt therefore to retain the dialogue form in this part, but shall state some of the arguments in a direct manner.

"Like draws like, say the philosophers. Is this true? Perhaps it is only half true. Good

draws good, but bad does not draw bad. The good are friends with the good; the bad are not friends 26 to the bad. But then, they may say that the bad are not like the bad. There is no constancy in badness. The bad are not even consistent with themselves. And so that like draws like, means that the good are friends with the good.

“And yet I see a difficulty. Friendship depends on mutual benefit. But how can the like benefit the like? It can give him nothing but what he has already?

“Again: the good man, in so far as he is 27 good, is self-sufficing, and needs no help from others: how then can he love others for their benefits? And so we seem to be quite wrong. Let us try another course.

“Hesiod says that like hates like, out of envy and jealousy.

Potter is angry with potter, and minstrel is jealous of minstrel.  
Yea, even beggar hates beggar.

And on this ground some maintain that the most unlike things tend to be friends. The poor 28 tends to the rich through want, and the weak to the strong for protection, and the sick man to the physician. The most opposite things are drawn together by their mutual need. Each desires its opposite, not its like. The dry craves the fluid, the cold wants the hot, the bitter needs the sweet, the sharp the blunt, the empty wants fulness, the full wants emptiness. The opposite feeds the opposite, the like gets no advantage from the like. So opposite and opposite tend to friendship.

“But those on the other side will attack us. 29 They will say, Do the just and the unjust tend to friendship, the temperate and the intemperate, the good and the bad? It is not so.

“So it is not true, either that like is drawn



to friendship with like, or opposite with opposite. It is not true that the good is the friend of the  
 30 good, or the bad of the bad, nor the good of the bad.

“It remains then that that which is neither good nor bad, the indifferent, must tend to friendship either with the good, or with the indifferent, for nothing can tend to friendship with the bad.

31 “This seems to be a promising line of speculation. The sound body does not need medical care. The sound man is not drawn to the physician, but the sick man is drawn to him by his disorder. Now the body, as body, is a thing indifferent, neither good nor bad. But by its disorder, it is driven to seek the medical art as its natural friend. And thus an indifferent thing is drawn to friendship with a good thing, by the presence of an evil thing. But this can happen only before the indifferent thing is itself made to be bad by the presence of the evil thing; for when it has once become bad it will have no desire for the good. The presence of something may or may  
 32 not change that to which it is applied. If any one were to paint your auburn hair white, with white paint, there would be whiteness present, but your hair would not be white hair. But when your hair turns white with age, it will be white hair. So an indifferent thing, though an evil thing is present to it, may not yet be bad, or it may be bad. If it be not yet bad, the presence of the evil thing makes it desire a good: but if it have become bad, it loses even the desire of the good, and consequently does not tend to friendship with it.

33 “And thus, they who are already wise do not *philosophize*, that is, desire wisdom, nor do they who are sunk in the depths of ignorance. There remain those who have this evil, ignorance,

but who are not yet utterly ignorant; who know that they do not know what they do not know. Thus *they* philosophize who are not yet quite good, and not yet quite bad. And thus we have found exactly what is the tendency to be friends, and what is not. We say that both as concerns the mind and the body, and everything, it is the tendency of the indifferent to the good on account of the presence of the evil.

“Well! I was delighted, and thought that I 34 had caught the hare. But then I began to have my doubts. I am afraid, I said, this is visionary riches. We shall be laughed at as vain boasters. Look at the matter thus.

“When a man tends to be friends with anything he does so for some reason. For instance. The sick man, as we just now said, tends to be friends with the physician; he does so by reason of the health which he desires, and which his disorder makes him desire. He tends to physic as a good, 36 on account of health which is a good. But if health be a good it must be a good on account of something; and so we go on from good to good, till at last we must come to some highest good: and so in seeking the cause of friendship we must come to some highest aim of friendship, a *prôton philon*, on account of which all other tendencies to friendship exist. And all the other causes of which we have spoken are only images and reflexions of that, and may mislead us.

“For instance, if a father love his son above 37 all things, and if he know that the son has taken poison, he would desire exceedingly the medicine which will cure him. And hence he will desire exceedingly the cup which contains the medicine. But all this vehement desire is not on account of

the subordinate and intermediate instruments, but about that which is the object of them.

“So we do not in fact desire silver and gold, we desire them for the sake of something which we can obtain by their means.

“And so when we talk of friendship, we want a friend for some purpose to which all desire of friendships tends.”

39 The discussion then goes back, in a manner which appears an unprofitable and inartificial repetition, to the doctrine of our desiring the good  
40 on account of the evil. But the result is that there is a highest object of desire which gives value to everything else.

41 There is yet one other notion to be introduced. “That which we desire and want is that which belongs to us, that which suits us, the *appropriate* (*oikeion*). That it is which is the object of love, the aim of friendship. You two boys are friends of one another because you suit each other. And so if any one desires or loves or tends to anything it is because it suits him: it is adapted to his character and disposition. We must love that which belongs to our own nature.

42 “But in order to make this help us in our research, we must inquire whether the *appropriate* is the same thing as the *like*. We have talked till our heads are giddy, but shall we say that the appropriate is something different from the like? Is the good appropriate to the good, the bad to the bad, the indifferent to the indifferent? Even so. But in this case the bad will be the friend of the bad, as being appropriate to it; and the unjust the friend of the unjust; as well as the good of the good. And so we come back to the doctrine which we have already rejected.

“Well: why should we argue any more? I will only, like an advocate at the end of his speech, enumerate the opinions which we have discussed. If neither the loving, nor the loved, nor the like, nor the unlike, nor the good, nor the appropriate, nor the others which we passed in review—they are so many that I do not recollect them all—if none of these is the essential ground of friendship, I really have no more to say.

“While saying this, I thought of setting some of the elder ones a-talking. But thereupon the walking companions of Menexenus and of Lysis, their *Pædagogi*, like evil genii, came forwards, having with them already the brothers of our two boys, and called to them and told them to come home, for it was late. At first we and those who stood round tried to drive them away. But they heeded us not, and scolded in their barbarous language, and called still more authoritatively to the boys. They seemed to us to have been drinking a little in honour of the festival, and not to be capable of understanding us; so we were obliged to yield to them, and broke up the sitting. But as they were going away, I said, ‘Now Lysis and Menexenus, we have all made ourselves ridiculous, I, an old man, and you too. For the persons who are now separating will say that we think that we are friends—for I join myself with you—and yet we have not been able to discover what a friend is.’”

## REMARKS ON THE LYSIS.

As I have said, I am compelled to regard this discussion about friendship, not as a profound philosophical inquiry, in which Error is exposed and Truth brought to view, but as a series of puzzles, fitted well enough to exercise the intellect of boys, and of men in the infancy of speculation, and employed mainly for that purpose by Plato. There has been a disposition, however, in Plato's annotators, to see much more than this in the *Lysis*; and the manner in which this Dialogue has been spoken of is a curious example of the way in which a profound philosophy has been discovered by some in Plato's works, even in the parts to a common eye the most trivial or the most inconclusive. M. Cousin, in his Introduction to his translation of the *Lysis*, has found (as his predecessors have done) purposes and results in this Dialogue of a far higher kind than I have mentioned. He says, "Here his task is to prepare the way to truth by removing all the possible false solutions of a question; and by the progressive destruction of those, to push irresistibly the adversaries of the truth into the abyss of skepticism. That is his aim; I mean, his apparent aim. For above and beyond the abyss into which he precipitates and drives in confusion all the false dogmatisms of his time, there is a higher region into which he does not enter, but upon which he keeps his eyes fixed, and from which he borrows both the secret force which he shews in his combats on this ground, and the unalterable serenity of his soul in the midst of the ruins which surround him and on the brink of universal skepticism."—The reader who has perused the conversation of Socrates with the boys *Lysis* and *Menexenus* will judge for himself how far this eloquent language fitly describes the manner in which Socrates throws difficulties in the way of the assertions concerning the nature and grounds of friendship, which he extracts from the boys. To many it will probably appear difficult to discover in Plato all that such an admirer sees in him. M. Cou-

sin's account of the result of this Dialogue is consistent with his estimate of the process. "Although," he says, "Plato allows the conversation to end as if no progress had been made, in reality a result has been obtained, and a result of the highest value. All the incomplete solutions of the problem of Friendship have been successively gone over, half destroyed, half preserved, extricated from the errors which spoiled them and put them in conflict with one another, purified and reconciled, and all employed as integrant elements of a wider and higher solution. This solution is only indicated in the *Lysis*: it was unfolded in the *Phædrus* and the *Banquet*."—On this we may remark, that such a solution of an ethical problem as is here spoken of must be a definite truth which takes its permanent place in moral philosophy: and that no such abiding truth on the subject of friendship can be traced to these Dialogues of Plato as its origin, or indeed can be found in them by a common eye. There is a great deal of eloquent and ingenious discussion in them; but the matters discussed are rhetorical expressions rather than philosophical truths; and in the *Lysis*, are understood in an exceedingly vague and vacillating manner; enough to make them exercises of discussion, but not steps towards truth.

Other commentators also take no less lofty views of the character and result of the *Lysis*. Thus Schleiermacher considers the *Lysis* not, with M. Cousin, as a precursor to the *Phædrus*, but as a sequel to that Dialogue: although what doctrine there is in the *Phædrus* which is followed out and completed in the *Lysis* he has not explained. He says only, that to suppose the subject begun in a general form in the *Lysis*, and disposed of at last by a partial mythological representation as in the *Phædrus*, would be absurd and unworthy of Plato. This notion of making Plato's Dialogues parts of a systematic exposition without telling us what the system is, and deriving from this view arguments respecting the genuineness or chronology of the Dialogues, will probably weigh with those only who think Schleiermacher's authority important independently of his arguments.

With regard to the time of publication of the *Lysis*, an anecdote is told by Diogenes Laertius (xxiv. § 35) which places it in the lifetime of Socrates. It is said that when Socrates heard Plato read his *Lysis*, he said, "Heavens! what a number

of things has this young man invented about me!" The exclamation is to be interpreted, I conceive, as expressing rather a playful than a serious indignation: for of course the scheme of Plato's Dialogues was understood as implying that he invented and did not merely narrate; and however much the disquisitions of the *Lysis* may stop short of an accurate definition of friendship, such as could enter into a complete ethical philosophy, they still probably went beyond Socrates's real teaching both in their range and in their subtlety.

There seems to be no reason why we should reject this story, and therefore we may consider the *Lysis* as one of the Dialogues belonging to Socrates's lifetime; which agrees very well with its Socratic basis, and its freedom from traces of the warfare with "the Sophists" which occupied Plato's after-life. And we may observe that this early date of the *Lysis* confirms greatly the assignment of the *Charmides* to the same early period. For the agreement between the two Dialogues is very great in manner and conception; and even in purpose, the object being a definition of *philia* in this as it is of *sophrosyne* in the *Charmides*.

Socher, who questions the genuineness of the *Lysis*, still thinks it is by a scholar of Plato, and the same who wrote the *Charmides*. His main objection to the reception of the Dialogue as Plato's is that the conception of Friendship here presented is unworthy of him. But if our view be the right one, that the conceptions of friendship here presented are introduced merely to try the intellects and excite the interest of the boys, (which is the object the author himself propounds,) this objection will appear of small or no weight. The doctrines of this Dialogue appear to be alluded to in that chapter of Aristotle's *Ethics* in which he speaks of Friendship; and though Plato is not there mentioned, the mode in which these doctrines are touched on is quite consistent with the supposition that Aristotle was referring to them as Plato's.

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**THE RIVALS.**  
**OF PHILOSOPHY.**  
**(*PHILOSOPHIA.*)**



THE second title of this Dialogue would be more descriptive if it were *Philosophy and Gymnastics*, for the discussion turns mainly upon the relative merits of these two pursuits, as asserted by the two Rivals. But the main purpose of the writer would be better described if it were entitled *περὶ πολυμαθίας*, *Concerning Much-learning*.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE RIVALS.

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IN the *Laches*, a saying ascribed to Solon was referred to, and apparently assented to by the speakers Nicias and Laches, to the effect that it is a good thing to go on constantly learning something, even when we are old. This maxim is made the subject of discussion in another of the Platonic Dialogues, *The Rivals*; and this discussion is carried on by Socrates in this Dialogue very much in the spirit which Xenophon describes as having pervaded Socrates's conversation. We are told in the *Memorabilia*\*, that Socrates advised his friends and disciples to learn the sciences of the time, only so far as was useful for practical purposes;—geometry, for instance so far as it is useful in land-measuring, but not when it runs into complex and almost unintelligible diagrams;—astronomy, so as to know how to follow the seasons of the year, the periods of the month, the hours of the day and night, in the way in which watchmen on land and sailors at sea know these things; but not to attempt to learn what is taught about the circles in which the heavenly bodies move, and their periods and their distances from the earth, and about the planets, and about the causes of their motions. He strongly exhorted

\* iv. 7.

his hearers not to occupy their thoughts with these things, which God works in his own way, and which man probably could not discover, and in which the research could not be agreeable to the Gods, who have not made such things manifest to man. He thought that men by pursuing such researches might craze themselves, and that Anaxagoras had done so. His aim was to direct men's thoughts to consider what was their duty. He thus taught that philosophy, in the general sense of the term, is of far less dignity and value than justice, goodness, and virtue. No knowledge is of any concern to man in comparison with the knowledge of right and wrong.

Now this is precisely the teaching of *The Rivals*; but the doctrine is there clothed in a very lively dramatic form, which I must endeavour to exhibit to the reader. The narrative is put into the mouth of Socrates.

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## THE RIVALS.

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“ I WENT into the school which is kept by Dionysius, for the teaching of the usual branches of learning for youth; and there I saw a set of very handsome boys of good family, and also some young men who frequent such schools. There were two of the boys who were disputing together; about what, I could not well hear; but it seemed that they were arguing about some of the notions of Anaxagoras, or some such mathematical person; for they were describing circles on the floor, and making angles with their hands, and were very earnest upon the subject. I sat down by a young man who was much interested in one of the boys, and jogged him with my elbow, and asked what it was that the boys were so earnest about; I said, ‘It must be something very great and very fine that they care so much for.’ He however replied, ‘Very great and fine, truly! They are talking about the heavenly bodies, and the trifling stuff that they call philosophy.’ I was surprised at his answer, and said, ‘Young Sir! does philosophy seem to you such stuff? Why are you so severe?’ And another young man who was sitting near, and who was a sort of rival of his, hearing my question and his answer, said, ‘Socrates, you will get nothing by asking him whether he thinks philosophy to be stuff. Don’t you know

him? He passes all his time in wrestling and eating and sleeping. What else could you expect him to say, but that philosophy is stuff.' The fact was, that this young man was cultivating literature and the other gymnastics. So I thought I would leave the other alone, to whom I had addressed my question, as he did not pretend to be at home in talking but in doing, and go on asking my questions of the other who professed to have more knowledge, and see if I could get anything out of him. I said, 'My question was proposed to both. If you think that you can answer better than he did, I ask you, Do you think that philosophy is a fine thing, or not?'

"When the two boys heard us talking thus, they left off their talk, and dropt their disputé, and came to hear us. And then I felt, as I always do, a sort of reverence and emotion at the sight of handsome boys; and so apparently did the young man. He answered, with some vehemence, 'If, Socrates, I should come to think philosophy worthless stuff, I should think that I was not worthy to be called a man, nor anybody who talks so;' alluding to his rival, and speaking aloud, that the boys might hear. So I said, 'You think then that philosophy is a fine thing?' 'Very,' said he."

Here we have the subject introduced, and it is forthwith treated in the Socratic manner. 'Well, said I, but can we know with regard to anything whether it is a fine thing or a foul thing, if we do not, to begin with, know *what* it is?' He said, 'No.' 'Then,' said I, 'You know what philosophy is.' 'Perfectly,' said he. 'And what is it?' said I. 'What should it be but Solon's rule. Solon said, in one part of his poems,

Thus growing old I still go learning on.

And so if a man is to learn philosophy, he must

always be learning something, both when he is young and when he is old, that he may, in the course of his life learn the greatest possible number of things.'

"At first," Socrates says, "he seemed to me to say something sound; but having turned the matter in my mind, I asked him if he thought that philosophy consisted in knowing many things. 'Certainly,' said he. 'Well, but philosophy, the love of wisdom, is a good thing as well as a fine thing, is it not?' 'Certainly.' 'But are there not other good things? Is not the love of bodily strength a fine and a good thing as well as the love of wisdom? Gymnastics, as well as Philosophy?' He, with an ironical air, said, 'To that question I have two answers. To this person (his rival) I say that it is neither, but to you, Socrates, I confess that gymnastical excellence is a fine thing and a good thing.' 'And do you think that gymnastical excellence consists in the amount of exercise?' He replied, 'Certainly; as philosophical excellence consists in the amount of knowledge?'"

Soc. "But those who practise gymnastics, do so in order to put their bodies in good condition, do they not?"—"For that purpose," he said.

Soc. "And is it the amount of exercise which puts the body in good condition?—'How can any one be in good bodily condition who takes little exercise?'—Upon this I thought I must bring my gymnastical youth into play, to help me by his experience. I asked him:

'Why do you say nothing, my good Sir, when he talks in this way? Do you think that men are brought into a good bodily condition by a very great amount of exercise, or by a moderate amount?' He said, 'I, Socrates, agree with the

old maxim, that moderate exercise makes the health good. And here is the proof. Here is a man who studies so that he neither sleeps nor eats, nor takes exercise, and who is lean and long-necked and ill.'

"And as he said this, the boys were diverted and laughed, and the other blushed.

"I then said to the other, 'Will you not confess that it is neither very little nor very much exercise that puts men in good condition? You see we are two to one against you.' He replied, 'I am not at all afraid of arguing with him, even if I had a much worse case than I have; for he is nothing. But with you I will not wrangle against my own conviction. I allow that it is not very much exercise, but moderate exercise, which puts men in good condition.'"

The argument then goes on, in the usual inductive fashion.

Soc. "And what shall we say of food? Is it very much or a moderate quantity that is good for men?" He allows the same of food.

"And then I compelled him to make the same admission with regard to other things which affect the body, that a moderate amount is best.

"Well, said I, but about the mind? Of the things which operate upon *it*, is a moderate or immoderate quantity good for it?" "Moderate," he said.

"But among the things which operate on the mind are the things which we learn; is it not so? He allowed that it is.

"So then a moderate quantity of them is best; is it not? He granted it."

Thus the original proposition is settled, and Solon's maxim is disproved by this train of induction. But the proof of the smallness of the value of the usual philosophy is to be carried farther by

another line of induction. And to this the Dialogue now turns. The question is started, How are we to know what is a moderate quantity?

Soc. "Whom are we to ask that we may <sup>3</sup> know what is a moderate quantity of exercise, or of food for the body? We all three agreed that we must ask the physician, or the gymnastic teacher.—Whom can we ask what is a moderate quantity of seed to sow in a field? The husbandman.—Whom are we to ask what is a moderate quantity of things to be sown in the mind as things learnt? And here we were all quite at a loss. And I, jesting, said: As we cannot tell, shall we ask these boys? Or perhaps we are ashamed to do so, as Homer says that the suitors of Penelope who could not themselves bend the bow of Ulysses, would not let any other person try.

"As they appeared to be brought to a standstill in this line of inquiry, I tried another course, and said: 'What are the parts of science which a philosopher ought to learn? as he is not to learn all, nor many.'

"The more literary of the students replied immediately that what he ought to learn is the most elegant and appropriate parts, by which he might make his philosophy contribute most to his reputation; and that he would do this, if he appeared to be acquainted with all Arts and Sciences, or at least with as many as possible; and that he must learn the portions which belong to a liberal education, the education of free men, the parts which require mind and intelligence, not those which depend on manual skill." Socrates says,

"You mean, as in the art of building, you may get a mason for five or six shillings, but for an architect you must pay hundreds of pounds; for there are only a few in all Greece? Is that what



you mean?" And he assented, and said it was what he meant.

- 4 Socrates then asks him if it is not impossible to learn well two Arts or Sciences: still more, many such, and each of wide extent. He replies:

"Do not imagine, Socrates, that he is to learn each Art or Science accurately, as an especial Artist or Professor of that Art or Science would; he need learn it only as a liberally educated man should, so as to be able to follow better than persons in general what is said by professional persons, and to give his own opinion, so as to appear the most accomplished and the best informed of the company present, both in what is said and what is done of a technical or scientific kind."

"You mean," says Socrates, "a man like what is called a Pantathletes, who engages in all the five kinds of exercises;—leaping, running, quoining, boxing and wrestling. He will be second in running or in wrestling, or in any one particular exercise, though he aims at winning on the whole. In the same way, is your philosopher to be inferior to the cultivation of each particular science, and thus to be a second-best man? Is this your notion?"

- 5 The youth assents: and Socrates then proceeds to shew that this kind of philosopher, second-best in everything, is good for nothing. "If," he says, "you were ill yourself, or had any of your friends ill, whether would you send for your second-best philosopher, or for a physician?" The young man says, "For both."—SOCRATES:—"That will not do for me. You must tell me which first and in preference." "Of course, then, the physician."—SOC. "And if you were in a ship

in a storm, would you entrust the safety of yourself and all that belonged to you to the regularly trained sailor or to the philosopher?"—"To the sailor."—"And so with regard to everything else, so long as you have got a man belonging to the craft, the philosopher is of no use. And so philosophy is not a good thing, because not a useful one." This he was compelled to confess.

Socrates then goes on, "May I go on with my questioning? Perhaps I shall be thought rude if I do."—"Ask what you will," says the youth. "I have really nothing to ask; only I want to put together what has been said. We have agreed that philosophy is a fine and a good thing; and that we ought to be philosophers; and that philosophers are useful people because philosophy is a good thing; and then again we have had to agree that philosophers are of no use, so long as there are persons of each particular craft; and there always are such persons. Are we not agreed about these points?"—"We are," he said.

"'Well but,' I said, 'at this rate the philosopher, according to your account of what philosophy is, is a useless and worthless character, so long as there are cultivators of special arts. Do not let him have this character, my friend. Do not let philosophy be such a business as this;—to dabble in all sciences, to peep into everything, and learn a little of everything. This is very poor work: no better than what we speak of with contempt as the mechanical acts.'"

Here we are a second time brought to the conclusion that philosophy in the sense of learning many things, is worthless and useless. And here the Dialogue might very well stop: but apparently the author thought it necessary to complete his

doctrine, that this philosophy is a worthless thing, by adding to it the Socratic tenet, that the true philosophy is virtue;—that the knowledge of right and wrong is the important thing. This he does very briefly, and in a manner less complete than in some of the other Dialogues. I need only indicate the argument still more briefly.

7 “There is an art by which men break in horses;—that is, make them better than they were. And the like of dogs. The same art which does this, teaches what horses and dogs are good, what are bad. So the art which teaches what men are good and what bad, must be the art which breaks them in, that is, betters them by chastisement. What is this Art or Science? Plainly it is Justice. So Justice is the Art of knowing what men are good and what are bad.”

Then follows an argument for the value of Self-knowledge in man: but as it is founded upon a horse knowing what are good and what bad horses, and the like, it is, as I conceive, an extravagant and helpless attempt at induction. It is made to end in the establishment of *Sophrosyne*, Wisdom, in the sense of Self-knowledge, as being  
8 identical with *Dicæosyne*, Virtue or Justice. And it is further inferred that Virtue must be shewn in  
9 all the spheres of active life; the family, the city, the state: and that the philosopher is especially bound thus to exhibit practical virtue. “If it is a loss of reputation to him, not to be able to give a good opinion when a physician is consulted, how much more is this the case when the question is concerning matters still more important; matters of practical right and wrong! In such cases, how disgraceful to him to be second or third, instead of first! And thus, my friend, philosophy is some-

thing very different from that knowledge of many things, and dabbling in many sciences, which you recommended."

"When I had said this, the literary youth was abashed at the turn which the discussion had taken, and held his tongue. The illiterate gentleman said that it was all right: and the rest of the company commended what I had spoken."

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## REMARKS ON THE RIVALS.

THE latter part of this Dialogue, in which the value and obligation of justice and active virtue are sought to be established, appears to me confused and feeble; and on that account we might question the genuineness of the Dialogue, as some have done. But in the former part, the matter is genuinely Socratic, as I have pointed out; and the drama appears to me quite in Plato's style. The way in which the student who maintains that philosophy is *Polymathy*, Much-learning, insults his rival and is put to shame, is quite Platonic: and this youth, who is for learning enough of everything to make a shew about it, is the germ of the representation of such universal professors as Hippias, and others, whom Plato attacks in his later works. The representation of Socrates's habits and conversation agrees well with the best authorities; and even Socher, who thinks the Dialogue is not Plato's own, ascribes it to some young disciple of Socrates. Considering how peculiar the Platonic drama in the Dialogues is, and how few have succeeded in this kind of composition in any age, it appears a bold assumption to assume that in the school of Socrates, when Dialogue-writing was just beginning to appear, there were several writers who could write such dramas, and write them so well. It seems easier to suppose that in Plato's earlier essays at least, he was sometimes feeble, inconclusive, and

even self-contradictory : and thus, to suppose such Dialogues as the Rivals to be Plato's, notwithstanding their faults.

Socher, the most moderate of those Commentators who deny the Platonic origin of this work, does so mainly on this ground : that in the Rivals, the philosopher is asserted to be a man who ought to conduct well and rightly the business of a household and of a state : which is, he says, quite at variance with the loftier aspirations of the Platonic philosophy as shewn in other Dialogues, which led to the persuasion that the business of the state was beneath his care. As I have said, the part of the Dialogue in which this view of the philosopher's business is contained, appears to me inferior to the rest ; but a doctrine so genuinely Socratic, if not Platonic, might easily be put into Socrates's mouth, even by Plato ; especially while he was still merely a disciple of Socrates, and not the asserter of a new system.

The grounds on which I defend the Dialogue will of course lead us to ascribe it to an early period of Plato's career, while Socrates was yet alive, and probably before his accusation had begun to be talked of.

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**THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.**

**OF THE NATURE OF MAN.**

**(*PHYSIS ANTHROPOU.*)**

THE second title *ἡ περὶ φύσεως ἀθρώπου* is too general. The subject of the Dialogue is really *Of the Education of a Politician*.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

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THERE are in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* two Conversations which approach so nearly to the Platonic Dialogues termed the *First Alcibiades*, that they may well serve as an introduction to it: and by perusing them first, we may form a tolerably clear notion of the relation of the Platonic Dialogues to the real conversations of Socrates. Socrates in these instances follows out at some length a favourite thesis of his: that to *know* something is requisite to speaking well. The first of these two conversations is held with Glaukon, the brother of Plato\*; the other with Euthydemus†, another young man of fashion at Athens. A few passages from these will throw light, as we have said, on Plato's Dialogues.

“When Glaukon, the son of Ariston, not yet twenty years old, was obstinately bent on making a speech to the people of Athens, and could not be stopped by his other friends and relations, even though he was dragged from the speaker's bema by main force, and well laughed at, Socrates did what they could not do, and by talking with him, checked this ambitious attempt. ‘So, Glaukon,’

\* *Mem.* III. 6.

† *Mem.* IV. 2.



said he, 'it appears that you intend to take a leading part in the affairs of the State.'—'I do, Socrates,' he replied.—'And by Jupiter,' said Socrates, 'if there be any brilliant position among men, *that* is one. For if you attain this object, you may do what you like, serve your friends, raise your family, exalt your country's power, become famous, in Athens, in Greece, and perhaps even among the barbarians, so that when they see you they will look at you as a wonder, as was the case with Themistocles.' This kind of talk took Glaukon's fancy, and he stayed to listen. Socrates then went on—'Of course, in order that the city may thus honour you, you must promote the benefit of the city.' 'Of course,' Glaukon said. 'And now,' says Socrates, 'do not be a niggard of your confidence, but tell me, of all love, what is the first point in which you will promote the city's benefit.' And when Glaukon hesitated at this, as having to consider in what point he should begin his performances, Socrates said—'Of course, if you were to have to benefit the family of a friend, the first thing you would think of, would be to make him richer; and in like manner, perhaps you would try to make the city richer.' 'Just so,' said he. 'Then of course you would increase the revenues of the city.' 'Probably,' said he. 'Good. Tell me now, what *are* the revenues of the city, and what they arise from? Of course you have considered these points with a view of making the resources which are scanty become copious, and of finding some substitute for those which fail.' 'In truth,' said Glaukon, 'those are points which I have not considered.' 'Well, if that be the case,' said Socrates, 'tell me at least what are the expenses of the city; for of course your plan is to retrench anything which is superfluous in these.' 'But by

Jove,' said he, 'I have not given my attention to this matter.' 'Well then,' said Socrates, 'we will put off for the present this undertaking of making the city richer; for how can a person undertake such a matter without knowing the income and the outgoings?'"

Glaukon of course must by this time have had some misgivings, at having his fitness for a prime minister tested by such questioning as this. However, he does not yield at once. 'But, Socrates,' he says, 'there is a way of making the city richer by taking wealth from our enemies.' 'Doubtless there is,' said Socrates, 'if you are stronger than they; but if that is not so, you may by attacking them, lose even the wealth you have.' 'Of course, that is so,' says Glaukon. 'Well then,' says Socrates, 'in order to avoid this mistake, you must know the strength of the city and of its rivals. Tell us first the amount of our infantry, and of our naval force, and then that of our opponents.' 'O, I cannot tell you that off-hand and without reference.' 'Well, but if you have made memoranda on these subjects, fetch them. I should like to hear.' 'No: in fact,' he said, 'I have no written memoranda on this subject.' 'Soc. Then we must at any rate not begin with war: and indeed it is not unlikely that you have deferred this as too weighty a matter for the very beginning of your statesmanship. Tell us then about our frontier fortresses, and our garrisons there, that we may introduce improvement and economy by suppressing the superfluous ones.' Here Glaukon *has* an opinion, probably the popular one of the day. 'I would,' he says, 'suppress them all. I know that they keep guard so ill there, that the produce of the country is stolen.' Socrates suggests that the abolition of guards altogether would not remedy

this, and asks Glaukon whether he knows by personal examination that they keep guard ill. 'No,' he says, 'but I guess it.' Socrates then suggests that it will be best to defer this point also, and to act when we do not *guess*, but *know*. Glaukon assents that this may be the better way. Socrates then proceeds to propound to Glaukon, in the same manner, the revenue which Athens derived from the silver-mines, and the causes of its decrease—the supply of corn, of which there was a large import into Attica—and Glaukon is obliged to allow that these are affairs of formidable magnitude. But yet Socrates urges, 'No one can manage even one household without knowing and attending to such matters. Now as it must be more difficult to provide for ten thousand houses than for one, he remarks that it may be best for him to begin with one; and suggests, as a proper case to make the experiment upon, the household of Glaukon's uncle Charmides; for he really needs help.' 'Yes,' says Glaukon, 'and I would manage my uncle's household, but he will not let me.' And then Socrates comes in with an overwhelming retort. 'And so,' he says, 'though you cannot persuade your uncle to allow you to manage for *him*, you still think you can persuade the whole body of the Athenians, your uncle among the rest, to allow you to manage for *them*.' And he then adds the moral of the conversation: What a dangerous thing it is to meddle, either in word or in act, with what one does not know.

The errors which are rebuked, or rather, bantered in this conversation, are more the presumption and conceit of an ambitious boy, than the false doctrines of an erring philosopher. And yet I do not think it can be doubted that even here, the necessity of exact knowledge of particulars as

a basis for all discussion of generals, and the distinction of knowledge and opinions, were present to the mind of Socrates; though perhaps those doctrines, in this general form, were felt as pervading the conversation, rather by disciples of the stamp of Plato, than of Xenophon.

The same tendencies are in other places treated in the same way, as to both their aspects, namely, as personal conceit and as false philosophy, both encountered by the patient application of a scheme of interrogation logically connected, and so unfolded into numerous aspects. This occurs in the conversation which Xenophon relates as taking place with Euthydemus. Euthydemus in Plato is, as exhibited in the Dialogue of that name, a frivolous sophist, dealing in the most shallow and foolish quibbles, that can hardly aspire to the dignity of sophisms. In Xenophon, he is (probably at an earlier period of life, if he be the same person, which is doubted) a handsome and fashionable young man, who has not yet begun to take a part in speaking to the public assemblies, but has made a common-place book of extracts; on the strength of which he conceives himself to be in the possession of all political wisdom; and thinks with scorn of being instructed in any particular department by any one who has made it his especial study. He is 'to be found' always at a harness-maker's whose shop looks on the Agora. Thither Socrates goes with his friends, and in his first visit talks *at* the young man, who consults his own dignity by taking no notice. At a second visit, Socrates pursues the same course with more effect, speaking of Euthydemus by name, as he was beginning to go away; and, after saying that of course he will soon become a public speaker in the political assemblies, giving a sketch of what he supposes the

opening of his speech will be ; which he says must plainly be to this effect :

“Men of Athens : I do not profess to have had my knowledge from others ; and though I have heard that there are persons skilled in speech and in action, I have never sought their society : nor have I ever taken a master in what is to be known :—so much the contrary, indeed, that I have not only avoided learning anything from anybody, but even seeming to do so : but this shall be no obstacle to my giving you such advice as just now comes into my head.”

And then, true to his habit of illustrating the Art of Politics and the requisites for its exercise, by a comparison with other arts more definite in their form and object, Socrates says that it would be fit, on the same principles, that those who applied to the State for any medical office, should address the People in the same manner : as thus :

“Men of Athens : I do not profess to have learnt medicine from any one. I never asked any of our physicians to be my master. I have avoided not only learning anything from physicians, but even seeming to have learnt this art. But let that be no obstacle to your giving me this office : for I will try to learn something by making experiments on your bodies.”

This made everybody laugh, and effectually secured the attention of Euthydemus : though still he protected himself by looking wise in silence. On this, Socrates plies him more gravely, with arguments drawn from the mode of learning other arts, and the greater difficulty of the Art of Politics. But his fuller success is reserved for a third visit, in which Socrates, avoiding all that might seem to aim at a triumph, comes to the well-known shop alone. And then Euthydemus sits down by him.

Socrates then very soon contrives, as may be supposed, to involve Euthydemus in concessions which shew him to be ignorant of that which the knowledge of Politics necessarily involves. He is obliged to acknowledge that he has no real knowledge of what is Just and what is Unjust; or, as we say more simply, of Right and Wrong; or of Good and Evil:—no true knowledge of himself, notwithstanding his having been twice at Delphi, and being familiar with the maxim, Know thyself. And finally, though he aspires to rule the people, he is obliged to acknowledge that he has no exact knowledge what “the People” means; and ends his discipline of cross-questioning, by confessing that he had better hold his tongue, since he knows nothing. Xenophon adds that this lesson of humility was not lost on Euthydemus, but that the young man immediately attached himself to the society of Socrates, and scarcely ever left him: while the sage, on the other side, ceased to banter his young convert, and taught him, in the simplest and clearest way, what he should know and what he should do.

In a great measure of the same nature as the conversation of Socrates with Euthydemus in Xenophon, is the imaginary conversation of Socrates with Alcibiades in the Platonic Dialogue commonly termed the First Alcibiades. We know from other sources of information that Alcibiades was an object of great interest to Socrates; and that he had attracted great notice at Athens in his early years by his beauty, his talents, his self-will and self-conceit, and his ambition. His birth and the circumstances of his family placed him from the first in an eminent position in the city. He was the nephew and ward of Pericles. He was conspicuous for the petulance and extrava-

gance which he shewed in the city, and for the courage which he manifested in the field of battle, when he served as a hoplite in the army under Phormion in 432 B.C. He then received a severe wound and was in great danger; owing his life only to the exertions of Socrates, who served in the ranks along with him. Eight years afterwards, Alcibiades serving in the cavalry at the battle of Delium, had an opportunity of requiting his obligation to Socrates, by protecting him against the Bœotian pursuers. He sought the society both of Socrates and of other teachers, Prodicus and Protagoras, with a view of making himself skilful in discussion. In 420 B.C. at the age of thirty-one or thirty-two, an early age for a public man, he came forward in public life on occasion of the negociation with the Lacedæmonians about rendering up the prisoners taken at Pylus. In 415 B.C. he spoke strongly in favour of sending the great Athenian expedition to Syracuse, and was himself one of the generals who conducted that ill-fated armament. On that occasion it was known that his projects went further than those of any man in Athens, extending not merely to the conquest of Syracuse, nor even of all Sicily, but also to that of Carthage and the Carthaginian empire. These aspirations of his, or other wider and earlier aspirations, are referred to in the Dialogue; which will perhaps be most intelligible and significant, if we suppose it to be held, as the Dialogue itself supposes, a little while before he thus assumed an important position as a public man. The relation between the parties, and the character and projects of Alcibiades, are implied in the Dialogue itself.

## THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

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SOCRATES begins by addressing him thus:  
“I imagine, O son of Clinias, that you are 1  
surprised that, having been one of your earliest admirers, I do not desert you when others cease to pay you attentions: though, when others sought your conversation in crowds, I for many years did not even speak to you. The cause of this is not human caprice, but the divine warning by which I am accustomed to regulate my actions. *That* it was which withheld me: it withholds me no longer; and I hope that in future it will not be an impediment.

“During this time I have observed how you despised all your admirers; so that your haughtiness repelled them all, and sent them away. And I will tell you the reason why you despised them. You think that you do not need help from any one: for that your own gifts are enough for you, without any help, beginning with your body, and ending with your mind. You think you are hand- 2  
some and well-formed; and every one who sees you must allow that you are not wrong in this: that you are of one of the best families in the first city of Greece; that you are the nephew of the great and powerful Pericles; and that you are rich. On



these accounts you have been haughty, as I said, to your admirers; and they have retired, as you know. And so, I suppose, you wonder why I still follow you, and what hope it is that brings me near you."

3 ALCIB. "Why, Socrates, you only anticipate me. I was just going to ask you why you molest me by following me about wherever I go."

SOC. "I will tell you very willingly, if you will stay and listen to me."

ALCIB. "Say on."

SOC. "But have a care of asking me. Perhaps I may find it as difficult to end my story, as I have found it to begin."

ALCIB. "My good friend, speak; I will hear."

SOC. "Since you ask, there is no help for it. I must speak plainly."

4 "If, Alcibiades, I saw that you were satisfied with such a life as you have hitherto led, and contented to go on in the same path, I should have long ago ceased to care for you. At least I think so. But now I will tell you what your innermost thoughts are; and by that you may know whether I have given my attention to you. This is what I think. If any god were to say to you, O, Alcibiades, whether will you live on, keeping your present possessions, but not permitted to add to them, or will you die? you would choose to die. And I will tell you what the hope is on which you live. You will in a few days have to present yourself before the Athenian people. If you come before them, and prove to the Athenians that you deserve to be honoured, as never Pericles nor any of the statesmen of the past time was—if in this way you attain the supreme power in the city—if in this way you become also a great man among the other Greeks, and among the Barbarians who inhabit

this European continent—and if the same God were to tell you that you may be master of Europe, but that you are not allowed to pass over into Asia, nor to meddle with matters there, I conceive that you would not agree to live, even on these conditions, if you were not allowed to fill with your name, and to rule with your power, the whole human race. I believe that you think nobody except the lords of Asia, Cyrus and Xerxes, worthy your consideration. That these are your views, is, with me, not a matter of conjecture, but of certainty. Perhaps you will say, as you know, that this is true; and you will say, What, Socrates, is this to the purpose of your sticking close to me as you do? My dear son of Clinias and Dinomache, I will tell you. This which you have in your thoughts you cannot accomplish without my aid. Such is my power over you. I can do more for you than all your guardians and friends. None of them can assist you to the power which you seek, and I, with the help of God, can. While, however, you were young, and while your hopes were not yet full blown, my divine monitor did not allow me to talk with you of such things: but now he does.”

ALC. “You appear to me now, Socrates, more absurd than even before you began to explain yourself. Suppose I have such thoughts as you describe—for if I deny them, you will not believe me—how can you help me?”

Soc. “I shall not prove this to you by uttering a long discourse, such as you are accustomed to hear from other teachers: but if you will do me one small favour, I will explain myself more fully.”

ALC. “If it is not very troublesome I will do it.”

Soc. “—If you will answer the questions which I shall ask you.”

ALC. "Ask on."

Here we have the scheme of exposition reduced to the usual Platonic form; and we may abridge still more the course of the arguments.

The series of interrogations which Socrates now propounds to Alcibiades is very nearly the same as that which occurs in several others of the Platonic Dialogues, and may be considered as a sort of standard mode of reasoning in the Socratic school. It is indeed very nearly the same as that which I have quoted from Xenophon, in the conversation with Euthydemus. As then in these dialogues the answers of the persons interrogated are generally only "Yes," or "No;" "I cannot deny what you say," or "I do not see what you mean," I conceive that the exposition of the argument will gain in clearness as well as in brevity, by omitting many of these, and presenting the argument in a more direct form.

When Alcibiades has agreed to answer Socrates' questions, in order that he may see what he has got to say, the steps of the reasoning proceed thus. Socrates says:

- 7 "You intend to come forward in the Public Assembly of the Athenians in a short time. If when you are going to the tribune (the *bema*) I were to ask you what is the subject of deliberation on which you are about to advise the Athenians—Is it some subject on which you know better than they? would you assent?" Alcibiades says: "Of course it is so." "But," asks Socrates, "what you know is either what you have learnt from others, or what you have discovered yourself. Now both what you have learnt and what you have discovered, there must have been a time when you did not know. Now I know what you have learnt, for I have always had my eye upon you.

You have learnt to read, to wrestle, and to play upon the lyre. Is there anything else?"

Alcibiades allows that he has not taken lessons in anything else.

"But are you going to advise the Athenians 8 about reading and writing? Of course not. Or about lyre-playing or wrestling? Just as little. If they want advice on these points, they will take it from the masters of each art. As when they have to consult about health, they go to a physician. 9

"What then is the matter on which you will advise them?" Alcibiades answers, "On their own affairs."

Socrates then follows this into detail. "What affairs? About ship-building? You know nothing of that." Alcibiades says, "About war and peace, and the like."

Socrates says, "You mean you will counsel them with whom to make war, with whom to make peace, and when, and how. But they must do this with whom, and when, and as, it is best. But this also is a matter for professional advice. The master of gymnastics knows when and how it is best to wrestle. And so of when and how to play the lyre. 10 There are arts, Gymnastic, and Music, which teach this. Now what is the art which tells you when and how it is better to make war, or peace? Are 11 you not ashamed not to be able to tell me even the name of this art, though you are ready to give advice on the subject?"

Alcibiades at length, by leading questions, is 12 made to say that the question of better, as to war or peace, is a question of Rights and Wrongs. We are to make war on those that wrong us.

"But where," asks Socrates, "have you taken 13 lessons about Rights and Wrongs? Tell me, that I may go to that School."

- ALC. "You mock me, Socrates. Do you think I do not know about Right and Wrong?" SOC. "Yes, if you have found it out." ALC. "But do you think I have not found it?" SOC. "Yes, if you have sought it." ALC. "But do you think I have not sought it?" SOC. "Yes, if you ever thought you did not know it." ALC. "But was there not a time when I did not know it?" SOC.
- 14 "Tell me when. You have known it, I suppose, at least three, or four, or five years. And before that you were a mere boy. And even then I know that you thought that you already knew such things." ALC. "How do you know that?" SOC. "Because I have heard from your masters that when you played at any game, you often accused your playfellows of being bad boys, and wronging you. Was it not so?" ALC. "Why, Socrates, what was I to say when they *did* wrong me?" SOC. "But how did you know whether they
- 15 wronged you or not?" ALC. "Of course I knew." SOC. "So that even then you thought you knew about right and wrong. When did you find it out? Was there ever a time when you did not think this? Never. So that you did not find it out yourself, and you did not learn it from any other."
- Alcibiades then recalls a former concession, "Perhaps," he says, "I was wrong when I said that I found it out. It was not so, I learnt it as others learnt it." SOC. "How is that? From whom did you learn it?" ALC. "From *the many*." SOC. "You speak of fine teachers, when you tell me of the Many." ALC. "Why? Can they not teach this?"
- 16 SOC. "Let us see what they can teach. Can they teach you chess? And if they cannot teach you this, can they teach you more important things, such as right and wrong?" Alcibiades says, "But

they can teach more important things. For instance, they taught me to speak Greek."

Socrates is here obliged to make a distinction. "Yes," he says, "they can teach you to speak Greek; 17 for they agree what is Greek. They can tell you what you are to call *a horse*, and what, *a man*; but they cannot tell you whether a horse is sound, or a man is healthy. If you find them differing with one another, you can have no trust in their teaching. Now you know that they differ exceedingly 18 as to what is right and what is wrong. They fight and kill each other on the ground of such differences. Homer's *Iliad* gives you the account of one such quarrel. Homer's *Odyssey* of another. Those who were slain at Tanagra, Athenians, Lacedæmonians and Bœotians; those who died in the battle of Coronea, in which your father Clinias fell, perished on no other account than this; a difference of men's judgments about right and wrong. How then can we trust them on such a subject, when they differ so widely? How can you call *the many* your masters in such a matter, when 19 they carry their differences to this extreme point?" Alcibiades allows that this is reasonable; and Socrates fastens upon him the consideration that this point is proved, not by the assertions of Socrates, but by his own admissions.

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We have, in the part of the Dialogue which I have thus abridged, the usual Socratic argument. The knowledge of right and wrong must be a peculiar branch of knowledge, requiring, like any other branch of knowledge, an acquaintance with the first principles of the subject, and to be acquired by special study. We have, on the other side, the view which Plato ascribes to Protagoras, in his Dialogue of that name, which we shall afterwards consider;—that the knowledge of right and

wrong is generally diffused among mankind, and is naturally acquired by intercourse with them.

The course of the Dialogue so completely agrees both with the course of several others of the Platonic dialogues, and with the line of reasoning ascribed to Socrates by Xenophon, that we cannot say otherwise than that the reasoning is Platonic, and apparently, of that period of Plato's exposition when he made it his business to present the doctrines of Socrates in a more dramatic form. The drama is quite characteristic; and includes a reference to the relations of Socrates and Alcibiades which has all the air of reality, when compared with the information which we receive from similar passages of Plato and from other sources.

The notes of time which occur in the Dialogue, so far, all agree in placing the time at which it is supposed to be held at an early period of Plato's life. Alcibiades is spoken of as a person who will soon come forward in public life, and who is known to entertain views of unbounded ambition. He first appeared as a prominent public speaker on occasion of the Lacedæmonian Embassy, B.C. 420. He is mentioned as a speaker in the *Wasps* of Aristophanes, which was acted B.C. 422; and his lisp is there ridiculed (line 44). It is not likely that his ambitious projects, which mainly led to the Syracusan expedition, B.C. 415, would be spoken of as they are here, without further comment, after they had thus taken a practical form: still less that the East rather than the West would be spoken of as their aim: and less still, after the terrible failure of that expedition. The battles referred to are those preceding the Peloponnesian war:—that of Tanagra, B.C. 457, and that of Coronea, B.C. 447. Schleiermacher, who holds this Dialogue not to be genuine, says, Why are not more recent battles referred to; as that of Delium and that of Amphipolis, B.C. 424? To which the simple answer is, that they had not been fought at the time when the Dialogue is held. And that they are *not* mentioned, where the mention of them would have been so natural, is evidence that the Dialogue was supposed to occur before they happened. As it is plain that the Dialogue is supposed to be held before Alcibiades had come forward in public, and therefore long before the battles of Delium and Amphipolis, Schleiermacher's question, why these battles are not mentioned, is really the question why the

writer did not commit a useless and flagrant anachronism. In the Dialogue itself, we read that at a period four or five years earlier, Alcibiades was a mere boy. If we extend this boyhood to his 18th year\*, B.C. 432, the drama of the Dialogue will fall about that year, just before the beginning of the Peloponnesian war.

But this is a different question from the determination of the time at which the Dialogue was written and published by Plato. Plato was born 429 B.C., and probably began to seek the society of Socrates when he was about 20, 409 B.C. It is not likely that he published even his most Socratic Dialogues till some years after this. The Theages, which we may place about the time of the expedition of Thrasyllus, B.C. 409, is, like the Alcibiades, mainly employed in expounding the characteristics of Socrates' teaching. The Symposium, which also contains a picture of Alcibiades, was written, it would seem, 16 years after the death of Socrates, that is, B.C. 383, when Plato was 46. Alcibiades had then been dead many years; he died in 404. It appears therefore that a personal interest about Alcibiades as a living man was not needed in order to induce Plato to make him the subject of a Dialogue. Alcibiades' fortunes had indeed been various. Appointed one of the generals of the great Syracusan expedition in 415, he had soon been summoned home on the charge of impiety, but instead of obeying the summons, fled to Sparta. He continued with the enemies of Athens, till he was recalled 411, and enabled to return to Athens in 407; and after being general for a time, was again deposed. We may suppose it unlikely that the Dialogue was written during his exile; perhaps most likely, after his death. Say therefore B.C. 403.

But we may go onwards with the Dialogue, for new arguments come into view. After Alcibiades has been led to confess that the Many, with their conflicting opinions of right and wrong, cannot be fit teachers on that subject, he says, still bent on political life:

ALC. "After all, the Athenians and the other 20  
Greeks do not so often deliberate about right and  
wrong. They think such matters are evident

\* In Chap. xli. Alcibiades is said to be not quite twenty at the time of the Dialogue, *ἔτη οὐκ ἔτι γεγονώς σφόδρα εἰκοσίν.*



enough. They deliberate rather about what is profitable for them. Profit is not the same thing as Justice. Many have profited by doing wrong. Many have suffered by doing right."

21 SOC. "You know then what is profitable?"

ALC. "Why should I not? Except you are going to ask me the same string of questions as before, when I learnt it, or how I found it out." SOC. "Of course I should ask you the same questions: and they would prove the points in the same manner. But you are fastidious, Alcibiades. You think that old arguments are like broken dishes. You will not use them. You want spick and span new arguments."

22 "But as you are so dainty, let us look at the matter another way. You shall prove that justice and profit are not the same thing: and to do this, you may ask me questions, as I have been asking you; or you may prove it in a continued speech, if you will." ALC. "No, Socrates, I cannot utter a continued dissertation to you." SOC. "Why, my good friend, imagine me to be the People, the Assembly, and then you will only have to convince me, as you intend to convince them. It is

23 the same process, convincing one and many. So now, prove that Justice sometimes is not profitable." ALC. "You are severe." SOC. "Well then, shall I prove to you that it is not so? Will you answer my questions?" ALC. "Ask: I must answer." Socrates then proceeds with his argument; which is briefly this: What is just is honourable: what is honourable is good: what is

24 good is profitable. He illustrates this by examples. He who helps a comrade who is in danger in a battle, may receive wounds; may be killed. He who does not do this may escape with a whole skin. Here you have honour and courage which

are good, joined with wounds and death which are supposed to be bad: but would you take the honourable side or not? Which do you prefer? Which would you choose for your own part? Alcibiades says, "I could not bear to live as a coward." Socrates puts the argument in another form. "He 26 who acts honourably does well: he who does well is happy." And so again, "What is honourable is good, and what is good is profitable. And thus justice is always profitable."

We have here the argument conducted by means of phrases which play an important part in the Platonic Dialogues; and of which it is difficult to convey the meaning so as to retain the force of the argument. *Kalon* and *aischron* may be rendered by *honourable* and *base*, *noble* and *ignoble*, *beautiful* and *foul* or *vile*, and by other terms: but none of these antitheses can be made to occupy in modern reasoning, the place which the Greek terms held. None of these qualities are, in our conception, of so elementary and simple a kind, so self-evidently applicable in given cases, that we can make them the hinges of a weighty argument respecting fundamental moral conceptions. The arguments which bear on these can often be rendered only by periphrastic transformations, or cannot be rendered at all to the conviction of a modern reader. And with regard to another of these phrases, *eu prattein*, if the argument be rendered closely, it seems to involve us in the necessity of employing the corresponding English phrase, *to do well*, in two senses; both of which it undoubtedly bears, but which are clearly different: namely, *to do well*, morally, that is to do rightly: and *to do well* in its more colloquial sense, to prosper, in which sense no doubt, it approaches near to the meaning of being happy. These dif-

ficulties of translation often occur in Plato: and in estimating the arguments which he thus expresses, we must recollect how new such general and fundamental reasonings were among his contemporaries, and how imperfect the phraseology of Ethics was when he began his speculations.

- 27 At this point, Alcibiades declares that he is quite perplexed, and cannot tell what he thinks, and what he does not, while Socrates thus questions him. Socrates explains to him that this perplexity arises from his ignorance, and from his thinking that he knows, when, in fact, he knows  
30 nothing. He says, "Even so. You are, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, in a state of disgraceful ignorance: and so, you dash at politics without knowing anything about the matter."

We then come to another topic, also frequently renewed in other Dialogues of Plato; and treated here, very much in the same way as it is in them: namely, the general ignorance of the citizens of Athens on such subjects, and the absence of any practice of teaching them. Socrates says:

"You are not the only person in this city thus ignorant. The greater part of persons who meddle with business are equally ignorant, with the exception of a very few, and perhaps of your guardian Pericles." Alcibiades says: "He, however, Socrates, is said to have grown wise as he is, not by the mere course of nature, but by learning. He has cultivated the society of many of the wise men: of Pythoclides: of Anaxagoras. Even now, old as he is, he converses habitually with Damon for such purposes."

This mention of Pericles appears to imply that he was still alive and in power, and therefore agrees with the other notes of time already pointed out: (his power lasted from B.C. 444 to his death

B.C. 429). We have then the argument, "Has 31  
Pericles, being wise in himself, taught others to be  
wise? Has he taught his two sons?" "No," Alci-  
biades says, "they were stupid." "Has he taught  
your brother Clinias?" "O," Alcibiades replies,  
"he is mad." "Has he taught you?" "No."  
says Alcibiades, "I did not pay attention to him."

Socrates still pursues the inquiry: "Whom has  
he taught? Who is the wiser for being in his  
society? We know that some men have learnt of  
others. Pythodorus and Callias learnt of Zeno,  
and each gave him twenty minæ; and they became  
wise and famous."

Alcibiades acknowledges the general ignorance 32  
of his fellow-citizens: but he founds upon it an argu-  
ment in favour of his determination to mingle in  
public affairs. "Since," he says, "my rivals in that  
career know so little, I shall be a match for *them*."

Socrates, on this, says, "How unworthy of you! 33  
I am ashamed of my affection for you. Recollect  
the antagonists with whom you will have to con-  
tend are not the other competitors for public ap-  
plause at Athens, but the Kings of Lacedæmon and  
Persia. Will you," he says, "fix your attention 34  
upon men like Midias, the quail-breeder?" (or as  
we might say, the cock-fighter) "men who obtrude  
themselves into public affairs, while they still bear  
manifest traces in their appearance and language  
of their barbarous and servile origin, and are des-  
titute of education: who flatter the mob, instead  
of ruling the city."

Alcibiades suggests that the generals of the  
Lacedæmonians and the king of Persia are, after  
all, like other men. Socrates recommends him to  
dismiss this notion: in the first place, because it  
will tend to make him neglect the right prepara-  
tion of himself for business. And, in the next

- 35 place, because it is false. He reminds him of the high descent of the Spartan and Persian kings. Alcibiades says, "We too are descended from Eurysace, and Eurysace from Jove." Socrates replies that "They have been kings through many generations: we are all private men. Artaxerxes will laugh at Eurysace of Salamis, and Æacus of Ægina.
- 36 Then, he says, consider the care with which the infants of the royal race are brought up, both in Sparta and in Persia. Persons high in office are appointed to watch and teach them. Your guardian Pericles committed you to an imbecile old man, Zopyrus the Thracian. How you have been educated, nobody in Athens knows, except some affectionate admirer of you, like myself.
- 38 "And then as to your wealth, the Lacedæmo-  
39 nians are much richer than you think. Gold is constantly going in to that state, and never comes out. The foot-marks are all turned one way, as the Fox says to the Lion in Æsop's fable. And between the wealth of Greece and of Persia there  
40 is no comparison. I have heard from a man worthy of credit, who went to the King, that he passed through one large and fertile region, which was called The Queen's Girdle, another, The Queen's Veil, because the revenues were applied to provide those articles of the royal dress. I think then that if any one were to tell Amestris, the wife of Xerxes, 'Your son, Artaxerxes, is going to be attacked by the son of Dinomache, whose dress costs, at most, fifty minæ (about £200); her son, Alcibiades, having an estate of less than three hundred acres at Erchice;' she would say, 'It must be that the man depends upon his wisdom and good education. I have heard that these matters are held in much  
41 account among the Greeks.' And if she were then to be told that this Alcibiades is not yet quite

twenty years old, and is quite uneducated: and that, when an affectionate friend tells him that he ought to learn something, and go through some discipline before he enters upon such a contest, says that he will not, he will set about it as he is; she would marvel, and would ask, 'What on earth does the boy found his confidence upon?' and if we should say, 'On his fine person, and his noble family, and his wealth, and his natural talents,' she would think we were mad. And in like manner Lampido, the daughter of Leotychides, the wife of Archidamus, the mother of Agis—all kings—would think it a wild attempt for you to attack her son, under such circumstances. And does it not seem shocking that the women among our enemies should judge better what we ought to be in order to attack them, than we judge concerning ourselves?"

He adds, "There is only one way—namely, by culture, knowledge, and skill—by which you can surpass your antagonists, and make yourself a name among Greeks and Barbarians, which you desire more than any other man."

A note of time is given in the mention of Agis. He first appeared as a leader of armies in the sixth year of the Peloponnesian war, B.C. 425, and hence Ast argues he could not be referred to, as he is here, at a much earlier period. But according to our view, the dialogue is supposed to take place only seven years before this; and Agis is not here quoted for what he has done, but for his royal position, as the hereditary king of Sparta; and the mention of him is really more to the purpose, supposing him a prince yet untried in actual business.

The general argument of the part of the Dialogue just given, is that so far as Alcibiades is personally concerned, it is rash and unwise in him to meddle in political affairs without having studied

morality and politics: and the more general thesis, that self-education is the most important concern of man. This latter theme is pursued in the remainder of the Dialogue in a more abstract and analytical manner, yet not without some happy applications of the personal relations of the persons speaking, and some ingenious thoughts. I will give it very briefly.

42 Alcibiades agrees that Socrates appears to be in the right, and asks, "Where are we to seek this education?" Socrates says, "I want it for my own sake, as well as for yours. Let us see about it."

We have then a resumption of the usual Socratic catechism. "We want to be good;—good in doing. But in doing what? In managing horses? No. Ships? No. These are the arts of special classes." "We want," Alcibiades says, "to be good, as the good and honourable—the *kalokagathoi*—of the Athenians are. We want to be good as men are who use the services of men." But still the interroga-

45 tion returns, "Use their services for what?"

46 But another line is taken. It is agreed that "We want to be able to benefit the city. A city is benefited by the prevalence of mutual good-will. Good-will arises from agreement. But persons agree when they know the same thing to be true.

47 And thus, a man does not agree with a woman about spinning. It is her concern. He knows nothing about it. A woman does not agree with a man about a suit of armour. This is a man's concern. So that here we have not the good-will arising from agreement." Alcibiades says that here we have the good-will arising from each party

48 doing his own business. Socrates asks, "Where then is the good-will arising from agreement?" and Alcibiades acknowledges himself entirely puzzled and perplexed.

Socrates exhorts him still to persevere; he promises still to reply to his interrogations, and they proceed in a new line.

"To educate ourselves," Socrates says, "we 49 must improve ourselves. But we must distinguish. We may improve a thing, or improve what belongs to a thing. Shoes belong to the feet, the cobbler improves shoes. But Gymnastic improves the feet. So that to improve ourselves, and to improve what belongs to us, are different operations, 50 belonging to different arts."

Socrates then goes on to pursue this notion. 51 "How," he asks, "are we to fix our attention on the thing itself as distinguished from what belongs to it? We must distinguish between the person and the instruments that he uses. The leather-cutter and the lyrist use the knife and the lyre, but *they* are something different from *these*. They use also their hands and their eyes, but yet *they* are not *these*. The man is something different from the parts of his body. What then is the man?"

Socrates then goes on: "The soul uses the 52 body as an instrument; commands it as a servant. The man must be either the Soul or the Body, or the compound of the two. He is not the Body, for the Body is governed by the Soul. He is not the compound of the two, the part governed and the part governing. It must be the governing 53 part—the Soul. When Socrates converses with Alcibiades, it is their souls which converse. And 54 thus, when the Delphic oracle bids us know ourselves, it bids us know our Souls. When I admire and love Alcibiades, I love his Soul. Those 55 who loved merely the body of Alcibiades did not love him. Those lovers left you when the body lost the bloom of youth; and therefore it is that I alone stick to you when they have all deserted you. And this is the solution of the question 56



which, when we began, you said you were going to ask me.

“And now my care for you is, that you may not be spoiled by the People of Athens, and become a popularity-hunter;—the ruin of many promising men. And to avoid this, cultivate your soul, and then you may go into public life carrying with you an antidote to every danger.”

57 There is then use made of an analogy of a very lively kind, to illustrate what is meant by knowing ourselves. “We may take,” Socrates says, “the analogy of the eye. The eye sees not itself but by reflection from some other thing; for instance a mirror. But the eye can see itself also by reflection in another eye; not by looking at any other part of a man, but at the eye only. So too the Soul,  
58 to know itself, must look into the Soul of a friend; into the knowing, the wise part of the Soul. There is nothing more divine than this. We shall thus know our faults, and our good faculties: we shall thus acquire *Sophrosyne*, true wisdom, the virtue of the Soul.”

59 “Moreover,” Socrates adds, “he who does not know himself cannot know others. He cannot direct a city; he cannot even direct a household. He cannot know what it is that he does. He must err. And he who errs, does ill; and he who does ill is unhappy. It is not the rich man who is happy, but the truly wise—the *Sophron*. It is not walls, and docks, and ships, which cities require, in order to be happy, nor numbers, nor greatness, but virtue. If you are to manage well the affairs of the city, you must make the citizens virtuous. And no man can give what he has not. You must  
60 be virtuous. You must get justice and wisdom. You must act, regarding the divine part of your nature, as we have just called it. Then you and the city will do well and be happy.”

He still pursues the subject. "To do what we 61 will, mere power without knowledge, is not an advantage, either to a private man or to a state. A sick man, who does not know what is good for him, that is, who has no medical knowledge, if he have his will, is probably destroyed. And in like manner a man is not to wish for absolute power, not to desire a tyrant's sway, either for himself or for his city. For those who have not virtue, to be governed is better than to govern. Those who are bad are fit for slavery. Those who are virtuous are alone fit for freedom. Virtue is the title to liberty. Do you possess this title?" Alcibiades acknowledges with shame, that he does not.

"How then," Socrates asks, "are we to avoid a condition which we dare not even name, in connexion with a man like you?"

Alcibiades answers, "If you, Socrates, will help me."

Soc. "No, Alcibiades, you must say, If God will help you."

ALC. "With all my heart. And I will say this too: that we are changing our relative position. From this day I shall follow you, as you have hitherto followed me."

Soc. "My good friend, my affection to you is, it seems, to be rewarded like that of the parent stork, who in his age is tended by his offspring."

ALC. "Even so, Socrates. Henceforth I will begin to study justice."

Soc. "And may you complete your studies. And yet I am full of fears: not that I doubt your natural aptness. But I am afraid of the strength of our Political Seductions: I fear they may be too strong for you, and for me too."

## REMARKS ON THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

THIS Dialogue contains, as we have seen, many of the reasonings, doctrines, turns of argument, and illustrations, which appear to be an exposition and expansion of the teaching of Socrates ; and which occur in other Platonic Dialogues. The Dialogues in which such matters predominate, we assign, on that account, to the earlier part of Plato's life ; and we generally find in those Dialogues that the notes of time which occur agree with this supposition. That is eminently the case with this Dialogue, which, being supposed to be held when Alcibiades was about eighteen years old, is placed a few years before the Peloponnesian war, when Pericles was the leading man at Athens, and when Socrates was resorted to by admiring hearers. We have not here the developed views which occur in the later Dialogues. It is not, as Schleiermacher remarks, like the Philebus : and according to our view it ought not to be so ; for in the Philebus Plato has advanced far from the Socratic point of view. There is much in it which agrees with what we may call the Socratic catechism : much of the dislike to Athenian public life which Plato always shewed. At the same time, there are many thoughts which are here thrown out and pursued to a certain length, but which are not worked up into the Platonic speculations in their later form. Such are the discussions in which it is shewn that the Soul is the Man ; which however is, in a manner, taken for granted in the other Dialogues, and is apparently introduced here to explain the relation of Socrates and Alcibiades ; and the analogy of the soul seeing itself in another soul, as the eye in another eye ; which is of the same nature as many of the images which occur once, and only once, in Plato's writings ; and certainly has beauty and point sufficient to recommend it on its own account. A great number of subjects are taken up, and in some cases the transition is made in a rather abrupt manner. This is most likely to have

occurred in Plato's earlier writings, before his speculations had acquired a systematic form, and while his mind was still effervescing with the various thoughts which rose upon his speculative spirit in its youthful activity. The dramatic character and conduct of the piece are of the same kind as those of some of the most admired of the Platonic Dialogues: and the iteration with which the moral of the discussion is enforced, even when the argument appears hardly to support it, may find a parallel in other places; for instance, in the *Gorgias*.

Some critics, as I have said, reject this Dialogue as not genuine, but their grounds appear to be very insufficient. Those relating to the chronology we have considered, and have found, as I conceive, the force of them to be strongly the other way. The notes of time place it where, according to us, the subject-matter would place it.

As objects that Socrates treats Alcibiades like a school-master with the rod in his hand, talking to an ignorant boy. But the truer expression would be that he treats him as an affectionate elderly friend might be expected to treat a promising youth, in order to lead him to the path of true glory. Schleiermacher says the *Alcibiades* is too submissive and passive for a person of his known petulance and spirit of opposition. But what does Alcibiades say of Socrates in the Banquet, even when his spirit is inflamed with wine? That Socrates had brought him to the confession of his faults, and had fascinated him with his conversation. He there uses even the very strongest of the expressions which occur in this Dialogue. He says that Socrates makes him feel as if he were a slave. He says, "When I hear Pericles and other celebrated speakers they seem to me to speak well, but I never had such a feeling of disturbance, my soul was never made to feel so indignant with itself, as if it were in the condition of a slave, as it does when I listen to Socrates. It seems to me that life is not tolerable, if I am to continue as I am\*." In the Dialogue now before us Alcibiades is pert and haughty at first: he is afterwards subdued by the dialectic skill of Socrates. Much more remarkable examples of a like transition are afforded by Polus and Callicles in the *Gorgias*, and Thrasymachus in the *Republic*. Parts, says Schleiermacher, are prolix.

\* *Sympos.* sect. 39.

## 148 REMARKS ON THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

Often Alcibiades might make more of his argument than he does. But there is hardly a Dialogue of Plato to which the like remarks are not applicable. The whole Dialogue appears to me quite consentaneous to all that we can conceive of Plato's writing at the period to which I ascribe it. And as we shall see, it agrees in many important points very nearly with the Meno, which we place a short time later.

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**THE SECOND ALCIBIADES.**

**OF PRAYER**

**(*PROSEUCHÈ.*)**

THE Second Alcibiades is mentioned by Diogenes with its second title, *περὶ προσευχῆς*, which is quite appropriate. It might, however, be entitled more fully, Of the Blindness of Man as to Prayer, and his need of Help therein.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND ALCIBIADES.

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**B**ESIDES the First Alcibiades, which we have just had before us, there is among the Platonic Dialogues a Second Alcibiades, of which the subject is Prayer. Almost all critics agree in regarding this as not the work of Plato; and though this opinion appears to be well founded, a brief account of this Dialogue may tend to shew the quality of the spurious Platonic Dialogues, and may serve as a measure of the arguments respecting the genuineness of others of the Dialogues.

In this Dialogue, Socrates is represented as discoursing with Alcibiades, or rather, we might say, catechizing him.

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## THE SECOND ALCIBIADES.

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**SOCRATES.** "Pray, Alcibiades, are you on your way to offer prayer to the gods?"

**ALCIBIADES.** "Exactly so, Socrates."

**SOC.** "I thought so, for you look very grave, and turn your eyes to the ground, as if your mind were full of something."

**ALC.** "And what should my mind be full of, Socrates?"

**SOC.** "The most weighty thought that can be, at least according to my judgment, Alcibiades. For tell me, I beseech you, do you not think that the gods, when we pray to them, whether privately or publicly, sometimes grant and sometimes refuse our prayers; grant them to some, refuse them to others?"

**ALC.** "So I think."

**SOC.** "And does it not require, think you, great consideration, that each person may take care not to ask for himself what are great evils, he thinking them to be good, and finding the gods in that disposition in which they grant what the man asks in prayer? As they say that *Cædipus* prayed that his sons might decide their family claims by the sword; and thus when he might have obtained by prayer some alleviation of the calamities under which his family were labouring, he drew down additional inflictions by his imprecations. And

so his prayers were fulfilled, and a long train of consequent evils followed, which we need not enumerate."

ALC. "But, Socrates, you speak of a man who was mad. You do not think that any man in his sound senses would be so extravagant as to make such a prayer."

SOC. "But madness, what is it? Is it the opposite of sound-mindedness?"

ALC. "It is."

We here embark on the Socratic quest of Definitions; which here, as elsewhere, I may abridge and simplify by divesting it of its dialogue form. The steps are simple.

"There are men of sound minds and men of unsound minds. So there are men in health and men diseased. But are there any who are neither of these two? No: a man must be either healthy or diseased. So a man must be either sound in mind or unsound.

"But the opposite of a sound mind is madness; the opposite of a sound mind is also folly; therefore folly is madness.

"But is this so? Are we to say that all foolish men are mad? If any of your young acquaintance are foolish (as some are, and some of the older ones too), are they mad? Bless us! Do you not think that in this city few are sound-minded, and the greater part foolish, and therefore, as you say, mad! And do you not think we are in evil case, living among so many mad men, and likely to be roughly handled, as madmen use, and to have felt this long ago? And yet, my dear friend, this has not happened to us."

This puzzle of proving two things to be the same, because they are both opposite to a third thing, occurs in some of the Platonic Dialogues.

In this case Socrates soon solves it, as indeed it is not difficult to do.

He goes back to the analogy of bodily disease. "A man who is diseased may have gout, or fever, or ophthalmia; or he may have some other disease, for there are many. Now every ophthalmia is a disease, but every disease is not ophthalmia; and so of fever, and of gout. And so of trades; there are shoemakers, and carpenters, and carvers, and the rest; all these are artisans, but all artisans are not carpenters, or shoemakers, or carvers.

"And so there are different kinds of unsoundness of mind. Those who are afflicted by it in the highest degree are called mad; those who have a little less of it are called wrongheaded and crotchety; those who like to use mild terms call them excited; others, odd; others, innocents, helpless, dummies; and many the like names you may hear used. And these kinds of unsoundness of mind differ like the diseases of the body, or like different trades."

But this classification of different kinds of folly, so elaborately brought out, is hardly made use of in the sequel. Socrates, in order to support his views concerning the right mode of prayer, takes a fresh start, from another definition of sound-mindedness. Thus:

"You call—do you not?—*those* persons sound-minded who know what they ought to do and say; and those unsound-minded who do not know this, and who do and say what they ought not. *Œdipus* was in this case. But there are many who, not under the influence of anger, but thinking they are praying for what is good, still ask what is bad for them.

"For example, you yourself, if the god to whom you are going to address your prayers were

to appear to you in a visible form, and before you began your petition, were to ask you if it would suffice you to be ruler of this city of Athens; and if you thought this a paltry offer, were to add the supremacy over all Greece; and if he saw that you still thought this too little, unless he added all Europe, were to promise you *that*, and not only so, but to satisfy your wishes were to engage that this very day all should know that Alcibiades, the son of Clinias, is their Ruler; I conceive that you would go away greatly delighted, as having obtained a great good."

"Certainly," says Alcibiades; "and so would any one else, if such a promise were so made him."

Soc. "And yet you would not wish that the rulership over all Greeks and all barbarians should be given you in exchange for your life."

ALC. "Of course not; for how then could I enjoy the gift?"

Soc. "And if you were to use the gift ill and to your own harm, even then you would not desire it." ALC. "No."

Soc. "You see thus how dangerous it may 5 be to accept at random what is offered you, or to pray for such things; since they may be harmful or fatal. We have many examples of persons who have aimed at supreme power and have thereby lost their lives. You must have heard of what happened very lately, — yesterday or the day before as it were—when Archelaus of Macedon was killed by his favourite, who was enamoured of the sovereignty as Archelaus was of him. This favourite killed his patron that he might be, as he expected, a king and a happy man; and after he had held his power for three or four days was himself put to death by a conspiracy. You know too among our own citizens—for these are matters

which we do not know by hearsay but by seeing—several who sought commands in the army, and who, in consequence of their having been commanders, are either now exiles from the city, or have been put to death. And even those who fared the best were still subjected to such persecution—besieged more closely than they ever besieged the enemy—that they wished they had never been commanders at all. And so persons pray for children, and then have children to their pain and grief: sometimes from the faults and sometimes from the misfortunes of their offspring; so that they wish they had never been parents.

“And yet though all this be so plain, it is hard to find a person who will not take such things when they are offered him, or will not pray for them if he is likely to obtain them by prayer. People go on praying for such things, and then pray them away again.

“And so I have a suspicion that men pray the gods to no purpose, and complain unjustly that ills are sent from them; for it is themselves who either by their vices or their follies

Draw griefs beyond their lot.

And so, Alcibiades, it will turn out that *that* poet was wise, who among unwise friends, when he saw them praying for what was not good for them, though they thought so, made a prayer for all in common. He said,

Jupiter, King, what is good, if we ask it or fail to request it,  
Give to us still; what is evil avert though sought in our prayers.

This seems to me well said, and safely.”

Alcibiades professes himself so far convinced; but there is still one point on which Socrates raises a discussion. Alcibiades says, “Our ignorance, then, causes these evils. Ignorance is a great

evil." Socrates takes up this, and says, "Let us take care: there may be something to be said even in favour of ignorance."

He then proceeds to prove this by somewhat extreme suppositions. "If," he says, "like Orestes you wished to kill your mother;—or should that be too shocking a thing to think of even as a supposition—if you wished to kill your uncle and guardian Pericles, and were to take a dagger and go to his house for that purpose; and if when you found him, you were to mistake him, and think he was not Pericles, you would not kill him; and so ignorance may be a good thing in some cases."

But again, there is another proof. "No knowledge, if there be not combined with it a knowledge of what is good, is of any use. Most commonly it is pernicious. The orators who counsel the people about peace and war and the like, ought to know what it is best to do, and when it is best to do it.

"Now in each art, the person who knows has an especial name. The man who knows how to manage a horse is a horseman. The man who knows how to wrestle is a wrestler; and so on. But are such persons necessarily wise? By no means. What then should we say of a state composed of good archers, good flute-players, good wrestlers, and the like, mixed with advisers of war, judges of punishment, and orators such as we have spoken of, inflated with political wind, all these being without the knowledge of what is best:—the knowledge where it is best to employ each of those arts? We should say it was a very wretched state.

"And thus you now see what I told you, that all the sciences without this knowledge of what is best, are of little use to their possessors."

Alcibiades says, "I did not see it before, but I do see it now."

"This then, the science of what is best, is the science really to be attended to and studied. Without this the man is a ship without a pilot.

"He is like what Homer says of Margites :

Many the arts that he knew and knew not one of them rightly.  
What has this to do with what we are saying?  
It shews that a man may know much and know it ill. And then it is plain that he was a good-for-nothing man."

And now Socrates resumes his original question, and asks Alcibiades whether, if the gods were to offer him the boons which they originally spoke of he would accept them: Alcibiades is so far convinced that he says he does not know. He inclines to leave the choice of blessings to the Gods.

Socrates adds another example of the same kind. "The Lacedæmonians," he says, "make every day a public prayer similar to that which we have mentioned from the poet: they pray the gods to give them what is good and what is honourable: they ask no more. And yet they are not less prosperous than their neighbours. I will tell you something more, which I have heard from older men. There was once a war between the Lacedæmonians and the Athenians; and our city was defeated on every occasion, by land and by sea. So the Athenians, in their indignation, sent to ask Jupiter Ammon, why the gods gave victory to the Lacedæmonians rather than to them, who, they said, made the most numerous and the most splendid sacrifices of all the Greeks, and offered costly gifts at the shrines, and made magnificent processions in honour of the gods every year, and the like: while the Lacedæmonians were very sparing

in their religious offerings, often even offering a beast which was not without blemish. And the answer was very brief: 'Ammon says thus to the Athenians: he loves the simple prayer of the Lacedæmonians better than all the sacrifices of the Greeks.' Now this simple prayer I believe to be the one which I have mentioned.

"And so Homer speaks of the costly sacrifices of the Trojans, which did not prevent Ilium and Priam and his people from being hateful to the gods: the gods do not care for our gifts: they do care for the state of our souls." 13

Alcibiades acknowledges himself quite convinced: and Socrates says, "You see that it is not safe for you to pray, lest the gods hearing you blaspheme, send you what you do not ask. It is best for you to be quiet: and not even to use the Lacedæmonian prayer, on account of your state of *excitement*:—that is the softest name for folly. It is necessary to wait till we can learn how we are to be disposed towards gods and towards men."

ALC. "And when will this time come, Socrates, and who will be my teacher? I long to know who is to be this man."

SOC. "One who loves you. As Homer says that Minerva took away the mist from the eyes of Diomede,

That he might well discern if the shape were a god or a mortal;

so he must remove the mist which now enwraps your mind, that you may know what is good and what evil, which at present it seems you cannot."

ALC. "May he take it away, mist or whatever it is. I will obey him without reserve, if he will make me better."



SOC. "In truth he has a wonderful affection for you."

ALC. "And so it seems best that I defer till then my sacrifice."

SOC. "You are right. It is better than to run so great a risk."

ALC. "Good, Socrates. But this chaplet which I have brought as a part of the religious ceremony, I will place on *your* head, as an acknowledgment of the good counsel that you have given me. To the gods I will give chaplets and all other religious honours, when I see that day approaching. And with their blessing it will approach ere long."

SOC. "I accept this, and any other mark of your good will, gladly. And as Creon in Euripides, when he sees Tiresias crowned with a chaplet, and hears that it has been given him by the soldiers in respect for his insight into the future, says,

I take this triumphal crown as an augury of victory ;  
For we are labouring in a stormy struggle, as you know :

so I too take your good opinion as a good augury : and I need it, for I, not less than Creon, am engaged in a stormy struggle, and wish to get the better of your other admirers."

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### REMARKS ON THE SECOND ALCIBIADES.

IN this Dialogue there are several passages which are like passages in the other Platonic Dialogues. The description of Alcibiades' ambition closely resembles that in the First Alcibiades. The argument that no special knowledge is of any value without a knowledge of what is really good ; the disparagement of second-rate knowledge in many things ; as well as the value ascribed to Socrates' teaching, are of frequent occurrence in Plato. We know from Xenophon that Socrates did speak of prayer very

much to, the effect of what is here said. In the *Memorabilia* (i. 3. 2) "He prayed the gods simply to give him what was good, deeming that they best knew what *is* good. Those that prayed for gold or silver or power, or any other such things, he thought they were just as if they prayed for a cast of a die, or a battle, or anything of which the issue is most uncertain."

But the way in which these Platonic features are combined, appears to be unlike Plato. The entirely passive part which Alcibiades plays in the Dialogue, and his feeble resistance to Socrates' arguments, exhibit a great want of the usual Platonic drama. The way in which, at the end, Alcibiades gives his chaplet to Socrates is more dramatic; but this trait seems to be borrowed from another Dialogue, the *Banquet*, where Alcibiades does the same thing. The manner in which, in this conclusion, Socrates is, by a sort of mysterious implication, half identified with a divine teacher, goes far beyond anything in Plato; and the way in which the Socratic arguments about knowledge are worked seems to me feeble and incoherent. Also the notion of the Deity, as being sometimes in the humour to grant man's requests, appears to be, as Socher remarks, quite unworthy of Plato and of Socrates.

To these arguments against the genuineness of this Dialogue as a work of Plato are added others borrowed from chronology and history. Here, while Pericles is still alive, Archelaos is already dead, and we are told the manner of his death, though he died thirty years after Pericles; after Alcibiades, and perhaps after Socrates. We are told of a war between the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, in which the latter were defeated in every battle, by sea as well as by land: history knows of no such war. The sending of an embassy of inquiry by the Athenians to Jupiter Ammon is more like a poetical fiction than an historical fact.

Athenæus\* says that the Second Alcibiades was said to be by Xenophon: but the above arguments, and the style, are against Xenophon's authorship. Probably the assertion was a conjecture, and natural one, because Xenophon was addicted to prayers and offerings to the gods. Apparently the writer of the Dialogue was a later imitator of Plato.

The mention of persons who had eagerly desired military com-

\* *Deipnos.* xl. 114.

mand, and had found it lead to exile or to death, appears to refer to the case of the ten Athenian generals who were condemned for their conduct at and after the battle of Arginusæ ; an occasion on which Socrates incurred great peril by refusing to act in opposition to the law. The general train of thought falls in with the reflexions on the Folly of Human Prayers and the Vanity of Human Wishes which have formed the substance of poems in ancient and modern times, as the second Satire of Persius, the tenth Satire of Juvenal, and the poem of Johnson written in imitation of the latter. The theme is, no doubt, much like what occurs in this Dialogue :—

How wavering man betrayed by venturous pride...  
 Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good..  
 How nations sink, by darling schemes opprest,  
 When vengeance listens to the fool's request.

But it is not likely that in any of these cases there was a conscious reference to the Dialogue now before us.

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**THE AGES.**  
**THE DIVINE MONITOR.**  
*(DAIMONION.)*

THE second title of this Dialogue as given by Diogenes Laertius, is *ἡ περὶ φιλοσοφίας*; but this is so vague and inappropriate that I have substituted the title which the Dialogue itself suggests.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE THEAGES.

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WE have seen that in the First Alcibiades, Socrates represents himself as in the habit of attending to a divine influence, of which he was from time to time conscious, which often restrained him when he was ready to proceed in some certain course; while in the absence of its warnings, he could go confidently onwards. This Demon of Socrates, or *Genius* of Socrates as it has been called by modern writers, is referred to by Xenophon, and spoken of by several of those whose conversation he reports, as a special privilege. Thus Euthydemus says\*, “The gods, O Socrates, seem to treat you in a more friendly way than others, since they signify to you beforehand, even without being asked, what it is best to do, and what not.” And so in other places†. And this is adduced as evidence of his piety‡. This internal monitor is apparently referred to in the *Theætetus*§, where Socrates says that the God compels him to be a midwife and prohibits him from being a parent. It is plainly spoken of in the Defence which Plato puts in his mouth. He says to the Judges||, “The reason why I never engaged in public life is that which you have often heard me tell; that I am attended by a certain divine sign, which indeed is what Miletus in his indictment distorts into a

\* *Mem.* IV. 3. 12.    † I. 4. 15.    ‡ I. 1. 19 and IV. 8. 11.  
§ *Sect.* 20.    || *Apol.* c. 19.

crime. This is an influence by which I have been accompanied ever since I was a boy, and which occurs as a voice which always operates to hold me back from what I am about to do, but never thrusts me forwards." And after his condemnation he tells his judges, by way of shewing that his line of defence has been what it ought to have been\*, that the customary prophetic voice which had checked him frequently on previous occasions, even trifling ones, had never stopt him on that occasion. Nor can we doubt that though sometimes this attendant of Socrates is spoken of in a somewhat jesting manner by his friends, he was sincere in regarding it as an important influence to be reverently dealt with, and that many sympathized with him in this reverence.

There is one of the Platonic Dialogues which bears especially upon this warning genius of Socrates, and shews the manner in which he was supposed to speak of it; and as this Dialogue has its hypothetical time in the earlier part of the Platonic series, it may be conveniently spoken of here. The Dialogue is the Theages. It opens by Demodocus addressing Socrates, whom he wishes to undertake the instruction of his son.

\* *Apol.* c. 31.

## THE AGES.

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**D**EM. "Socrates, I was wishing to speak with you in private if you are at leisure; and indeed if you are not very much engaged, perhaps you will make a moment of leisure for me."

Soc. "I am at leisure, and very much at your service: say on."

DEM. "Will you then come into the Portico of Zeus Eleutherius: there we shall be uninterrupted." Soc. "If you choose." DEM. "Come then."

Demodocus then begins somewhat formally to open the subject. "All plants and all animals," he says, "are easy to bring into being, but hard to rear when they have been produced. So is it with man. It was no trouble to get this boy, but it is a difficult and anxious business to bring him up. And not to speak of other matters, I have a special anxiety about his present fancy; for though it is not a low desire, it is a hazardous one. In short, Socrates, this youth of mine wants to be wise. He has been set upon this by some of his companions, whom he is ambitious to rival; and now he wants me to pay I do not know how much to some Sophist, to make him wise. I do not care so much for the money, but I think the plan is a dangerous one. I have kept him back as long as



I could; but I am nearly beaten, and I believe it will be best to give him his way, that he may not go and put himself in some one's hands without my leave, which would be worse. So I am come here to place him with one or another of these Sophists. But I am lucky in falling in with you; for you are the person whose advice on this matter I should most wish to have. So pray advise me, now you know my case."

SOCRATES. "To advise, Demodocus, is, as the old saying tells us, a sacred office; and if it be so in other matters, assuredly it is in that of which you speak; for there is no more sacred business than education, either of one's self or of one's relatives. But let us consider what it is that we mean, that we may not go on, you talking of one thing, and I of another, and so make ourselves ridiculous, both of us, I the adviser and you the advisee."

DEM. "You say well, Socrates; let us so proceed."

SOC. "Yet even that is not quite the right way. We must inquire what it is that this boy wants, that we may not make any mistake on that head, which would defeat our purpose."

DEM. "Yes, that is likely to be the best way."

SOC. "But what pretty name has this pretty youth, that I may address him properly." DEM. "His name is Theages."

SOC. "A pretty name indeed, and of good omen."

"So, Theages, you wish to be a wise man; and want your father to place you with some one who will make you so." THEAGES. "Yes."

Socrates then goes on in his usual manner to lead Theages to say what he means by wisdom. Wisdom is knowledge. What knowledge do you want? What knowledge is it that you have not, and that your father will not help you to get?

Theages says his father knows very well, for he has often explained to him, though now he pretends not to know. Socrates encourages him to tell it again: and we have then one of the usual enumerations. Is it the knowledge of ships, or of horses? No; of men. But of men who are sick? of men who sing? No. Such knowledge is Medicine, or Music. It is the art of governing men, as Hippias and Periander did. But what were Hippias and Periander called? They were called Tyrants. And then Socrates says, playfully:

“You shocking boy! You want to be a tyrant 5 over us, and you blame your father because he will not send you to a school of tyranny. And you, Demodocus, are you not ashamed of yourself when you knew what he wanted, not to help him to it? and not to have sent him to where he might have the lesson he desires? Well, now that he has brought this charge against you before me, let us take counsel together, you and me, in whose hands we are to put him, that he may acquire the wisdom of the tyrant.”

They go on pursuing this subject through several other illustrations, playful and serious. And at 8 length Theages says, that if Socrates will allow him to frequent his society, he will seek no other teacher. This Demodocus also urges. Socrates 9 says, he wonders at their thinking that he can make the youth wiser. “There are,” he says, “various persons who profess such teaching, Prodicus and Gorgias, and Polos, and others, who are sought by numbers, who pay them large sums, and hold themselves much obliged to boot. I know nothing of their lofty science. I wish I did. I know nothing.”

Theages then says: “You see, father, Socrates 10 is not willing to take me as his pupil. I should

be very glad to go to him if he were willing. He is merely playing with us when he says he knows nothing, for I know many men of my age, and a little older, who were good for nothing before they began to frequent his society; and when they had been a little while with him, were better than others who had been superior to them before."

Socrates then begins to refer to the subject of which we are especially speaking, his warning Genius. He says,

Soc. "Do you know how that was, O son of Demodocus?"

THE. "Yes, I know that if you are willing, I shall get on as well as they did."

Soc. "No, my friend: you do not know the whole of the case. I will tell you. Providence has so ordered it that I have a divine Monitor which has attended me from a boy. This is a voice which, whenever it comes to me, always stops me from doing something which I was thinking of doing; never drives me forwards. And the voice operates too for any of my friends who are in the habit of associating with me, and interposes to prevent their doing something. I will give you examples and persons. You know Charmides, our good-looking friend, the son of Glaucon; he was in habits of intercourse with me when he was going to enter the lists to run at Nemea; and as soon as he began to talk of this his intention, the voice interposed. I then told him this, and said, 'Do not take a part in that race.' He said, 'Perhaps the voice means that I shall not win; but at any rate I shall have the advantage of the practice.' So he went. And you may ask him what was the result of the trial.

"And if you please, you may ask Clitomachus,

the brother of Timarchus, what Timarchus said to him when he went to his death, directly in opposition to the genius."

THE. "What was it?"

SOC. "He said, 'Clitomachus, I am now going 11 to my death, because I would not take the advice of Socrates.' And what did this refer to? I will tell you. When Timarchus and Philemon rose from table, and went away to kill Nicias (the son of Heroscamandros) they only were privy to the design; and Timarchus said to me: 'Now, Socrates, you go on drinking; I have business elsewhere; if I prosper, I will return here.' And the voice warned me; and I said to him, 'Do not go:' for the usual sign was given; and he stopped. And shortly afterwards he again rose to go, and said, 'I am going, Socrates;' and again I made him stay. And the third time, he tried to escape my notice, and went away without saying anything to me, when I was attending to something else. And so he went, and did the deed he died for.

"And about the Sicilian expedition, you may hear from many persons what I said with regard to the destruction of the army. And what happened some time ago, you may learn from those who know it. And you may now make trial whether the sign is worth anything. For when Sannio the Handsome went out in the expedition in which he is now engaged my attendant gave me a warning. And now he is gone with Thrasyllus, against Ephesus and Ionia, and I fear that he will die or meet with some calamity like the others; and I have great fears as to the fate of the whole expedition.

"I have told you these instances of the inter- 12 position of my attendant genius, because it has the greatest influence in the cases of those who frequent

my society. For against many of them it sets itself in opposition; and they can get no good from my society, nor can I associate with them. Some it does not prevent from being with me, but they profit nothing thereby. But those whose intercourse with me my genius favours, are those whom you speak so well of; and they no doubt make rapid progress."

He then goes on to give some further notices of the result of his intercourse with young men. "Some," he says, "who make progress, retain steadily what they have gained. Others, again, advance rapidly while they are with me, but when they leave me, they cease to be distinguishable from ordinary persons. This was the case with Aristides, the son of Lysimachus, and grandson of Aristides. He went on very well while he was with me: then he was sent on some military expedition by sea. And when he came here, he found Thucydides the son of Melesius and grandson of Thucydides. And the day before, Thucydides had had some angry words with me. And Aristides, when he had saluted me and talked about other matters, said, 'I hear, Socrates, that Thucydides gives himself airs, and stands up against you, as if he were somebody.' 'It is even so,' said I. 'What!' said he, 'does he not know what a slavish character was his, before he was accustomed to your society?' 'Why, truly,' said I, 'it would seem that he does not.' 'I assure you,' he said, 'Socrates, that my case was quite absurd.' 'How?' said I. 'Why,' he said, 'before I went upon my expedition I could hold discourse with any man, and was fond of seeking the society of the most accomplished men; but now, on the contrary, I run away from a man if he appears to be a person of any culture: so conscious am I of my helplessness.' 'And,' said I, 'did your

ability leave you suddenly, or by degrees?' 'Gradually,' said he. 'And when you had it, did you get it by anything which you learnt from me, or in some other way?' 'I will,' said he, 'tell you, Socrates, what the fact was, though it seems difficult to believe. I never learnt anything from you, as you know. But I made progress when I was with you, even when I was only in the same house, even when I was not in the same chamber; and, as seemed to me, still more if I was in the same chamber; and more still if I was looking at you while you were speaking, and not looking another way: but most of all did I make progress if I sat near you, and touched you, and took hold of you. But now,' he said, 'all this habit has evaporated.'

"This then, Theages, is the nature of my inter-<sup>13</sup>course with learners. If it seem good to God, you will go on fast and well; and if not, not. Consider then whether you had not better get yourself taught by those who can be sure of the lessons they convey to their pupils, rather than take your chance with me."

Theages declares that he will take his chance, and pray for success, and Demodocus approves.

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## REMARKS ON THE THEAGES.

THE *Theages*, by the pupils of Socrates whom it mentions, real or imaginary, claims a connexion with the other Platonic Dialogues; for Aristides and Thucydides, the grandsons of Aristides the Just, and of Thucydides the rival of Pericles, are represented, in the *Laches*, as brought by their fathers, Lysimachus and Melesius, and offered to Socrates as pupils. In the *Theages* they are spoken of as having been his pupils. The way in which the *Genius* of Socrates is spoken of in the *Theages* is almost iden-

tical with the way in which the same subject is referred to in the *Theætetus* and in the *Apology*.

The notes of time which occur in the reference to historical circumstances also place the hypothetical time of the *Theages* after that of the *Laches*. In the *Laches*, Nicias is alive, and is one of the interlocutors. In the *Theages* we have mention made of the Sicilian expedition, and of its calamitous issue, in which Nicias lost his life, B. C. 413.

In the *Theages* we have a reference to a fact which appears to offer a more exact determination of the time when the Dialogue is held. It is stated, as a way in which the trustworthiness of Socrates' warning voice may be tested, that Sannio is gone in an expedition led by Thrasyllus against Ephesus and Ionia, the event of which is, it is implied, yet uncertain.

In Xenophon's *Hellenics*, B. I. c. 2, we have the account of the failure of Thrasyllus's expedition against Ephesus, in consequence of which the soldiers of Alcibiades afterwards refused to serve in the same ranks with the soldiers of Thrasyllus. This defeat happened B. C. 409: and hence the hypothetical period of the Dialogue might be placed at that time, ten years previous to Socrates' death: but the composition and publication of the work probably belong to a later period, when the event was known: yet most likely, when it was yet recent.

Thrasyllus was connected in an especial manner with the history of Socrates: for he was one of the Athenian generals who gained the naval victory of Arginusæ, and were afterwards accused of not saving the men who were wrecked in the subsequent storm (B. C. 406). On that occasion, the grief and anger of the Athenians who urged this accusation led to a violation of the constitutional rule which required that persons accused should have notice of their trial; and in particular, a transgression of the law called the psephism of Canónus, according to which the judicial vote on each person accused was directed to be taken separately. But Callixenus had proposed that all the generals at once should be condemned to death by a single Decree of the People: and he was supported by a crowd of persons, the relatives and friends of the persons said to have been so cruelly deserted, who appeared in mourning dresses with shaven heads, and demanded vengeance. These men would not hear of any

delay or impediment to the punishment of the generals. The Prytanen, or legal presidents of the Assembly, among whom, by the usual course of rotation, Socrates happened to be, at first refused to propose to the Assembly a decree which was thus unconstitutional and illegal. On this Callixenus threatened to include them in the same decree with the generals: and the storm of public fury raged so fiercely that all the Prytanen bent before it except Socrates. He alone would not yield to the threats or violence of the popular party, or consent to take a part in an illegal proceeding. The question was ultimately put by the Prytanen without his concurrence, and the six generals, of whom Thrasyllus was one, were put to death.

In the Apology, § 22, among the pupils of Socrates, Paralus is mentioned, "whose brother Theages was;" which may be supposed to mean that Theages was then dead. In the Republic, VI. § 10, Theages is mentioned as one who would leave philosophy for politics, if his health would allow him to do so.

The Theages is pronounced to be spurious by Schleiermacher, in the following manner: "Of late the Theages has often and from different quarters been pointed out as not genuine, so that it requires no more proof. The reader of critical discernment discovers the grounds for himself: and for others the judgment will become true, when it has been often enough repeated." This oracular mode of pronouncing judgment upon a disputed question, and of claiming a peculiar property in critical discernment (*kritischer sinn*), assumes, of course, a special and favourable audience. Outside of such an audience the assumption that the judgment will become true by being repeated often enough, will not hold good. We venture to weigh the arguments for and against the genuineness of the Dialogue, notwithstanding Schleiermacher's disparagement of the statement of the grounds of judgment in such a case; nor shall these disdainful expressions prevent us from fairly weighing the grounds which Schleiermacher alleges for his opinion.

He objects, that though the Dialogue is in many respects of a Platonic enough colour, the notion of the Genius of Socrates, as given in the Theætetus, is taken up in a blundering way by the author of the Theages; and that the divine monitor is made into a little familiar Demon. To which I do not know in what



form we can put our reply, except to say that there is not the smallest foundation for this remark. There is no more about a little familiar Demon in the Theages than in the Theætetus. In the Theætetus (§ 20), as in the Theages, he says that different pupils made different progress under his care. In the Theætetus he ascribes this difference plainly to the direction of a god; in the Theages he says that he had a previous warning of the result. Where is the discrepancy, or the "mistaken and perverted representation" of the "bad imitator" who, according to Schleiermacher, wrote the Theages?

I may add, that in the Apology Socrates speaks of his monitor in quite as definite and detailed a manner as in the Theages. And Schleiermacher (whether truly or not is another question) regards the Apology as written by Plato, though as being, not a composition by him, but a report of what Socrates actually said on his trial.

I do not know of any other argument which Schleiermacher has condescended to use. He speaks, indeed, of the "little stories" which are told in the Theages, illustrating the warnings of Socrates' monitory voice: but this was precisely a case where such little stories were suitable. The whole Dialogue is in perfect harmony with other Dialogues of Plato. So much so, indeed, that Ast, who denies its genuineness, has quoted ten passages in which it agrees with special parts of other Dialogues; "In which, therefore," says he, "it is taken from those other Dialogues." This would be a reasonable inference when we had proved, or made probable, on other grounds, its spuriousness; but till then, the coincidences between two Dialogues prove nothing against either; or if anything, as much against the one Dialogue as the other.

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**CLITOPHON.**  
**HORTATORY.**  
**(*PROTREPTICOS*).**

**THE Clitophon is not so much a hortatory or *protreptic* Dialogue, (which epithet Diogenes assigns to it,) as a discourse concerning Socrates's habit of exhortation, and his deficiency in the requisite sequel of exhortation.**

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CLITOPHON.

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IT may not unnaturally occur to the reader of the preceding Dialogues that even if we give our assent to their reasonings as far as they go, they take us but a little way forwards in the career of moral improvement. If the teaching of Socrates is represented, as to its scope and extent, by these Platonic Dialogues of the Socratic School, it was at most only a beginning of a solid, pure, and elevated scheme of morality. And though we take into account, as we ought to do, Socrates's habit of exhorting his hearers to disregard outward things in comparison with the culture of the soul, and his example embodying the virtues which he enjoined, still we can easily conceive that to many of his contemporaries he might appear unworthy of the profound admiration which his disciples bestowed upon him.

That this was so we learn from Xenophon\*. "It has been both said and written by some concerning Socrates, that he had an excellent talent for giving men a turn towards virtue, but that he had not the power of leading them forwards in that course. Let those persons attend not only to the argumentations which he often used in order to confute those who fancied that they knew every-

\* *Mem.* I. 4. 1.

thing, but also to the effect which his daily conversation produced on those who lived in his company."

It would be curious if it were to be found that we have had handed down to us, amongst the Platonic Dialogues, one of the adverse critical writings to which Xenophon thus refers: the question is at least worth considering with reference to the Dialogue entitled *Clitophon*.

If we had a writing in which the above remark on the imperfection of Socrates's teaching was made, and if this remark were there followed by an attempt to show that the remark was unjust, we should of course conceive that the work was written by a disciple and admirer of Socrates: as we see exemplified in the passage just quoted from the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon. But if the objections were made by one person in a Dialogue, and left unanswered by the other, and if the objector in conclusion declared that he gave up the hope of learning from Socrates what he wanted to know, and professed his resolution to seek a more satisfactory doctrine from another teacher, known or represented as the established antagonist of Socrates, we should be inclined to think such Dialogue written by a person who was not, or had ceased to be, the disciple of Socrates.

This is precisely the case with the *Clitophon*. I will first translate this Dialogue, and then consider whether this is the best view we can take of it.

## CLITOPHON.

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**T**HE first speech is given to Socrates; and Clitophon, though addressed indirectly only, responds.

SOC. "It was lately reported to me by some one, that Clitophon the son of Aristonymus, in a conversation with Lysias, had spoken unfavourably of the conversation of Socrates, and praised highly the influence of Thrasymachus's society."

CLIT. "Whoever it was, Socrates, he did not report rightly to you what I said to Lysias of you. For in some points certainly I did not praise you, but in some I gave you decided commendation. And as I see that you really are vexed with me, though you pretend not to care about it, I should like to tell you what I did say, now that we are by our two selves: that you may not think me more ill-disposed towards you than I really am. For at present you have probably heard an exaggeration of my criticism, and so, are more angry with me than you ought to be. If then you encourage me to speak freely to you, I shall be much obliged, and will tell you what I have to say."

SOC. "It would be very shameful in me not to be willing to attend to you when you are desirous of doing me a service: for it is plain that

by knowing my good and my bad points, I may practise myself in improving the former, and may avoid the latter as far as I am able."

CLIT. "You shall hear. Often, Socrates, when I have been in your company, I have been struck with admiration at your discourse. You appear to me to speak better than any one that I ever heard, when, like a divine person in a tragedy, made impressive by machinery which elevates him above the other characters, you cry in your solemn voice: 'O men, whether are you going? Do you not see that you are not doing any one thing which you ought to do? You give all your thought and care to the getting of riches; and yet your sons, to whom you will have to leave your riches, you neglect, and take no care to teach them how riches are to be used. You provide them not with masters who shall teach them what is right, as you should do, if it is to be taught: or, if it be to be learnt by habit and exercise, who shall habituate and exercise them therein. Nor have you—which would be a fit preliminary—ever taken care of your own condition in these matters. Now when you see that both you and your children have been able to learn reading, and music, and bodily exercises, which you esteem a necessary part of a good education, and are yet quite unintelligent and mistaken in your way of regarding and dealing with wealth, how is it that you do not see the worthlessness of the present system of education, and seek some teacher who may rescue you from your want of culture on this subject: Recollect:—it is in consequence of this indifference, this neglect, not because the foot does not keep due time to the rhythm of the lyre, that brother is at variance with brother, and city with city; and that discords and disorders arise which lead to quarrels

and wars, and to the extremes of evil-doing and evil-suffering. Sometimes, indeed, you say that the wicked are wicked, not for want of teaching, or for want of knowledge, but because they *will* be wicked. But then again, you dare to say that wickedness is ugly and hateful to God. Now one must ask, who can willingly choose such a lot as that? He, you say, who is over-mastered by pleasure. But then, he does not *choose* it; for he who is over-mastered does not act by choice. So that every way we are brought to the conclusion that wickedness is an involuntary thing; and that men should be trained to avoid it by a more careful discipline than now prevails—both individual men, and collective bodies of men, that is, cities and states.'

“When, Socrates, I hear you saying these 3 things, as I often do, I hear you with admiration, and praise you with all my power. And so I do when you go on to say, which naturally follows upon this:—That those who exercise the body carefully and neglect the mind, do neither more nor less than this: They neglect the part which governs, and give their whole care to the part which is governed. And so, when you say that he who does not know how to use anything, does better not to use it at all. If any one does not know how to use his eyes, or his ears, or his whole body, it is better for him not to hear, not to see, not to use his body for any purpose, than to use it at random. And the same, you say, is true of the arts. He who does not know how to use his own lyre, cannot know how to use his neighbour's: and he who does not know how to use another man's does not know how to use his own; and so, with regard to all other instruments and to everything else. And the conclusion which you draw in this striking line of discourse is, that he who



does not know how to make a right use of his Soul, had better let his Soul remain in inaction; had better not live, than live after his own devices: or if live he needs must, it is better for him to live as a slave than as a free man: giving up the rudder of his mind, as it were, into the hands of another, who knows the art of steering men;—the art of government, which you, Socrates, often call the Art Political, identifying it with Jurisprudence and Justice.

- 4 “Now to these discussions, and to many more of the same kind, very excellently argued, to the effect that virtue may be taught, and that the culture of ourselves is our highest business, I hardly ever said anything in opposition, nor have I anything of that kind to say. I think that they are most proper and useful exhortations, and that they most fitly rouse men up from their habitual slumbers. And then I listened for what was to come next. I did not begin by asking you, Socrates, but I applied to your companions, your fellow-inquirers, your associates, or whatever one ought to call them in their relation to you. I first asked those who were understood to be in the highest consideration with you, inquiring what was the next step in the discourse, and adopting in a certain degree your manner:

“‘O excellent sirs,’ I said, ‘tell me, you who know, how are we to follow out the exhortation to virtue which we have heard from Socrates? Is this all? Are we not at some time to come to the practice of the subject, and begin the work in reality? Is this to be our business all our lives, to exhort those who have not yet been exhorted; and that these should exhort others? Or are we now to ask Socrates, and to ask one another, what comes next? Acknowledging that this is that

very thing which man should do, what follows? How are we to set about this business of learning *Dikaiosyne*—justice? We may reasonably ask this. For if any one were to exhort us to apply to the culture of our bodies, treating us as children who do not know that there are arts for that purpose, namely, Gymnastic and Medicine; and if he were to upbraid us with neglect, saying, that it was shameful to give great care to the culture of wheat and barley and vines, and other things which we cultivate and grow for the sake of the body, and not to learn some art or contrivance to provide for the body itself, that it may be in the best possible condition, when such an art did really exist: and if we were to ask the person so exhorting, ‘Do you say that there really exist such arts?’ he would say, I suppose, ‘Yes, the Arts of Gymnastic and Medicine.’ Now what is the art which in this way cultivates the soul to virtue? Let us know it.’

“To this the ablest of those applied to re-<sup>5</sup>plied, ‘The art about which you ask is that about which you hear Socrates so often discoursing: it is *Dikaiosyne*—no other.’

“And on this I said: ‘Do not give me the name merely, tell me the nature of the thing. Thus: There is an art of Physic, *Iatrike*; and this art has two objects: to make new Physicians, in addition to those who already are so, and to cure men’s diseases. Now the second of these objects is not an art, but is the work to be done by the art, the object for which it is taught and learnt: namely, Health. And so in Architecture,—*Architectonike*,—there are Houses, and there is architectural skill; the former is the work to be done, the latter is the art to be taught. And so in Jurisprudence,—*Dikaiosyne*,—the art is to make men

jurists (to give knowledge of right and wrong), as the other arts give each its appropriate knowledge. But what is the other object? What is the work to be done, the thing to be effected, by the jurist? What are we to call this? Pray tell me.'

"Well; one man said that it was the Fit; another, that it was the Right; another, that it was the Useful; another, that it was the Profitable. To which I replied, that 'Here again these are terms used in all arts, *to do fitly, to do rightly, to do usefully, to do profitably*, and the like. But as to the object to which the courses so described tend, each art defines its own object. So in the art of Furniture-making, that is well done, rightly done, fitly done, which is done so as to make furniture; and furniture is a Thing, not an Art. Now what is the thing which Jurisprudence—*Dikaioσύνη*—is to produce?

6 "At last, Socrates, some one of your associates answered me,—he who appeared to be the most acute in his explanation,—that 'This is the peculiar work of Jurisprudence, and belongs to no other of the arts: to establish Friendship in cities.'

"And he being questioned again, said that Friendship was always a good, and never an evil. And when he was further questioned, as to the Friendships of children, and of brute beasts, which we call by that name, he would not allow that these are Friendships: for he agreed that the greater part of these are productive of evil rather than of good. So to avoid this consequence, he denied them to be Friendships at all; and declared that they who called them so, named them wrong. The true and real Friendship, he said, was Unanimity—agreement in thought—*homonoia*. But when he was asked whether he meant agreement in opinion—*homodoxý*, or agreement in solid knowledge,

science—*epistemè*, he spoke with condemnation of agreement in opinion: for it was proved to him that there are among men many agreements in opinion which are very pernicious; whereas Friendship was, he allowed, always a good, and was the work of Jurisprudence—*Dikaiosyne*. And so he said that the *homonoia* which he meant was the same as solid knowledge—science—*epistemè*—not opinion.'

"And when we had got to this point, and had puzzled ourselves, the persons who were present were much entertained with the subtlety of our arguments, and with observing that we had gone round the circle, and come back to the point we started from: they said,

"'Physic—*Iatrike*—is *homonoia* of a certain kind, and so are all the arts (for those who know them well agree about their doctrines): but they can in addition say what they are about: but this *dikaiosyne*, which you say is *homonoia*, what does it tend to? Whither has it vanished, leaving us in ignorance what its object and work is?'

"And at last, Socrates, I asked this question of yourself; and you said at first that it was the business of *dikaiosyne*—of justice—to benefit our friends and to harm our enemies; and then afterwards it appeared that the just man never harms any one, for he does everything for the benefit of all.

"Having tried to get beyond this point, not 7 once or twice, but for a long time, at last my perseverance is exhausted, and I must give it up. I think that for exhorting men to the cultivation of virtue, you surpass everybody; but that with regard to anything beyond this, one of two things must be true—either that you do not know anything more, or that you will not impart it to me.

Such a thing might happen with regard to any other Art. A person who knows nothing of the steersman's art might praise that art, and tell how valuable it is; and in like manner with regard to other arts; and one might perhaps say that you, in like manner, do not possess a knowledge of Jurisprudence or Justice, notwithstanding all the praises which you bestow upon it. I do not, for my part, believe that it is so; but as I have said, one of the two things is true, either that you do not know it, or that you will not tell it me.

“And so I shall, I think, go to Thrasymachus, and to any one that I can find, to help me in my difficulty, unless you will have done with your eternal exhortations, and go on to something else. You may take for granted that Clitophon is convinced that it is ridiculous to take care about other things and to neglect the soul, for the sake of which we care for everything else; and all the rest of it.

“And so I beg that you will go on to something else; and if not, *I* must really go on and do still what I have hitherto done—praise you in some things, when I speak to Lysias and to other persons, and in some things blame you. For as I have said, Socrates, to a person who wants exhortation to turn him to virtue, you are worth anything; but when a person has been exhorted and turned, you are almost an obstacle to his going on to the end, and attaining the happiness which virtue gives;—rather a hindrance than a help.”

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## REMARKS ON THE CLITOPHON.

THIS Dialogue, as we now have it, ends with a repetition of the charge against Socrates which was made in the beginning, and without any reply on the part of Socrates or any defender of his. And the representation of the Socratic teaching here given, that it consists entirely in Socrates exhorting his disciples to seek virtue, and in the disciples exhorting others, and they again others, without any of them being able to tell what object they were aiming at, or what work they were to effect, makes it not only defective, but also ridiculous. So far, therefore, the Dialogue has the look of being the production, not of an adherent, but of an adversary of Socrates; and may very well be supposed to be one of the adverse criticisms of Socrates's teaching, of which Xenophon, as we have seen, says there were examples in his time.

But another view of this Dialogue may be taken. How far was Plato likely to assent to the criticism of Socrates's teaching here given: that it was only a beginning, since while he exhorted men to be virtuous, he did not tell them what virtue was? To such a criticism Plato would have assented entirely, for his life was spent in supplying the defect thus noted. He tried to complete the Socratic teaching by inquiring what virtue was; and in his *Republic* he gives a system which defines the virtues commonly spoken of, and points out their work, namely, the construction of a Polity or State, and the place of each in that work. Plato's reply, then, to the objections of Clitophon would be that the defects of Socrates might be supplied, and that they were supplied in his system. He might even have placed the *Clitophon* as an Introduction to the *Republic*:—as a preface to mark the transition from the Socratic to the Platonic scheme.

But would it have suited such a transitional purpose to make Clitophon the objector, and to represent him as an admirer of

Thrasymachus the Chalcedonian sophist, and as disposed to prefer him to Socrates? Yes: such a selection of persons and opinions would have extremely well suited the scheme of the Republic. For the whole of the first Book of that great Dialogue is employed in a very spirited discussion between Socrates and Thrasymachus, and Clitophon appears as a supporter and backer of the latter. The rude fierceness of the Chalcedonian is in the end completely quelled by a steady course of calm Socratic interrogations, and then the way is left open for the establishment of the positive Platonic ethics.

But how far does this notion agree with what we know of the Clitophon from ancient authors? It agrees very well. Diogenes Laertius repeatedly mentions the *Clitophon* among the Platonic Dialogues, which is against the supposition of its being spurious; and tells us that according to some it was an Introduction to the Republic\*.

As to the manner of the Dialogue, there appears to me to be ingenuity both in the way in which the Socratic circle of reasoning is rapidly travelled round, and in the Socratic tone in which Socrates is attacked. Ast's remark, that it runs off into declamation, appears to me about as inappropriate a criticism as could have been penned: and Schleiermacher's observation, that if Clitophon was to be refuted, Socrates would have set about it sooner, is equally inappropriate; for the whole Dialogue is so short, that nothing in it can be said to come late; and indeed its length suits well the dimensions of such a Preface as I have supposed.

The reader to whom the Platonic Dialogues are new, cannot judge well of the suitability of the Clitophon to make a transition from the Dialogues of the Socratic School to the Platonic Republic; but if this scheme be borne in mind in entering upon the Republic, I think it will appear very probable.

In translating this Dialogue, as in some others, I have thought that it would make the meaning more plain to translate some of the leading words by two or three alternatives, so as to cover the whole of the ground which the argument rests upon. Thus *Dikaiosyne* includes both Jurisprudence and Justice, for it is at the

\* III. 60.

same time a Doctrine and a Virtue, an Art and a Habit. As an Art it rests (according to the Socratic notion) upon Science; and the question in these Socratic Dialogues is, upon what Science does each Virtue rest. But the basis of the Platonic Republic is, that Virtue is not Science only, but the due control of the several Affections. And thus we see here the end of the Socratic interrogations, and the beginning of the Platonic doctrines.

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# THE PLATONIC DIALOGUES.

## CLASS II.

### *DIALOGUES REFERRING TO THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF SOCRATES.*

THERE are several of the Platonic Dialogues which turn in a greater or less degree upon the closing circumstances of Socrates's life; the Meno, Euthyphro, Crito, Apology, and Phædo. Of these, some, as the Meno, might from their general import be placed in the class which we have already had before us, the Dialogues of the Socratic School. But it will, I think, make these Dialogues more illustrative of Socrates's history and philosophy if we collect them into a class by themselves, which therefore I shall now proceed to do. We have already had, as I noted in the Laches, some of the sentiments which occur in these Dialogues; but those now before us contain a representation of Socrates's temper and conversation when the prospect of death was before him, which has in all subsequent times been regarded as very striking, and which appears to have been intended by Plato as a monument to the memory of his master.

**M E N O.**  
**O F V I R T U E**  
**(*ARTE*.)**

The second title of the Meno, ἡ περὶ ἀρετῆς, describes the professed subject of conversation proposed by Meno, and discussed by Socrates; but the most noticeable part of the discussion is that in which it is contended that Learning is Recollecting; and the conclusion, in which it is implied that the Virtue which does not involve knowledge is not what the philosopher seeks.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE MENO.

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**T**HAT the Platonic Dialogues contain matter such as that which occupied a large space in the conversation of Socrates, we have seen by comparing parts of them with the *Memorials* of Xenophon. There are some other memorials of Socrates's conversation, of a somewhat different kind, which lead to a like result.

There is, commonly published among the Platonic Dialogues, though also commonly noted as not genuine, a fragment entitled "Of Virtue\*." This fragment contains a series of brief questions connected with that which we have already noted as the general Socratic inquiry: What kind of knowledge is Virtue, and can it be taught? The fragment is by some regarded as a report of the conversations of Socrates, preserved to us by Simon the leather-cutter†. Of this Simon we learn from Diogenes Laertius‡ that Socrates was in the habit of frequenting his shop and talking there, as Xenophon tells us that he did at the harness-maker's shop§, looking on the Agora, where he met Euthydemus: it seems very likely that this was the same shop. Simon, the master of the shop, was, we are told, a person of independent mind, so

\* *περὶ ἀρετῆς.*

† Lib. II. cap. xiv.

† *σκυτοτόμος.*

§ *ἡμισποιοεῖον.*

that when Pericles offered to provide for him, he refused, that he might keep his freedom of speech. He was in the habit of taking notes of the discourses which Socrates held in his shop, and these notes he afterwards published—the first published Socratic dialogues. Boeckh has seen reason to ascribe to him not only the piece of which I have spoken, *Of Virtue*, but three others, *Of Justice*, *Of Law*, and *Of the Desire of Gain*\*. It appears that the jesters of the time said of the Dialogues published by the leather-cutter, that they were *leathery*†: but this was too obvious a witticism for us to draw any inference from it. Socher regards the piece, *Of Virtue*, as the first draft of the *Meno*: but we may rather, I conceive, with Boeckh, look upon it as real Socratic talk, such as was afterwards dramatized and followed out by Plato in his Dialogue. In the fragment, Socrates rushes abruptly into the subject, as follows:

“Is Virtue a thing which can be taught, or is it indocible, so that men are virtuous by natural disposition, or in some other way?” “At present,” the reply is, “I cannot tell, Socrates.” “But,” Socrates rejoins, “let us consider the matter thus. If any one wanted to have that Virtue which a good cook has, namely, Culinary Virtue, where could he get it?”—“Plainly from good cooks.”—“And if any one wanted to be a good physician, what then?” “Plainly he must learn of good physicians.”—“And if he wanted to be good in the Virtue of good architects?”—“He must learn of architects.”—“Well then, if he wanted to have the Virtue which the good and wise have, where must he go and learn?”—“Why,” the replier is

\* Simonis Socratici ut videtur, Dialogi quatuor. Heidelberg, 1810.

† Σκυτικὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦς διαλόγους καλοῦσι.

now made to say, "from good and wise men; for what other quarter can he go to?"

But this reply is soon to be involved in difficulties. "Who then," Socrates asks, "are our good men? Let us know, that we may see whether it is they who make other men good."—It is replied, "Thucydides, (the general,) Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles."—"Well: do we know who taught them?"—"No: that is not recorded."

"Or again," Socrates continues to ask, "do we know any one, citizen or stranger, who by intercourse with these persons was made better?"—"This too is not recorded."—"But was it that they grudged to make others good, as they were? Did they fear rivals in goodness, as cooks and physicians and architects are susceptible of rivalry? Such men of art may interfere with one another: but do good men interfere with other good men? Is it not better for anybody to live among good men than among bad?"—The replier, as yet, is hardly prepared to allow this, so the proof is given in the same dialogue fashion.—"Good men do good to others, bad men do evil: no one likes to receive evil rather than good: and the good must like to make men good; and yet, as it appears, they do not do this."

But again: this argument is pursued in a more effective form. "These good men, Themistocles and the like, had sons. Would they have grudged their sons the benefit of being made good if they could have given it?"—"Clearly not."—"Well: but Themistocles had his son Kleophantus taught to ride well; he could stand on the horse's back while he galloped, and doing so, cast a dart: and other accomplishments. Have you not heard this of our elders?"—"I have."—"His son then had a talent for learning, it appears."—"So it appears."



“Was then this Kleopphantus a good and wise man like his father?”—“I never heard that he was.”—“Can we then think that he, who must needs have wished to make his son wise as he was wise, would have left him no better than his neighbours, if virtue and wisdom could be taught?” “It does not seem likely.”—“Well: but let us take another case; Aristides had a son, Lysimachus: he had him taught all that could be taught, for you and I have known him and lived with him. And so Pericles brought up his sons Paralus and Xanthippus, one of whom was your especial friend. These the fathers caused to be taught horsemanship, music, and other exercises; but were they taught to be good men?”—“Perhaps,” says the replicant, “they might have come to be such, if they had lived. They died young.”—“Ah,” says Socrates, “you stand up for your friends. If Virtue could have been taught, Pericles would have had it taught them before music and bodily exercises. No: it is not docible. There is again the case of Thucydides with his two sons, Melesias and Stephanus: they did not die young. Their father gave them good masters in the art of wrestling—masters whom we know, to the one Xanthius, and to the other Eudoxus. He spared no expense in masters of other arts: in Virtue he might himself have been their master at no expense, and have taught them *that* if it had been docible. Is not this likely?”—“So it seems.”—“Thucydides was a man of fortune and of many friends; would he not have paid some person to teach his sons to be good, if virtue could be taught?”—“Certainly.”

But then the other side is taken. “If Virtue cannot be taught, and men are good by natural disposition, not by teaching, let us see what fol-

lows. There are horses which are good by their natural temper, [as *we* say, their blood,] are there not?"—"There are."—"And are there not certain persons who have the art of discerning this temper—good judges of horses—both their points and their spirit?"—"There are."—"And what is the name of *their* art or skill?"—"Judgment in horse-flesh."—"And so of dogs, there is a skill which discerns the good from the bad; what is that?"—"Knowledge of dogs."—"And so with regard to gold and silver, there are persons who distinguish the good from the bad; who are they, and what their art?"—"They are assayers, and their art is assaying."—"And so, training-masters can judge of the bodies of men, *whose* limbs are good and whose bad, for every kind of exercise: who are likely to excel in bodily performances."—"It is even so."

"And now," the interrogator goes on to say, "which is of more importance to cities? That its horses and dogs, and the like, should be good, or its men?"—"Plainly its men."—"If then there were good natural characters among men, would not men have employed all their ingenuity to discover means of discerning them?"—"Naturally."—"But is there any art which does this?"—"I know of none."—"And yet if there were such an art, it would be of the greatest value. It would tell us what persons would become good men, even while they were yet boys: and then we must take them and lock them up safe in the Acropolis, as we do silver and gold, that they might come to no harm and run no risk, but be the blessings and benefactors of the city when they were grown to man's estate."

Finally, both ideas of the alternative being thus, as it seems, disproved, the replicant appeals

to Socrates: "We are in danger," he says, "of coming to the conclusion that Virtue is given to men neither by teaching nor by disposition. How then do men become virtuous?" To this Socrates replies, "I think this cannot easily be explained, but I conjecture that it is by a sort of Inspiration, like that of soothsayers. In fact, wise statesmen prophesy the future course of political events better than any soothsayer can do: and we can see plainly that there is something divine about them."

He adds two traits of the habits of the times, apparently for the purpose of excusing the boldness of calling wise statesmen *divine*\*,—that women, in expressing admiration of a man, call him "a divine man;" and that the Lacedæmonians use "divine" as the highest term of praise, and that Homer and the other poets do the same. "And so," he says, "the Gods, when they wish to bless a city, raise up in it good men, and when they wish to destroy a city, they take its good men away."

"And thus Virtue comes neither by teaching nor by nature, but by a divine destiny."

I do not think we can look upon the concluding remarks as in any degree insincere or ironical. On the contrary, I believe, that both the pious turn of thought, and the view of the difficulties of the alternative, belong really to Socrates's habits of mind. The questions here propounded occur again and again in the Platonic Dialogues, and most, as I conceive, in the earliest Dialogues. This Dialogue of Simon (adopting that designation of it) has, in the mode in which the questions are treated and connected, a very remarkable resemblance with a portion of the *Meno*.

But in the *Meno* we have other matter which,

\* Plato uses these remarks in the *Io* as well as the *Meno*.

I conceive, was not a part of Socrates's teaching, but of Plato's own speculations. We have a series of careful exemplifications of what good Definitions are; and we have a remarkable proof, drawn from geometrical reasoning, of Plato's doctrine that Learning is Recollecting: a doctrine traced to very weighty consequences in the *Phædo*.

**Meno**, the Thessalian, who is in this Dialogue represented as conversing with Socrates, is understood to be Meno the Thessalian who is a conspicuous but very vicious character, in Xenophon's *Expedition of the Ten Thousand*. He is here represented as a rich man who had sought the society of philosophers, and who expected them to answer such questions as he propounded, directly and without hesitation; and the Dialogue starts with such a supposition.

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## M E N O.

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**M**ENO, the Thessalian, opens the Dialogue thus:

“Can you tell me, Socrates, whether Virtue is to be taught? or whether it is not got by teaching but by exercise? or neither by exercise nor by teaching, but is conveyed to men by nature? or in some other manner?”

This rude blunt mode of propounding a philosophical question, or rather several philosophical questions, as a man asks from another what he has a right to know, and what he has no doubt of being told, just as he might ask the way to a village, is of course quite out of harmony with the slow, subtle, patient, polite Socratic mode of dealing with such questions: and therefore the first thing to be done is to pull up with a short rein the interlocutor who thus speaks; and the next, to break him into the Socratic pace proper for such lines of travelling. This Socrates sets about in the following manner.

“The Thessalians, Meno, have long been noted in Greece for their good horsemanship and great wealth; and now they are becoming no less noted for their knowledge of philosophy. This turn they have taken in consequence of Gorgias’s visit to our city; for when he was here, he had

for hearers some of the first persons of your great family the Aleuadæ, and among the rest your very intimate friend Aristippus: and others of the Thes-salians. And from that time you have got a habit of answering fearlessly and stoutly, if you are asked any question; as men should do who know most things; and you go so far as to put yourselves forwards to be asked by any who likes, of us Greeks, any question we please; as being ready to answer it whatever it may be. But here, among us Athenians, my dear Meno, the case is very different. We are not wise. We have no knowledge of philosophy. There is a great dearth of the article. I believe it is all gone away from us to you. If you ask any of our people here the questions you have asked me, they will laugh in your face, and say, Sir stranger, you seem to take me for something more than human, with your supposition that I can tell you whether virtue is got by teaching, or in what way; I assure you, I am so far from knowing whether virtue may or may not be taught, that I am obliged to say, I do not even know what virtue is. Now this is precisely the condition, Meno, in which I am. I am, <sup>2</sup> in this matter, in the same difficulty with my fellow-citizens. I am obliged to condemn myself as an ignorant person, who do not even know what virtue is. And not knowing what it is, how can I know anything else about it? Do you think it possible that a person who does not know who Meno is, should know whether Meno is handsome or rich or noble? Does it appear to you that he can?"

MEN. "No, it does not. But as for yourself, Socrates, is it really true that you do not know what virtue is? And is this the account of you that I am to carry home with me?"

SOC. "Even so, my friend. And not only so, but that I never met with any one who did know, so far as I could judge."

MEN. "How! Did you not meet with Gorgias when he was here?"

SOC. "I did."

MEN. "And did he not seem to you to know this?"

SOC. "I have not a good memory, Meno, so that I cannot at present tell whether he did or did not. But perhaps he *did* know, and perhaps you know what he said? Put me in mind then of his notion: or give me your own, for I presume you agree with him." Meno says, "I do."

SOC. "Then let us leave him alone, as he is not here; and do you, Meno, of all love, tell me; and do not grudge me this information; that it may turn out that I, who had the luck to be acquainted with you and with Gorgias, told a falsehood, happily for me, when I said that I never had met with a person who knew this."

3 Meno then begins, in a loose manner, to speak about the virtue of various classes of persons. "The virtue of a man," he says, "is to be able to conduct the business of the state, to help his friends, to damage his enemies, to guard himself from damage. The virtue of a woman is to keep her house well, and to be obedient to her husband. And so, different accounts may be given of the virtue of a boy or a girl, and of an old man or woman, and of a free man, and of a slave. And many other kinds of virtue," he adds, "there are; so that there is no difficulty in saying what virtue is. Each station, each age, each occasion, has its appropriate virtue. And the same, Socrates, may be said of vice."

This loose way of treating the subject, of course

offers an opening to the interrogatory analysis of Socrates. He says ironically: "We are quite in luck, Meno. We were seeking for one virtue only, and we find that you have got in your head a whole swarm of virtues. But following this notion of a swarm, I should like to inquire this:—Suppose I were to ask you what a Bee is, and you were to reply that there are many and different kinds of bees: and if I should then ask you, Do you say that they are of many and different kinds as being bees; or that they agree in being bees, but differ in size or colour, or some such quality; what would you then answer?"

MEN. "I should answer, that in being bees they do not differ from one another."

SOC. "If after this I should say, Tell me then this, Meno: that point in which they do not differ, but all agree, what is it? would you be able to tell me?"

MEN. "I should."

SOC. "Do this then with respect to virtues; 4 and though they are many and various, still as they all belong to one kind by which they are virtues, looking at this and considering what it is, do you now make answer to him who asks you, what virtue is? Or do I not make myself understood?"

MEN. "I think I understand you; but yet I do not apprehend your question so clearly as I could wish."

SOC. "As you think that the virtue of a man is one kind of thing, that of a woman, another, and so of the rest; do you think that this holds of virtue only; or that the same is true of other things also; that the health, or strength, or size of a man is one kind of thing, that of a woman, another? Or is it in all cases the same kind of



thing, in as far as it is health, whether it be the quality of a man, or of any other person?"

MEN. "I think that the health of a man and of a woman is the same kind of thing."

And so with regard to size and strength, as Meno agrees. This trial of a proposition on several clear cases, in order to apply it to one less clear, is precisely what was meant by *Induction*\*.

Socrates, after the examples of health, strength, and the like, which do not differ in man and in woman, asks,

"Does then virtue, in being virtue, differ in young or old, woman or man?"

MEN. "This, somehow, Socrates, does not seem to me exactly like the other cases."

SOC. "But how is that? Did you not say that it was the business of a man to manage the state well; and of a woman to manage a house well?"

MEN. "That I do say."

SOC. "And can either state or house be managed well, if they are not managed discreetly and justly?"

Here, by resolving the general conception of virtue into discretion, justice, and the like, we fall into another of the Platonic speculations, which we shall afterwards pursue. But at present we shall consider only what bears upon the attempts at definition. Meno is soon led to propound, as a

\* Thus Cicero says (*De Invent.* i. 31), "Inductio est oratio, quæ rebus non dubiis captat assensionem ejus quicum instituta est: quibus assensionibus facit, ut illi dubia quædam res, propter similitudinem earum rerum quibus assensit, probetur." Induction is a form of discourse which begins by securing the assent of the person we are talking with in cases not doubtful: and from this assent, proves to him a doubtful case, on the ground of the similitude of the cases in which he assented: and of this process Cicero gives an amusing example from Æschines the disciple of Socrates.

definition of Virtue, (§ 5,) that it is to be able to rule men. It is easily shewn then that this will not apply to a boy or to a slave. Socrates suggests that they must add, to rule *justly*. On this Meno says:

“I agree to this, Socrates, for Justice is a Virtue.”

Soc. “Do you mean that it is *A* Virtue, or that it is *Virtue*?”

MEN. “Explain yourself further.”

Soc. “I would have you consider this as you would any other matter. Thus if, for example, I should say that a Round is *A* Figure, but not simply that a Round is Figure. And I should say this because there are other figures besides a round.”

MEN. “And you would say rightly; and so I say that there are other virtues besides Justice.” And being asked to name them, he mentions Courage, and Discretion, and Wisdom, and Magnanimity, and many others. And here Socrates’s critical remark naturally recurs, that “we have got many virtues, but have not learnt what is Virtue.”

Meno then acknowledges that he cannot find a universal kind of Virtue which appears in all Virtues; as he can find universal kinds in other cases. Socrates then offers to try to help him in this attempt. And this he does by giving examples of successful definitions. When we talked of Figure, he says, we agreed that a Round was not Figure, but *A* Figure. So if any one were to ask what is Colour, if we were to answer White, he would rejoin, Is it Colour, or *A* Colour? and you would reply, *A* Colour, because there are other colours as well as white. The interrogator would then remind us that he wants a definition of Figure which shall apply to straight as well as to

round, and to round as well as straight. This Meno confesses he cannot give, and begs Socrates to help him. Socrates agrees to do this as well as he can, and propounds, in the first place, as a definition of Figure, this: that it is that which always  
 8 accompanies Colour. To this Meno objects, that if any one declared that he required a definition of Colour as much as of Figure, the proposed definition would be futile. Hereupon Socrates, waiving, he says, his right to a reply on the other side, before he offers anything more, consents to propound another definition of Figure, namely this: Figure is the boundary of a solid\*. This is acquiesced in; and so little is said about it, that we may perhaps suppose it to have been a definition generally current at the time: as indeed it agrees very nearly with the definition which was received into the elementary books of the Greek geometers: "a figure is that which is inclosed by one or more boundaries."

Yet the mode in which it is introduced seems to imply that it was not yet familiar; or rather implies,—what is I conceive the fact really involved in many of the prolix, and seemingly needless questions and answers of the Platonic dialogues,—that the use of such abstract terms as he required to express his speculations was a novelty; and that such abstract terms needed to have the attention fixed upon them, before they could be used as clearly intelligible. Socrates begins:

"Tell me: is there such a thing as an end, or a limit, or a boundary? I mean the same thing by all these terms; though perhaps Prodicus, [who was famous for drawing distinctions between seeming synonyms,] would tell us there was a difference. But do you ever talk of a thing being terminated

\* στερεοῦ πέρας σχῆμα εἶναι.

or bounded? I want nothing subtle or refined, but the common meaning of words."

MEN. "I do use such terms, and I think I understand them."

Soc. "Good. Do you know what is a plane, and what is a solid, as they occur in geometrical reasonings?"—MEN. "I do."

Soc. "Now, then, you may understand what I call Figure. In every case, that which bounds a solid, I call Figure. And hence speaking more compactly, I say that Figure is the Boundary of Solid."

Socrates then gives another definition, but not without a little playful resistance. Meno asks him to define Colour. He replies, "You are unreasonably exacting, Meno. You want to give poor old me the trouble of answering your questions; and you will not recollect and tell me what Gorgias told you Virtue was."

MEN. "But I will do so, Socrates, when you have told me this."

Socrates indulges in some further pleasantry about Meno relying upon the influence of his good looks, which, he says, you know is my weak point: and then he gives his definition of Colour, which is this:

"Colour is an efflux of figures, adapted to vision, and sensible\*." This definition also is introduced by some questioning about the terms employed. "You know," Socrates says, "the effluxes of things, which Empedocles spoke of: and you know the pores at which they go out, and at which they go in. You know what vision is." And after thus securing his path along these words, Socrates gives the definition which involves or implies them.

\* *ἔστι χροῖα ἀπορροή σχημάτων ὄψει σύμμετρος καὶ αἰσθητὸς.*

Meno praises this answer to his question: and Socrates adds, "You see at once, I think, from it, what I would define Sound, and Odour, and the like." Meno is so much pleased with the definition that he says, if Socrates would give him many such, he would stay at Athens longer than he had intended. "Ah," says Socrates, "I do not want for good will, but I have it not in my power to say many things like this." This praise may lead us to believe that Plato did really much admire this, probably his own, definition. And the nature of definitions being so far cleared, the speakers return to their inquiry as to the definition of Virtue\*.

- 10 "Come," says Socrates, "now do *you* try to give me your answer, and tell me what Virtue is; Virtue in general, observe. You are not to make one thing into many, as people jeeringly tell you you have done when you have broken anything. Leave Virtue sound and whole, and yet define what it is. I have given you examples of definitions."

Meno then has recourse to a quotation from some poet, and says that Virtue is "To joy in what is good and have the power;" that is, (it would seem to be implied,) the power to attain it. This definition is assailed in much the same way as the former ones; and it is not necessary to follow this portion of the Dialogue into detail.

\* The subject of definitions is still further pursued, and examples given of definitions in the *Philebus*. In that Dialogue, § 65, &c. there are several examples given of definitions which are plainly conceived to be especially happy: as the Definition of *Sensation*, § 66; of *Memory*, § 67; of *Recollection*, § 67; and of the *Ridiculous*, § 107; which indeed is not so much a Definition, as one of those Epigrams in the form of Definitions, which have often been given in modern as in ancient times: and which form the material of a little book lately published and called *A Game of Definitions*.

The expression "to joy in what is good," is understood to mean, to desire what is good; and upon this Socrates founds a series of interrogations, the effect of which is to shew that men never do desire anything except as thinking it good: according to the maxim which afterwards became familiar: "Quicquid petitur petitur sub specie boni." And thus from the definition of Virtue which Meno had proposed, we must exclude the *desiring* of good, as tautologous, and include only the attaining of good. But (§ 11), things called good are health, wealth, and the like. But is the getting of such things Virtue? And by a few more questions, Meno is made to confess that the definition must be restricted to getting them *justly*.

But here (§ 12) we are involved in the same fallacy as before, for Justice is a part of Virtue; and thus the whole of Virtue would consist in getting things with a part of Virtue.

Socrates puts this in a playful way:

"Ha, Meno, you are playing with me."—12  
 "How so, Socrates?"—SOC. "Because when, just now, I begged that you would not break Virtue into pieces, and make minced meat of it, and gave you examples of the way in which you ought to answer, you pay no regard to this request; but on the contrary, tell me, that Virtue is the being able to get good things with Justice; now Justice, you yourself say, is a part of Virtue. But how can any one know what is a part of Virtue, who does not know what Virtue as a whole is? You must recollect that when I answered your inquiry, what is Figure, we agreed to reject answers like this, where the answer is made by terms which are still the subjects of inquiry, and for which have not yet settled what they mean."—MEN. "We did well to reject such, Socrates."

Soc. "Well then, my good Sir, do not you attempt to explain anything by speaking of a *part* of Virtue, when we have not yet agreed what Virtue as a whole is. That brings us back to the original question. Or how do you say to this?"  
—MEN. "You appear to me to say rightly."

13 Soc. "Well then, answer again from the beginning, and do you and your friend say what Virtue is?"

Here Meno is brought to feel himself quite beaten. He says: "Ah, Socrates, before I was in your company I had heard of your way, that you do nothing but doubt yourself, and make others doubt. And accordingly, I now find that you are absolutely a magician who cast your charms and enchantments over me, so that I am filled with doubts. And in truth, if I may be allowed such a joke, you seem to me to resemble, both in your looks and in your ways, that flat-fish the numbing-ray. That creature benumbs the limbs of any one who approaches and touches it: and you seem to have produced a like effect upon me; you have benumbed me. I am benumbed, body and soul, and do not know how to answer you. And yet I have heretofore ten thousand times made many speeches about Virtue to many persons, and right well too, as I then thought. I think you do well to stay at home, and not to travel into foreign lands. If you were to go into another city, and do what you do here, you would soon be packed off as a wizard."

Socrates, of course, is not to be beaten in pleasantry. He says:

"You are a rogue, Meno. You had nearly taken me in."—"How so, Socrates?"—Soc. "I know why you made a comparison of me."—MEN. "And why, do you think?"

SOC. "That I might in return make a comparison of you. I know the way of all handsome people, they are fond of being told what they are like: they have their advantage in it; for the likenesses of the Beautiful are beautiful. But I will not retaliate by making a comparison of you. But as to the numbing-ray, if it benumbs others by being itself benumbed, I *am* like it: but if this is not the case, I am not. For it is not that seeing my own way clearly, I puzzle other persons; but entirely otherwise, that being puzzled myself, I make other persons puzzled too.

"And now as to Virtue: what it is, I do not know. Now you, it would seem, did know formerly, before you touched me, but now you are very like a person who does not know. But I am quite willing to consider and inquire in conjunction with you, what it is."

Here we come to a conclusion of the original scene. Meno's confidence is quite broken down, and he acknowledges that he knows nothing. But from this point a new start is taken, Meno propounding a doubt whether it be possible to pursue such an inquiry as Socrates proposes. "For," says he, "how can you seek for that of which you know nothing? How will you recognize it, even if you stumble upon it?"

Socrates at once identifies this difficulty with a puzzle then commonly current. He says, "I understand you, Meno. Do you see that you are bringing into our discussion a difficulty frequently started by wranglers: that a man cannot seek for either what he does know or what he does not know: for what he knows he need not seek, and what he does not know he cannot seek?"

MEN. "And is not that a good argument, Socrates?"



SOC. "It is not."

MEN. "Will you tell me why?"

Socrates here forthwith assumes the part of a teacher, and very soon gives his remarkable argument from Geometry for the doctrine that Knowledge is Recollection, or as we should now say, for the doctrine of Innate Ideas. But he so far retains the manner of the earlier teachers of profound doctrines, as to preface his philosophical argument by a mythical representation of the region from which human souls come, given in antique tone and language. He says:

"Yes, I will tell; for I have been instructed by men and by women wise in divine matters."

—MEN. "What their discourse?"

SOC. "Discourse true, meseems, and high."

—MEN. "What their discourse, and who the teachers? say."

SOC. "The teachers, priests and priestesses who have pierced to the reasons of things; Pindar and others of the poets who are divine. Their teaching this: mark if to you it seems true. They say that the soul of man is immortal, that from time to time it goes out, which is called dying, and then returns back again, but never is destroyed: and that on this account our lives must be holy. For, [as Pindar says,]

They that have paid to Proserpine  
The penalty of ancient guilt,  
Their souls in the ninth year  
She gives to the Upper Sun again.  
And hence spring glorious kings,  
And men both strong and wise,  
And thenceforth they by men  
Are sacred Heroes called.

15 Thus the soul being immortal, having had repeated births, and having seen the things of this life and of the other (the life of departed spirits in

Hades) has learned all that it can learn; and so it is not to be wondered that it can recollect things which it has known before, both about virtue and about other matters. And as all things in nature are connected, having learnt everything, it may easily be that when it has *recollected* one thing, which men call *learning* it, the soul may go on and find everything else, if one have sufficient courage and perseverance: for all seeking and all learning, is, as I have said, only recollecting.

“And so we are not to submit to that wrangler’s dilemma which we have been speaking of. That maxim would make us slack in inquiring, and is what indolent men love to hear: but our doctrine makes men energetic in their inquiries. And so I hold to this doctrine, and want you to investigate with me what Virtue is.”

MEN. “Be it so, Socrates. But do you simply assert this doctrine, that we learn nothing, properly speaking, and that what we call learning is a recollecting? Can you not teach me by proof that it is so?”

Here the way is opened for the proof which is to be given; but not given without some prelude of pleasantries.

Soc. “I said a little while ago, Meno, that you are full of tricks; and now it appears so. You ask me if I can teach you; me, who say that there is no such thing as teaching, and that what is so called, is recollecting: and so you want to make me contradict myself.”

MEN. “No, on my honour, Socrates, I had no such intention; I only used the term from habit. But if in any way you can make it plain to me that the thing is as you say, pray do so.”

Soc. “The thing is not easy, but I will make the attempt for your sake. But for that purpose,

call hither one of your many attendants, which you will, that I may shew in him what the case is."

MEN. "By all means. Boy, come hither."

SOC. "Is he a Greek? Does he speak Greek?"

MEN. "Yes, he is a boy born in my own house."

SOC. "Now attend and consider whether he recollects what he already knew, or learns from me."

MEN. "I am all attention."

We have here some traits of character of Meno, as an ostentatious rich man. He is attended by servants; by *many* servants; his servants or slaves are born in his house. And now the demonstration proceeds between Socrates and the Boy, Socrates drawing figures on the sanded floor, we may suppose, to illustrate his meaning.

16 SOC. "Tell me, boy, do you know that a square is a figure like this?"—BOY. "Yes I do."

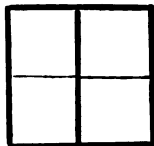
SOC. "A square then is a figure having all these lines equal, these four?"—BOY. "Yes."



SOC. "And these two lines that go across from corner to corner, are not these two equal?"—BOY. "Yes."

SOC. "And may there be a figure like this, which is greater, or which is smaller than this?"—BOY. "Yes, certainly."

SOC. "And if this side were two feet long, and this other side two feet long, how many feet would there be in it altogether? Consider it this way. If it were two feet this way, and only one foot that way, would the figure be two feet?"—BOY. "Yes."



SOC. "But as it is two feet

this way, too, can it be anything but twice two?"

—BOY. "No, it must be that."

Soc. "It is twice two then. But how much is twice two?"—BOY. "Four, Socrates."

Soc. "Now might there not be another figure double of this, but of the same shape, having all the lines equal, like this?"—BOY. "Yes."

Soc. "And how many feet would that be?"

—BOY. "Eight."

Soc. "Now try to tell me how long each line in that figure will be. The line in this figure is two feet; what will the line be in the double figure?"—BOY. "It is plain, Socrates, that it must be double."

Soc. "You see, Meno, that I teach him nothing, I only ask him questions. And now he thinks he knows how long the line is by which the square of eight feet is made. Does it not appear to you so?"—MEN. "It does."

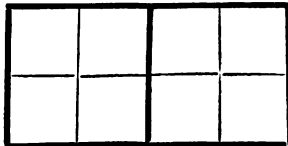
Soc. "And does he know?"—MEN. "Certainly not."

Soc. "He thinks it is made by the double line."—MEN. "Yes."

Soc. "Now attend to him, recollecting a little more, and better.

"Now, boy, do you say that the double space 17 comes from the double line? A figure of this kind I mean, not long one way and short another; but it must be equal every way like this, and must contain eight feet. Now do you think it will be so when it is made from a double line?" BOY. "Yes, I think so."

Soc. "But we shall have a figure double of this, if we add to it on this side another just like it, shall we not?"



Boy. "Certainly."

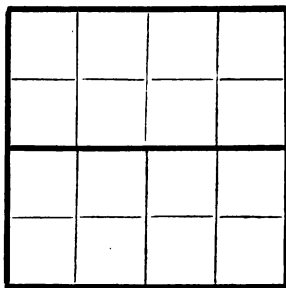
Soc. "So we shall make this into a figure of eight feet, by joining to it four more, thus."—

Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "Now let us make four figures equal to the first. Is not this too what you call a figure of eight feet?"

Boy. "Yes, certainly."

Soc. "Now are there not in this figure four spaces, each equal to the space of four feet with which we began?"—Boy. "Yes."



Soc. "How much will it be then? Will it not be four times as much?"—Boy. "Of course."

Soc. "Well then: is four times as much the double or twofold space?"

Boy. "No truly."

Soc. "How many fold then?"

Boy. "Fourfold."

Soc. "So you see, boy, from a double line there comes, not a twofold but a fourfold space."

Boy. "You say true."

Soc. "And four times four is sixteen, is it not?"

Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "Well, but the space of eight feet, from what line does it come? The space from this long line is fourfold."—Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "And from this short line, the half of the other, it is four feet—this space?"—Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "Well, but the space of eight feet is the double of this space on the short line, and the half of the space on the long line?"—Boy. "Certainly."

Soc. "Then the space of eight feet will come from a line greater than the short line and less than the long line? Will it not?"

Boy. "It seems so to me."

Soc. "Right! You must do that: answer what seems to you, and tell me. This short line is two feet and this long line is four feet; is it not?"

Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "And so the line which gives the eight feet space must be greater than this two feet line, and less than this four feet line?"

Boy. "It must."

Soc. "Now try to tell me how great you will say it must be."

Boy. "Three feet."

Soc. "Well: if it must be three feet, let us add to this two-foot line a line half as great, and it will be three feet, will it not? For these are two and this is one. And then here again is the other side, these are two and this is one: and so we get the space which you speak of."

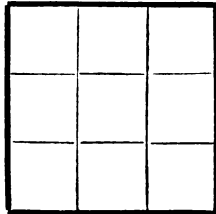
—Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "But if it is three feet this way and three feet that way, will not the whole space be three times three?"

—Boy. "So it seems."

Soc. "But three times three are how many feet?"—Boy. "Nine."

Soc. "But the double space which we spoke



of, how many feet ought it to contain?"—BOY.  
"Eight."

SOC. "So the space on the three-foot line is not yet the eight-foot space?"

BOY. "No, certainly."

SOC. "But from what line then? Try to tell us exactly. And if you cannot tell us by the number of feet, at any rate shew us from what line."

BOY. "Indeed, Socrates, upon my word, I really do not know."

18 SOC. "You see, Meno, how far he has got on the road of recollecting. At first he did not know what is the line which gives the eight-foot space, as indeed he does not yet know; but then he thought that he did know, and answered confidently as if he knew, and had no misgiving about his knowing: but now is aware of his perplexity, and as he does not know, so too he does not think he knows."—MEN. "You say truly."

SOC. "Is he not then at present in a better condition as to the thing which he does not know?"

—MEN. "That, too, appears to me true."

SOC. "Then in bringing him to a state of perplexity and *benumbing* him as you call it, like the numbing-fish, have we done him harm?"

MEN. "It does not appear to me that we have."

SOC. "No. We have done something in the way of preparation, it would seem, to shew what is his real position. For, at present he would willingly seek what he does not know: but in his former disposition he would without scruple have asserted to a numerous audience and upon many occasions, (and have thought that he was talking wisely,) that the line must have a double length."

MEN. "Very likely."

Soc. "Do you think that he would have set about trying to seek or to learn that which he thought he knew and did not know, before he was brought into this state of perplexity by being aware that he does not know, and so led to desire to know?"—MEN. "I think he would not, Socrates."

Soc. "So he was the better for being benumbed?"—MEN. "It seems so."

Soc. "Now observe how, out of this perplexity, he will find what he seeks, seeking it with me, who will do nothing but ask him questions, not tell him anything. Now watch me whether you catch me telling him anything or teaching him, or doing anything except asking him what he thinks.

"Well, but tell me now, boy. This is a square 19 of four feet, is it not? Do you understand?"

—Boy. "Yes, I do."

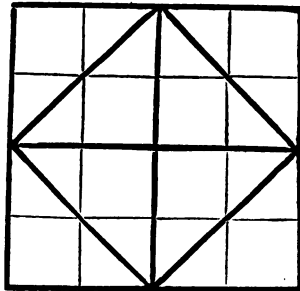
Soc. "And we can add to it this other equal to it?"—Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "And this third equal to either of the other two?"—Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "And can we not fill up this corner with another equal square?"—Boy. "Certainly."

Soc. "And so we have the whole made up of these four equal spaces?"—Boy. "Yes."

Soc. "And now this whole, how many fold is it of one of the spaces?"—Boy. "Fourfold."





Soc. "But it ought to be twofold. Or do you not recollect?"—BOY. "O yes."

Soc. "But this line which goes across from corner to corner, will it not cut each of these spaces into two equal parts?"—BOY. "Yes."

Soc. "And shall we not then have these four equal lines, including this space?"—BOY. "We shall."

Soc. "Now consider, how large is this space?"—BOY. "I do not know."

Soc. "But there are four squares, and the line cuts off one half of each, does it not?"—BOY. "Yes."

Soc. "And how many of these squares are there in this space?"—BOY. "Four."

Soc. "How many then in this included space?"—BOY. "Two."

Soc. "And four is how many fold of two?"—BOY. "Twofold."

Soc. "Then this included space contains how many feet?"—BOY. "Eight feet."

Soc. "Coming from what line?"—BOY. "From this line."

Soc. "The line which goes from corner to corner of the four-feet square?"—BOY. "Yes."

Soc. "The learned people\* call that line a diameter, or a diagonal: so if we call it a diagonal, the double space is that which stands on the diagonal, according to what you say, boy."—BOY. "Certainly, Socrates."

20 Soc. "How does it seem to you, Meno? Did he give us in his answers anything but his own opinions?"—MEN. "No: his own."

Soc. "And yet he did not know, as we said, a little before."—MEN. "You say true."

Soc. "Then were these opinions in him or not?"—MEN. "Yes."

\* σοφισταί.

SOC. "So a man who does not know has in him true opinions concerning the things that he does not know?"—MEN. "So it appears."

SOC. "And now these opinions are called up in him like a past dream. And if we were to go on asking him such things again and again on many subjects, do you not know that he might end by knowing as much as anybody else about such matters?"—MEN. "It seems likely."

SOC. "He will come to this knowledge, not by one's teaching him, but only asking him; he will get back the knowledge out of himself."—MEN. "Yes."

SOC. "But to get back knowledge out of one's self is called recollecting, is it not?"—MEN. "Yes, certainly."

SOC. "But this knowledge which this boy of yours has, he must either have had always, or have got somewhere, is it not so?"—MEN. "Yes."

SOC. "But if he had it always, he always knew: and if he got it from any quarter, at any rate he did not get it during his present life. Or has any one taught him geometry? For what he has done in the case which we have talked of, he will do in the same way about the whole of geometry, and all other branches of science. Now has any body taught him all this? You ought to know, especially if he was born and has been brought up in your household."

MEN. "I know very well that no one has taught him."

SOC. "And yet he has these opinions; is it not so?"

MEN. "It appears, Socrates, that it needs 21 must be so."

SOC. "But if he did not get in the present

life this knowledge which he has, it is plain that he learnt it and had it at some other time."

MEN. "So it appears."

SOC. "And that time must have been a time when he was not yet a man."

MEN. "Yes."

SOC. "If then during the time when he was a man, and also during the time when he was not a man, there were in him true opinions, which, when wakened up by questioning, became real knowledge, has not his soul been learning during the whole of time? For the time during which he was, and that during which he was not man, is evidently the whole of time."

MEN. "So it appears."

SOC. "If then there be in the soul a truth concerning real things, the soul is immortal, is it not? So that you may with confidence now set about seeking to know what you do not know, that is, to recollect what you do not yet recollect."

MEN. "You seem to me, Socrates, to be right, though I hardly know how."

SOC. "I think I am right, Meno. And as to other things which I have said, I would not affirm them very positively: but that when we judge that one ought to seek what one does not know, we are better and more courageous and less indolent than if we judged that what we do not know it is neither possible to find, nor right to seek;—this I would assert and maintain by word and by deed to the utmost of my ability."

MEN. "In this too, Socrates, you seem to me to speak well."

The course of the Dialogue in the last six sections is remarkable on several accounts. It is noticeable in its philosophical aspect, as a clear and striking exposition of an argument from the

perception of geometrical truth to prove the nature of the soul as having innate, or at least internal materials of truth;—an argument which has often been repeated since, and is still felt as possessing great force. And the ingenuity with which this argument is brought out in detail is an admirable specimen of the geometrical acuteness of the Grecian mind. For the argument is not merely the proof that the square on the diagonal is double the square on the side, the proof being effected by putting together four equal squares of which the diagonals are drawn so as to make a new square: though this way of stating the matter would suffice for the philosophical purpose of the argument. But the proof is more elaborate and complete than this. It is proved that if the original side be two feet, the side of the double square must be greater than two and less than four, and yet cannot be three feet. Indeed the geometrical reasoning is so much more than the philosophical purpose requires, that we are led to suppose that it is introduced partly for its own sake, on account of the pleasure which Plato had in dwelling on such speculations; and this belief is confirmed by the further geometrical illustrations which he uses in the succeeding sections. And in truth, Plato does not, here at least, make much use of the philosophical conclusion obtained from the argument, when he has got it. When he has thus proved that all learning is remembering, and that there is in the soul a truth concerning real things, he forthwith turns back to discuss the same questions as before, in much the same manner as before; making indeed the self-will of the interlocutor Meno a dramatic reason for doing so. The preceding argument is further remarkable as introducing an inference concerning the immortality of the soul, which is out of place here, but is plainly

referred to in the *Phædo*, as an argument current in the Socratic school.

The Dialogue should now proceed, as Socrates proposes, to the question, What is Virtue?—our means of knowing what anything is having been illustrated by the preceding discussion. But Meno the Thessalian is too self-willed to follow the subtle windings of Athenian speculation; and he still, somewhat importunately, recurs to his original question, Can Virtue be taught?

22 SOC. "Are you willing then—since we are agreed that men ought to seek for knowledge which they have not found—that we should try to seek out together, what is Virtue?"

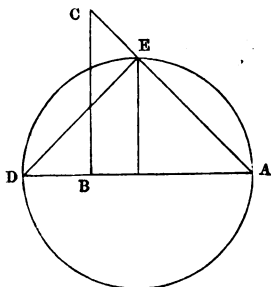
MEN. "Certainly, Socrates. Or rather, no. I should like best that you should consider and tell me that which I asked at first, whether we are to set about it as a thing which may be taught, or whether as if virtue were a thing which comes to men by nature, or in short, in what way it does come."

Socrates civilly rebukes this importunity. He would have wished to proceed from a definition: and he says:

"If, Meno, I were master not only of myself but of you, I would not have set about inquiring whether virtue is a thing which may be taught or is not, till we had first sought what it is. But since you make no effort to master yourself, being of course determined to be a freeman, and try to be my master, and in truth are so, I shall not resist your commands. For what can I do? We must then consider whether *that* has such and such properties with regard to which we do not know *what* it is. So be it, if it must be so. But you must relax a little in your mastership over me, and allow me to consider *hypothetically*, whether it is docible or anything else."

We then come to another geometrical illustration.

“I will tell you what I mean by *hypothetically*. It is what the geometers often do. If any one asks them about any figure, a triangle for instance, whether it is possible to inscribe this triangle in this circle, the geometer would say, I do not yet know whether it is possible, but we may make such a hypothesis as this, which may serve as a previous step to the solution. If the figure is such that when we apply it to the given diameter of the circle, it is defective by this line ( $BD$ ) as much as it projects beyond (at  $CE$ ), a certain consequence will follow; and a certain other consequence if this does not happen. And so I must answer you hypothetically about inscribing the figure in the circle, as to whether it is possible or no.”



This geometrical illustration has been a great puzzle to the commentators. The sense which I have given is new, but is geometrically consistent; for the right-angled isosceles triangle  $ABC$  can be inscribed in the semicircle, if, when it is applied as in the figure, the defect  $BD$  is equal to the excess  $CE$ ; and if  $BD$  be greater or less than  $CE$  it cannot be so inscribed; and thus we have a hypothetical answer to the proposed question.

And this mode of understanding the passage

seems to me to do less violence to the language than any other. I conceive that the triangle spoken of must be the isosceles right-angled triangle, the half of a square, which had already been repeatedly brought before the eyes of the speakers in the course of the Dialogue, and was marked in the sand on the floor. It cannot be that the problem was proposed with regard to *any* triangle; for such a problem was too general for the occasion, and admits of no such hypothetical answer: and the triangle is spoken of as *this* triangle. Of the circle we only take a semicircle, but this also is, I think, an inevitable limitation of the problem.

The part which offers any difficulty is, that the general term which in the Greek means *to be defective*, must be understood to mean to be defective from the diameter of the circle. But some such use of terms must be supposed in this case, for otherwise there is nothing to connect the triangle with the circle. The difficulty of giving a satisfactory explanation of this passage may be judged of when the reader is told that some commentators have made it refer to the inscribing a quadrilateral in a circle, and others in other ways.

The application of hypothetical propositions, thus illustrated, to the case in hand, is now proceeded with. Socrates says,

“And thus concerning Virtue, we, since we do not know either what it is or what qualities it has, must examine hypothetically whether it is docible or not; in this way: If virtue is a thing belonging to the soul, is it thereby docible or not docible? And in the first place, if it is something different from real knowledge, is it docible? or, as we shewed just now to be the same thing, *recollectable*. But as it makes no difference which word we use, let us still say *docible*.”

Here the hypothesis on which the inquiry is to proceed is that virtue is knowledge—real knowledge—science as distinguished from opinion—*epistemè* from *doxa*. And the inquiry then proceeds; making no use of the doctrine so laboriously established, that learning is recollecting.

SOC. "Is not this evident, that man can be taught nothing but knowledge?"—MEN. "So it seems to me."

SOC. "If then virtue be a kind of knowledge, it may be taught."

MEN. "How should it be otherwise?"

SOC. "And so we are soon at the end of this part of the inquiry, that if it be so it is docible, and if it be otherwise, not docible."

MEN. "Plainly."

SOC. "And now we must consider the next point, whether Virtue *is* knowledge or something different from knowledge."

MEN. "Yes, it seems to me that after that step we must consider this."

We then proceed to the argument that Virtue is a good thing; and because a good thing, a useful thing; and that to be a useful thing it must involve knowledge. But *knowledge* in this part of the argument is not called *epistemè* as before, but *phronesis*, *prudence*. The argument has its weight, and is one often repeated in these Dialogues, but it is hardly of so profound a kind as we should expect after the preparation which has been made for it.

SOC. "But now do we not say that Virtue is a good thing? may we not take our stand on this hypothesis, that it is good?"—MEN. "Certainly."

SOC. "If then there be any good which is different from knowledge and separable from it, it might happen that virtue is not a kind of knowledge. But if nothing be good which knowledge



does not include, we shall prove to be right in supposing it to be a kind of knowledge."—MEN. "Even so."

SOC. "Now it is by virtue that we are good."—MEN. "Yes."

SOC. "And if good, useful: for all good things are useful, is it not so?"—MEN. "Yes."

SOC. "And virtue itself is a useful thing?"—MEN. "It follows necessarily from what we have granted."

24 SOC. "Let us then now consider, reckoning things in detail, what the things are which are useful to us. We reckon as such things, health, strength, beauty, riches. We call them and the like useful, do we not?"—MEN. "Yes."

SOC. "But these very things we say are sometimes hurtful: or do you say otherwise?"—MEN. "No. I say so."

SOC. "Now consider: by what any of these must be guided, in order to be useful, or by what, in order to be harmful. Is it not that when they are guided by right usage they are useful, and when not, are harmful?"—MEN. "Certainly."

SOC. "And let us consider the properties of the soul, as well as the outward professions of which we have spoken. You know there are such things as temperance, and justice, and courage, and quick-wittedness, and memory, and magnanimity, and all such qualities."—MEN. "I do."

SOC. "Now consider which of these seem to you to be, not knowledge but something different from knowledge; and whether they are not sometimes helpful and sometimes harmful. Thus courage is harmful, if it be not a wise courage but mere daring. When a man is daring, and has not intelligence along with his daring, he is harmed; when he has it, he is advantaged."—MEN. "Yes."

Soc. "And so in like manner temperance and quick-wittedness, when we learn or refrain as intelligence bids, are useful, but without such guidance, are hurtful; are they not?"—MEN. "Very much so."

Soc. "And so universally do not all the energies and endurances of the soul, if wisdom guides them, tend to happiness, but if directed by folly they turn the opposite way?"—MEN. "So it seems."

Soc. "If then virtue be an act of the soul, and if it must needs be beneficial, it must be wisdom or intelligence: for all the acts of the soul are of themselves neither beneficial nor hurtful, but when combined with wisdom or with folly are respectively beneficial and hurtful. And thus as virtue is beneficial, it must be wisdom."—MEN. "So it seems to me."

Soc. "And as to those other external things, 25 riches and the rest of them, which we said a little while ago were sometimes good things and sometimes harmful, must we not say that as wisdom directing the other parts of the soul makes them beneficial and unwisdom makes them hurtful, so the soul deals with these external possessions and makes them beneficial when it uses them rightly, and harmful when not rightly?"—MEN. "Certainly."

Soc. "But the wise soul governs rightly, the foolish soul erroneously."—MEN. "It is so."

Soc. "May we not then say that in order to be good things, all the other things which belong to man must be guided by the soul and the soul must be guided by wisdom, and then wisdom would be the good thing; and the good thing is virtue?"—MEN. "It is so."

Soc. "Then wisdom must be virtue, either the

whole of it or some part of it.”—MENO. “What you say, Socrates, seems to me right.”

SOC. “And so men are not good by nature, [but by wisdom and knowledge and therefore by learning].”—MEN. “So it seems to me.”

SOC. “And this agrees with what we said before; that if men were good by nature, there would be among us a class of persons who would discern those of our young men whose natures were good; and these being thus selected, we should take them and keep them in the citadel of the Acropolis, and seal them up more carefully than if they were gold, that no one might get at them to spoil them, that when their time came, they might be of service to the state.”—MEN. “This seems likely, Socrates.”

26 SOC. “That is, because men are good not by nature but by learning?”

MEN. “It appears to me to be necessary, and it is manifest, Socrates, according to the hypothesis, that if Virtue be a kind of knowledge, it is docible.”

And thus we have the answer to Meno’s original question given on the Socratic ground: If Virtue be a kind of knowledge, it is docible as knowledge is: But Virtue is a kind of knowledge, for there is no virtue where wisdom is not.

But this was not Plato’s conclusion, nor does he rest in it here. He forthwith raises the question again, using the arguments which we have in the memorandum of Simon the Leathercutter.

We have had the argument on the side that virtue *is* docible not only to the same effect as it is given in Simon’s memorandum, but almost in the same words\*.

\* It would be easy to point out coincidences in several peculiar words and expressions which could not be the result of acci-

Now in like manner we have the argument on the side that virtue is *not* docible given in the *Meno*, nearly as in the same memorandum. "So then," Socrates says, "men are made virtuous by teaching, not by nature." Meno replies: "That appears to me now to be necessary. And in fact, Socrates, it is manifestly true according to our hypothesis; for if Virtue be Science, which is what we supposed, it is docible as Science is." To this Socrates replies, "In truth, so it seems; but yet perhaps we were not right in making that supposition."—"And yet," says Meno, "it appeared at the time to be a reasonable supposition." "But," says Socrates, "we want a view of the case which shall not only have seemed reasonable at some past time, but shall seem so at the present time, and for ever, if our conclusions are to stand." This prepares the way for the argumentation on the other side. Meno asks: "What is the matter? What is the point to which you refer, that you are dissatisfied, and have doubts again springing up in your mind, whether Virtue be Knowledge?" And to this Socrates replies: "I will tell you, Meno. That if it be Knowledge, it may be taught, I do not deny was a reasonable inference. But in the very proving that it is knowledge, consider whether the doubts which I have to state are reasonable. Tell me this. If anything be docible, Virtue or anything else, does it not necessarily follow that there must be, for that thing, Teachers and Learners?" Meno says: "So it seems to me." Soc. "And does not the contrary follow; that if, of anything, there are neither Teachers nor Learners, we may fairly suppose that the thing is not capable

dent: (ἐκείνων ἀποφηνάντων = οὗτοι ἂν ἀπέφαινον: ἐφυλάττομεν ἐν ἀκροπόλει = ἐφυλάττομεν ἐν ἀκροπόλει δημοσίᾳ: πολύμαλλον ἢ τὸ χρυσίον = ὡσπερ τὸ ἀργύριον καὶ μᾶλλον τι, &c. &c.)

of being taught?"—"Fairly," says Meno; but, he asks, "does it seem to you that there are no Teachers of Virtue?"—"Well," replies Socrates, "I have often sought for such Teachers, and cannot, for the life of me\*, find them. And I am not the only person who am thus seeking. I pursue the search in company with many others; and these, persons who one might suppose the best qualified to make such a discovery." And thus the way is prepared for the argument that the statesmen most eminent for political virtues have not taught, nor tried to teach political virtues to their children; which argument has already been given in the piece *On Virtue*.

But here, the presentation of this argument is made the occasion of a new and interesting drama. "Look," says Socrates; "we have the opportunity of handing over this inquiry to another person, and one very fitted to answer such an inquiry. Here comes a citizen, the son of Anthemion, a man rich and wise, and whose riches were the fruit of his own wisdom and diligence: a man too not proud and pompous and stiff, but courteous and affable: and he gave his son, who now joins us, an excellent education. And so, it would seem, the Athenians think; for they elect him to the highest offices of the state. He then, is just our man; whom we may ask about Teachers of Virtue; whether there are such or not, and who they are."

This description introduces Anytus, who afterwards figured as the accuser of Socrates; and who, coming near them, is forthwith involved in the colloquial discussion by the appeal of Socrates to him.

27 "Pray, Anytus," says Socrates, "join us in

\* πάντα ποιῶν.

the inquiry—that is myself and Meno here, who in his character of a foreigner claims you as his especial friend;—the inquiry who are the teachers of a certain thing we are talking about. And I may put you on the track of inquiry in this way. If we wanted to make this Meno here a good physician, to what teachers should we send him? Would it not be to the physicians?”—Anytus replies, “By all means.”—“And if we wanted to make him a good shoemaker, we should send him to learn of the shoemakers.”—“Yes.”—“And so of other things.”—“Certainly.”

“But,” resumes Socrates, “tell me again. We have said that, wishing him to become a physician, we should do well in sending him to the physicians. When we say this, do we mean that we should be wise in sending him to those who put themselves forward as good artists rather than to those who do not; and to those who ask money as a reward for teaching any that wish to learn? Should we not do well to look at these points?”—ANYTUS. “Yes.”

SOC. “And in the same way if we wished to make any one a good flute-player, we should send him as a pupil to those who profess to teach that art and take money for doing so: and it would be absurd to go, instead, to persons who do not profess themselves teachers; and who have no pupils in the art in question.”

ANYTUS. “Yes: very absurd and very ignorant.”

At this point, we are ready to go on to the sequel of the argument, as we have it in the Dialogue reported by Simon: that since the most eminent Athenians had not taught virtue to their children, it is not docible. But the appearance of Anytus is made use of to introduce, previously to

this step in the argument, some other topics. These topics are historically interesting, inasmuch as they exhibit the relations which existed at this time between Socrates, the Sophists, as they were called, and Anytus the accuser of Socrates. We see the dislike, and indeed the horror with which Anytus, who represents the opinion of the respectable part of Athenian society, looks upon the Sophists; the light in which they are viewed by Socrates, as pretenders to wisdom who made money by their pretences: and the manner in which Anytus, disliking the Sophists so much, dislikes Socrates almost as much, for using philosophical and logical arguments against them. The introduction of the Sophists, or as we may call them, Professors of Rhetoric, into the discussion, is provided for by throwing in the circumstance of teaching *for money* into the illustrations just employed. To make a man a physician, we send him to some one who teaches physic for money: to make a man a flute-player, we send him to one who teaches the flute for money. It would be, as Anytus argues, absurd, and an ignorance of the rules of society and the maxims of prudence, to do otherwise. On this Socrates rejoins:

- 28 "You say well. And now you are prepared to help me in giving advice to our friend Meno here. For he tells me that he wants to have virtue and wisdom;—that kind of virtue and wisdom by which men manage well their houses, or the state; discharge their duties to their parents; know how to receive and entertain in a fitting manner both their fellow-citizens and strangers. Now to whom are we to send him to learn these things? Does it not follow, from what we have been saying, that we must send him to those persons who offer themselves as Teachers of any Greek who

will come to them, and who fix and receive a settled price for this office?"

Anytus will not yet understand to whom Socrates is referring; he says:—"Who are the persons of whom you speak, Socrates?"

Soc. "You yourself know very well that these persons are they whom men call *Sophists*."

Anytus is shocked, even to hear the name.—"Hercules!" he cries, "Do not say bad words, Socrates! May no friend of mine, relative or connection, citizen or stranger, be taken with the insanity of going to these persons, to his manifest damage, as it must be. For manifest damage and perversion it is which they inflict upon those who have intercourse with them."

Socrates pretends for a moment to speak in their favour. He proceeds:

"How say you, Anytus? Do these persons alone, among those who profess to know anything\*, differ so much from the others, that they not only do not benefit those who are put in their hands, but damage and pervert them; and yet venture openly to demand payment for doing this? Really I cannot bring myself to believe you that 29 it is so. I know that one man, namely Protagoras, got more money, he alone, than Phidias and ten other sculptors;—Phidias who produced such noble and celebrated works. And it is quite a marvellous thing, if, while those who cobble old shoes and mend old clothes could not escape detection for thirty days, if they gave them back to the owners in worse condition than they received them, and doing this might die of hunger for aught they would get by their trade;—yet that Protagoras has been undetected, while for forty years he has been perverting those who have been

\* I omit *εὐεργετῆς* intentionally.



about him, and sending them away in worse condition than he received them. For I believe he was seventy years old when he died, and had practised his art for forty years; and even to this day his reputation is undiminished. And not only was Protagoras in this position, but very many others; some of older date than he, and some who are still alive. Now what are we, according to you, to say of these men? Do they deceive and pervert the young men, knowing what they do? Or do they not even themselves detect themselves? Can we suppose that those whom some regard as the wisest of men are so crazy as to be thus deluded?

ANYTUS. "No, Socrates, *they* are very far from being crazy. But the young men who pay them so much money are crazy: and still more, the friends and guardians of these young men: and most of all, the governments which allow them to come into their cities, and do not drive them away when they are there, be they natives or strangers, who take up such a trade."

30 Soc. "Pray, Anytus, has any of these Sophists ever done you an injury, that you are so hard upon them?"

ANYTUS. "Me! No; thank God I was never in their company, and never would let any of my family go to them."

Soc. "Then you do not really know anything about these men?"

ANYTUS. "And don't want to know."

Soc. "But, my good Sir, since you know nothing at all about this matter, how can you tell whether it has any good in it, or any bad?"

ANYTUS. "Very easily. I know what kind of people these are, whether I am acquainted with them or not."

Soc. "You must be a prophet. You must be

a conjurer, Anytus. For if it were not so I cannot conceive, according to what you say yourself, how otherwise you can know about these men."

Here the discussion of the Sophists is broken off, and the Socratic argument proceeds: "Well," Socrates says, "the object of our inquiry was not what kind of people those are who will make Meno worse than he is. Let them be the Sophists if you please. But as he is a friend of your family, do him the service of telling him where he may become eminent in such virtues as I have described to you."

This Episode about the Sophists is curious, for while it shews that Plato sought an opportunity of expressing his unfavourable opinion of the Professors of Education of his time, both as professing to teach knowledge which they did not possess, and as degrading their science and themselves by receiving pay; it shews also that he was alive to the irrational prejudices and blind bigotry with which they were assailed; to which indeed Socrates himself became a victim. After the Sophists are thus disposed of, the Dialogue returns, as I have said, to what we may regard as the old Socratic argument. Anytus is asked by Socrates, as we have seen, where Meno can learn the virtues which have been described. "Why," says Anytus, "do you not tell him yourself?"—"O," says Socrates, "I mentioned those who, I thought, were teachers of such things; but, as you say, this advice is stark naught; and I will not differ with you. So do you now, in turn, tell him which of our Athenians he must go to for his purpose. Mention any name you please."

ANYTUS. "What is the use of mentioning a 31 name? Any worthy and respectable Athenian that you take by chance will improve him more than the Sophists, if he will take the advice so given."

Soc. "But now these worthy and respectable men—did they become such spontaneously, no one teaching them? And are they nevertheless able to teach others what they themselves never learnt?"

ANYTUS. "I suppose that they learnt of those who were before them, and who were worthy and respectable. Do you not suppose that this city has always had worthy and respectable citizens?"

Here we see the patriotic prejudices of Anytus and the logical analysis of Socrates are about to come in collision. However the crisis is protracted for a while. Socrates says:

"Yes, Anytus, I think that there are here worthy and respectable men, and that there have been such in former times no less than now. But then, are these worthy men teachers of the virtue which they themselves possess? *That* it was which was the subject of our inquiry:—not whether we now have among us good men, or have had good men in former times; but whether goodness is a thing which can be taught. These good men, of present and of former times, had they the art of conveying their goodness to others? or is goodness a thing which cannot be conveyed or received from man to man? This was what Meno and I were inquiring when you came."

32 After this transition we come to the Socratic argumentation as we have already had it in Simon's Report. "If virtue can be taught, why did our great men not teach it to their children?" And then we have, here as there, the instances of Cleophantus the son of Themistocles, who was taught to be so good a horseman that he could stand on his horse in a gallop and cast his javelin: Lysimachus the son of Aristides: Paralus and Xanthippus the sons of Pericles, who were taught

horsemanship, music, and bodily exercises : Thucydides, the rival of Pericles, and his two sons Melesias and Stephanus, who were accomplished wrestlers ; and who had for their tutors, the one, Xanthias, the other, Eudorus : and we have the remark that Thucydides was so rich in money and friends that he would be sure to have the best teachers for his sons, even if he himself were too much occupied with public business to teach them.

This is the Socratic argument which we have in Simon. To us it must seem, I think, very harmless and inoffensive. But it would appear that at Athens at that period it *was* really very offensive, and excited in no small degree the wrath of the respectable portion of society. Anytus replies to it only by a warning including a threat, and then goes away. He says with severity :—  
 “ Socrates, you seem to me to be prone to speak ill of men very lightly. If you will take my advice, I would recommend you to take care of what you say. In most cities it may be easier to do a man an ill turn than a good one. In this it certainly is so. I think that you yourself are aware of this.”

We cannot but look with great interest at this warning menace, when we recollect that this man was the cause of Socrates's death. What inference may hence be drawn as to the time at which the Dialogue was written, I shall hereafter consider. But we shall also look with interest at Socrates's reply to this menace. He says to his companion :

“ Meno, Anytus seems to be out of humour 35  
 with me\*, nor am I surprised at it. For in the first place he thinks that I accuse the eminent men of whom I speak as having done something wrong ; and then he thinks that he himself is one

\* χαλεπαίνειν.

of these eminent men. If he ever come to know what it really is to be ill spoken of, he will not be angry at such expressions as these; but at present he does not know." Socrates then returns to the subject, and carries it on with Meno at the point where he had left it with Anytus; or rather at the point which preceded the Socratic illustrations. "Well but," he says to him, "have not you in your country, in Thessaly, worthy and good men?"—Meno assents.—"And are they willing to be teachers of the young men; and are they willing to allow that there are teachers of virtue; and that virtue is a thing which may be taught?"

The question so brought to its original form, being thus referred to the common opinions of respectable persons, Meno replies that their opinions are various; and that some of them say it can be taught, and some that it can not.

Upon this Socrates naturally asks: "Can we then reckon these persons teachers of a thing, with regard to which they do not even allow that it can be taught?"—"It does not appear likely, Socrates," says Meno.

They go on a little with the inquiry, so as still further to establish the general absence of definite notions on this subject. "How then?" asks Socrates, "Do these Sophists who alone are talked of as teachers, seem to you to be teachers of Virtue?"

To this Meno replies:—"This is one thing, Socrates, which I especially admire in Gorgias; that you will never hear him promise that he can do this; he even laughs at others when he hears them make such promises. What he professes to do is to make them good speakers."

Soc. "So then the Sophists do not seem to you to be the teachers we are seeking for."

MEN. "I cannot well tell, Socrates. I am

like other people ; sometimes I think there is such teaching and sometimes not."

Socrates then tells him that the poet Theognis, 36 who was held in great repute as a moral writer, had, like him, wavered between the two opinions, that virtue can be taught and that it cannot. And he quotes two passages, one of which expresses the one opinion, and the other, the other. And then he puts very pointedly the paradox at which they have arrived. "Do you," he says, "know any other thing in which they who profess themselves teachers, not only confess that they cannot teach others, but that they do not know it themselves : that they are unprovided in that very thing of which they profess themselves teachers : and those who are acknowledged by others to be good and excellent men, some of them say that it can be taught, and some that it cannot? When people's thoughts are in such confusion as this about a matter, can you properly call them teachers?"

Meno says that he certainly cannot. And then 37 they go on rapidly to conclude that as in this matter there are no teachers, and therefore no disciples, the matter must be one which cannot be taught.

But here they begin to trace back their steps and to look for a fallacy, and from this point, I conceive that Plato gives us his own solution of the paradox ; proceeding on the Socratic basis, that Virtue is a kind of knowledge, and yet forming an addition to the Socratic philosophy, as containing clearer and more systematic views of the nature of knowledge.

Meno says that the impression left by the discussion has been a disposition to doubt whether there are any good men, or at least what is the manner of their generation\*.

\* *τις ἂν εἴη τρόπος τῆς γενέσεως τῶν ἀγαθῶν.*

Socrates replies, "We are in danger, Meno, of turning out helpless fellows, who do little credit to our teachers; you to yours, Gorgias; I to mine, Prodicus. We must find somebody who will somehow make us better. We must look back and see if there is not some lurking fallacy in our investigations. We assume that knowledge must guide men in order that their actions may be right and good. But this is a ridiculous oversight. We must grant that there may be something else which may guide men right. We granted that men must be wise in order to do well. This was not a right concession." Meno asks, "How so?" And then Socrates proceeds to explain that men may, to a certain point, go right by the aid of good *opinion*, no less than by the possession of exact *knowledge* or *science*. A man may be a good guide to Larissa when he *knows* the way to Larissa: he may also guide others rightly if he *guesses* the way and guesses aright. And thus true opinion is no worse a guide in action than wisdom itself. This is what we omitted to take into account, when we reckoned wisdom as the only guide to right action.

"And so," Socrates continues, "right opinion is just as useful as scientific knowledge." At this point, Meno suggests the needful exception on which, in truth, the future argument depends. "No," he says, "Socrates; science is better than even *true* opinion in this; that when a man once has science, he can always hit the right point; but he who has only right opinion can sometimes hit the right point and sometimes not."

39 Socrates immediately fastens upon this essential and important distinction.—"How say you?" he asks, "The man who has right opinion, does he not always hit the right, even while his opinion remains a right one?"—This drives Meno

from his distinction. "Why," he says, "it seems that it necessarily must be so. And that being the case, I wonder why Science is held to be so much more valuable than right opinion, and why one is called one thing and another another."

Though Socrates seems to receive as a novelty the distinction asserted by Meno, between mere true opinion and solid scientific knowledge,—that the former is only accidentally and occasionally right, the latter, necessarily and universally,—he really adopts this distinction as fundamentally sound and highly important; and he illustrates it by a curious comparison, of which it is difficult to believe that the explanation given by scholiasts and commentators is the right one. He says that human judgments resemble the figures of Dædalus; which have this peculiarity, that those which are untied fly off, and run away, and are consequently of no value to you: but those which are tied are valuable, as well as beautiful. "And like these," he says, "are true opinions; for these too, as long as you keep hold of them, are beautiful and useful possessions; but they have a way of escaping out of the mind of the possessor, and are therefore of little value; *until* you fix them by the reasoning of causation\*." The scholiasts tell us that these images of Dædalus were statues or statuettes made by that artist, of which the earlier ones had the conventional Egyptian attitude, and therefore had no air of movement; those in his later style were in free and spirited attitudes, and seemed to move. It appears very unlikely that the *merit* of *seeming* to move in a statue should be compared with the *demerit* of *being* transient and fugitive in an opinion: and that the earlier lifeless works should be regarded as vastly more valuable than the later

\* ἕως ἂν τις αὐτὰς δῆσῃ αἰτίας λογισμῶ.



works which seemed alive. It is plain that what the argument requires is some kind of automaton which would jump away from him who handled it, unless he knew how to employ the device by which its spring of motion was controlled, and its escape prevented.

Mere opinion then, even when true, differs from real knowledge, or science, in this: that science is opinion made permanent, and fixed by the chain of demonstration. And this distinction is, as I have said, applied to the solution of the difficulty respecting the docibility of virtue. The distinction is, in passing, connected with certain peculiar opinions of Plato respecting the nature of knowledge, which opinions are put forward in various forms in other dialogues, and in the most distinct and lucid manner in this Dialogue, the *Meno*. The main point in these opinions is, that real knowledge is recollection of what we had previously known: which point had been fully illustrated in the preceding part of the Dialogue. Accordingly when Socrates has said, that opinion, in order to become really valuable, must be fixed by the chain of demonstration; he adds, "And this is, friend Meno, Reminiscence\*, as we have already agreed." And then he adds, "Opinion becomes science, and so becomes fixed: and in this way science is more valuable than right opinion, and differs from it in the character of fixity." Meno says, that this seems likely. Socrates says, "I do not assert it as a certainty, but I conjecture that the truth is so. 40 But," he adds, "one thing I do not conjecture merely, but *know*, that true opinion and science are different things: I do not profess to know much, but if there are any things that I know, I

\* ἀνάμνησις.

reckon this thing among them.”—Meno says, “You are right, Socrates.”

This difference then, of Opinion and Knowledge, being accepted as fully established, is to be applied to the solution of the difficulty which had presented itself to the interlocutors: how it was that men wise and virtuous had not taught wisdom and virtue to their children. And the solution is in brief this; that right opinion suffices for good and right actions, but that science is requisite for teaching. Socrates says: “Since virtue is not 41 docible, it cannot be science.”—MEN. “It appears not.” SOC. “Therefore science is not usually the guide in political actions.”—MEN. “It seems to me not.”—SOC. “It was not then by wisdom, nor as being wise men, that Themistocles, and the other persons of whom Anytus spoke, (in truth it was not Anytus but Socrates who spoke of them,) ruled the city. They could not make others such as they were, because they were not such by science.”—MEN. “It seems, Socrates, to be as you say.”—SOC. “As then it is not by Science, it must be by Right Opinion, the only remaining supposition, that statesmen govern well. They go by a sort of guess of which they can give no account, like oracle-utterers and diviners. For these persons too utter many things which are true, but do not know scientifically about these things.”—MEN. “It seems likely to be as you say.”

And here we are brought in view of a peculiarity in the Platonic or rather in the Greek notions, arising from their familiar acquaintance with pretenders to a sort of inspiration—deliverers of oracles, soothsayers, and reciters of traditional poetry—such as Ion, the rhapsodist, is described in the Dialogue of that name. That knowledge or opinion was the result of such inspiration, and

was in that sense, divine, did not place it *above* real scientific knowledge, but *below* it. To assimilate statesmanship to such knowledge, was to put it far below that scientific insight to which the philosopher aspired. To call men *divine* in this sense, was a kind of laudation which had a tinge of ridicule in it. It was what women said of the men whom they admired. It was what the Lacedæmonians said, making the phrase ridiculous by their dialect, and saying *seios* instead of *theios*\*. If men could not arrive at a better kind of knowledge than this, there was no hope for philosophy. Meno says that this appears to be true, though Anytus may be angry at such an assertion. To this Socrates replies: "As to that, I care little; 42 I will talk another time, O Meno, with him. But now we are come to the answer to the inquiry with which we began, and which we have been so long pursuing; and it appears that virtue is conveyed to those who have it, neither by nature, nor by teaching; but by a divine accident, in which reason does not operate†; without that intuition of principle which is the basis of science. This is true in all cases, *except*"—except what? It is plain that if there be an exception, it must include exactly the case which the philosopher is in search of; the case in which virtue depends upon solid scientific insight, and thence can be taught as mathematics can. The exception would then be the very point of the whole Dialogue, as it is its conclusion. And accordingly it is so. This account of virtue is true "except there be any one who possesses virtue in such a way as to be able to teach it to others. But if there be such a person, what is he like? He is like nothing less than a sub-

\* Σείος ἀνὴρ instead of Θεῖος ἀνὴρ.

† δνευ νοῦ.

stance in a realm of shadows. He would be among the living what Homer describes Tiresias as being among the dead\*. *He alone is a breathing man; the rest are fleeting forms.* Just so, such a man is related to others, in their connexion with virtue, as a true thing is to a shadow." Meno says: "You seem to me, Socrates, to speak excellently well."—Socrates then resumes his former conclusion. "From our reasonings it follows, Meno, that virtue comes, to those to whom it *does* come, by a divine lot." But then, preparing the way for further investigation, he adds: "We shall know clearly about this, when, as a previous step to the inquiry how men acquire virtue, we shall inquire this special point independently, What *is* virtue?"

And then we have the conclusion, resuming the drama of the scene, and connecting this Dialogue with the history of Socrates.

"And now it is time for me to depart: but do you, my friend, try to persuade Anytus not to be so fierce; for if you succeed in this, you will be doing the Athenians a service." Observe—he does not say doing *me*, but *the Athenians*, a service.

## REMARKS ON THE MENO.

HAVE we any evidence in the incidents and allusions of the Dialogue, by means of which we may determine the period to which the Dialogue belongs, so as not to depend merely upon our moral-philosophical scheme for its place? Meno, the Thessalian, is here introduced as a young man at Athens. Now he is one of the Commanders of Bodies of Troops in Xenophon's Retreat of the Ten Thousand, where he plays an important but not very honourable part. In that expedition he died, and the expedition

\* Οἷος πέννυται, τοὶ δὲ σκιαὶ ἀΐσσουσι.

took place at the time of Socrates's death, B.C. 399. It is not likely (as he is a person of no philosophical importance, though dramatically well suited for the place which he holds in the Dialogue) that he would be introduced into the composition after his death.

But a stronger proof that the Dialogue was written before the death of Socrates is to be found in the manner in which Anytus, the accuser of Socrates, and the main cause of his death, is introduced. He is represented as prejudiced against philosophy; but the accusation of corrupting the youth of the city by means of it, which he afterwards brought against Socrates with such fatal result, he here directs against the Sophists to whom Socrates is opposed. Anytus here blames him on another account; namely, because he accuses the most distinguished Athenians of neglecting the education of their sons. But still with a certain good will to Socrates he says to him, § 35, "I advise you to be on your guard. It is easy to injure a man in Athens." Whereupon Socrates says to Meno, "Anytus seems to be angry with me: but at that I am not surprised; for first, he thinks that I calumniate eminent men, and then, he thinks that he is one of them. He will soon see better."

And at the end: "That Anytus is angry with me, gives me no concern. Do you, Meno, as his foreign correspondent, bound to him by especial ties, try to convince him of what you yourself believe, so as to mollify him. If you can do this, you will render a service to the Athenians." All this implies that Anytus was known to be ill-disposed to the study of philosophy, as it was then gaining ground at Athens: but it is not conceivable that Plato should have made Socrates speak so of him, if he had already been the cause of Socrates's death by the accusation of corrupting the youth. This therefore agrees very well with the supposition of the Dialogue being written a little before the death of Socrates.

But the matter of the *Meno* appears also to shew that it was written at an early period, and before the *Phædo*. As I have said, knowledge, its origin, the grounds of its certainty, became subjects of acute and eager speculation among the Greeks. And the establishment and accuracy of geometrical knowledge had served especially as examples and evidences in this research. The question was, whether on any other subject, men could have certain

knowledge as they had in geometry; if they had, they might be supposed to attain it in something the same manner as in geometry. What that manner was, Plato had his own way of explaining: and if virtue was knowledge, the explanation would do for virtue too. This was an elementary way of treating the subject: it was one of the first ways, with Plato's views, of answering the question, What is the relation of Knowledge and Virtue? Now this way we have in the *Meno*. We have the nature of knowledge illustrated by the example of geometry. We have the evidence, given by a series of interrogations which Socrates applies to Meno's boy, that the truths of geometry exist in the mind and only require to be drawn out: that knowledge (of such truths) is like Reminiscence. We have also, in this Dialogue, Plato's theory to account for this fact:—namely, that such knowledge is *like* Reminiscence because it *is* Reminiscence: that the soul has acquired it in a previous stage of existence. This view of Geometry, as an evidence that acquiring knowledge of such truths is only recollecting, is fully unfolded and proved in the *Meno*; now this view is referred to as already known in the *Phædo*; and hence we infer that the *Meno* preceded the *Phædo*. On the other hand, the doctrine that therefore the mind has been in a previous stage of existence, is put forward timidly and briefly, as hypothesis or poetical tradition, in the *Meno*; but in the *Phædrus* is given at full length, as certain, and deduced from philosophical grounds; and hence we judge the *Meno* to be earlier than the *Phædrus*. With regard to the former point, the passage in the *Phædo* is this: Cebes says, "You often say, Socrates, that learning is nothing but recollecting: now this would be impossible if our souls had not existed before our birth and consequently would exist after our death." "What proof is there," Simmias asks, "that this Proposition is true? for I do not at once recollect the proof." "One of the most beautiful proofs;" Cebes replies: "if you rightly understand how to ask a man questions, he answers everything quite right: which of course he could not do if Science and Intuitive Knowledge were not already in his mind. You may place before him geometrical figures or the like, and you will see in the clearest manner that this is so." It would be natural for Simmias to ask upon this: "How does this appear with geometrical figures?" But this he

does not do, and even when Socrates offers further proof, he says, "I recollect, and am convinced." And thus Plato supposes the proof that the knowledge of geometrical truths is inherent in the mind, to have been given already. Now this proof is contained in the *Meno* only. If Plato had been in the habit of quoting himself he would have said, "This was proved in the Dialogue with *Meno*" (*Phædo*, c. 47).

"But the doctrine that to learn is only to recollect," says Ast, "does not need to refer us to the *Meno*: it is in the *Phædrus*." Yes, in the *Phædrus* is the doctrine that to learn is to recollect; but not the doctrine that this is evidenced by geometry, which is the noticeable point in the passage in the *Phædo*: of that, there is not a word in the *Phædrus*. And on the other hand, the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul is taught in the *Phædrus* in a positive and developed manner, of which the *Meno* contains the germ only.

There is an argument brought to prove that the *Meno* was written later than I have said. Ismenias is mentioned as a rich Theban (§ 26). His wealth is mentioned in contrast to the inherited wealth of Meno, and the wealth of Anytus's father gained in trade. Anytus's father (Socrates says,) obtained his riches not by accident or as an acquisition from another, like Ismenias, the Theban, who just lately has acquired the wealth of Polycrates. Here Schleiermacher says, Plato undoubtedly alludes to an event which Xenophon relates \*, of bribes sent by the Persian king to corrupt leading persons at Thebes, Corinth, &c., in consequence of which they excited a war against Lacedæmon, which compelled the Spartans to recal from Asia the victorious Agesilaus. Among these leading persons Ismenias is mentioned; and hence it is supposed that his wealth must have been thus acquired. This however was in the beginning of the war of the Thebans and Corinthians; 5 or 6 years after Socrates's death. Of course it would be a gross anachronism to make Socrates refer to the event: for it is referred to not only as a fact, but as a notorious, a proverbial fact. And Plato repeats this reference in the *Republic*. There, without any necessity, Socrates speaks of Ismenias the Rich, as a well-known person. This does not look like his having become rich only after the death of Socrates (*Rep.* I. 336 A).

\* Xen. *Hellen.* III. 5. 1.

But what was the sum which Ismenias could receive from Trinocrates the agent of the king? There were 50 talents sent, and six or more persons are mentioned as having received it\*. There could therefore be only 8 or 10 talents for him, about £2,400 or £3,000. This would hardly make a man rich to a proverb. And why him rather than the other five or six persons bribed?

Ast, with his usual levity in declaring Platonic Dialogues to be spurious, pronounces that judgment upon this, on the ground of the alleged *unplatonical* character of its result, which he thus represents: "That Virtue cannot be docible because there are no Teachers of Virtue: that not being docible, it cannot be Science and Knowledge, and so, rests only upon Opinion: that this is not imparted to us either by Nature or by Teaching: consequently Virtue can only be imparted by divine communication; and is like the divine impulse which is imparted to Prophets and Poets, which can do such great things without Reason and Knowledge. And thus Virtue is an irrational and blind kind of action." Now is this, he asks, a platonic doctrine? To which we reply, that this is altogether antiplatonic; but also that this is quite opposite to the doctrine of the *Meno*. This view confounds the false opinion which is maintained ironically or dramatically only, with the true doctrine really intended to be inculcated. The Question is discussed, Is Virtue docible? It is docible if it be Science; it is Science if it be a good thing: for nothing is good in itself but the right use of Reason, that is Science. This is really the opinion of Socrates (that is of Plato at this period) maintained in earnest. Over against this stands the opposite opinion held ironically as a mode of disparaging the common Greek education, which neglected this truth. Virtue is not docible: no one teaches it: no one learns it: so that it cannot be docible and discible. More than this: there have been eminent men, politicians who have rendered great services to the State; but those men neither learnt Virtue themselves, nor taught it to their children. And the solution of this opposition is, that there are two kinds of Virtue, one of which depends on the right use of Reason, the other does not. That which depends on Reason, on real knowledge, is docible; it may be taught by teaching the truths on which

\* At Thebes, Androclides, Ismenias, Galaxidorus; at Corinth, Timolaus and Polyantbes; at Argos, Cyclon and his friends. *Hellen.* III. 5.



it depends; and these truths may be taught, not as if we could make Reason for a man, or put it into him, but because we may awake the knowledge of good which a man has in him. This is the serious teaching of Socrates in the *Meno*. But, he also teaches, what you call 'political virtue,' by which your great and good men give good counsel to the State, depends not on Reason, Science, Insight, but on Opinions; which may be true, but at which men have arrived without knowing how; just as Poets utter beautiful strains and Prophets speak oracles, about things which they do not understand. (Here the irony is plain.) Such opining without real foundation, such accidental, casual Virtue, is not a thing which can be taught or learnt. Such Virtue is not docible. And thus the conclusion of the *Meno*, though expressed in a manner somewhat ironical, is perfectly clear as to its meaning. There are, Socrates says, two kinds of Virtue, political virtue or ability, and real wisdom; political virtue cannot be taught, for it is not wisdom. It was not by wisdom, not as being wise men, that Themistocles and men like him ruled the city. These politicians had no eminence in Science\*, but only in lucky opinion†. They are like the poets and prophets who utter beautiful things, but do not know the meaning of them themselves. Such men we may well call *divine*, for they did not act by human reason‡. They are Divine as Poets are divine, Enthusiasts, Inspired Ones. So women call their favourites Divine: so the Lacedæmonians, in order to praise a man, say, "he is a Divine man." Is it possible to mistake the irony here? "Well then, *this being so*," (does he mean that this is really so?) "Virtue cannot be taught; it comes by divine favour; except—except what?—except there should be some great politicians who can make others great politicians too. And if there were such a one, what would he be like? Like Tiresias, among the shades, as Homer describes him. He alone has real life; they glide about mere phantoms. Our wise man would be, in the matter of virtue, the same thing: the only real thing in a realm of shadows§.

Thus the *Meno* becomes lucidly Platonic. It is also connected by its persons and incidents with several of the other Platonic dialogues, and is a good key to them.

\* ἐπιστήμη.

† εὐδοξία.

‡ νοῦν μὴ ἔχοντες.

§ ἀληθὲς ἂν πρᾶγμα εἴη παρὰ σκιάς.

**EUTHYPHRO.**

**OF PIETY**

*(HOSIOTES).*

**THE** second title of the Euthyphro, *ἡ περὶ ὁσίου*, describes the professed subject of discussion in the Dialogue: but its real purpose, as I conceive, is its bearing on the trial of Socrates.

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE EUTHYPHRO.

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THE Meno gives us, in the character of Anytus, a representation of the impatience and anger which the old-fashioned Athenians felt, at the new-fangled spirit of speculation which had been introduced into the city, and diffused among the Athenian youth by teachers who were called Sophists. Socrates, though constantly arguing against these teachers, was by the popular notion confounded with them. Anytus, as we have seen, thought that arguments *for* the orthodox faith were almost as bad as arguments against it. Socrates had already, as early as 423 B. C., been confounded with the Sophists by Aristophanes, taken as their representative, and involved in the odium which the popular opinion fastened upon them: but it was above twenty years before the Comedy of *The Clouds* led to the tragedy of the death of Socrates. In the mean time other causes had tended to make Socrates unpopular with all parties. In the year B. C. 406, occurred the battle of Arginusæ; and on the occasion of the trial of the captains which followed this, Socrates stedfastly resisted the furious demands of the democracy because they were illegal: as we shall hereafter find noticed in his defence. In B. C. 405, the Spartan admiral Lysander took the city of Athens, and set up the oligarchy which is commonly known as the Thirty Tyrants. This oligarchy also looked upon Socrates with a suspicious eye, and tried to involve him in the guilt of their atrocities: which attempt he resisted

at the hazard of his life, as we shall also find noticed in the *Apology*.

Critias, one of the most unscrupulous of the Thirty, had been the friend and hearer of Socrates, but had in the time of the oligarchy become especially unfriendly to him\*. Hence it was, Xenophon says, that he caused a law to be made, that *no one should teach the art of words*:—meaning of course, the practice of analytical discussion which Socrates practised and encouraged. Thus, Xenophon says, not being able to find any thing to take hold of in him, his enemy brought against him the charge which is commonly made against philosophers, and appealed to vulgar prejudices.

For the fact is that Socrates never did teach the art of words: but his real offence was of another kind. When the Thirty put to death many of the citizens, and those, men of good character, Socrates said that if a master of a herd of cattle were to manage so that the cattle should become fewer and worse, he must surely be aware that he was not a good herdsman: and still more, if any one were the governor of a city, and if he acted so that the citizens became fewer and worse, he must be aware that he was not a good governor. This was reported to Critias and his colleague Charicles; whereupon they sent for Socrates, and shewed him the Law, and told him he was not to carry on conversational discussions with the young men. Here was an opportunity for Socrates to employ his art of cross-questioning, which he proceeded to do. He asked if he might inquire of them the meaning of the Law. "I am ready to obey the Law," said he, "but that I may not transgress through ignorance, tell me, when you say that I am not to use the art of words, does this art of words mean

\* *Mem.* I. 2, 32.

words rightly spoken, or words wrongly spoken? If it mean words rightly spoken, I must take care not to speak rightly: if it mean words wrongly spoken, I must endeavour to speak rightly." Charicles, in anger, said, "Since, Socrates, you have so much difficulty in understanding, take this as a plainer rule, that you are not to talk with young men at all." Socrates still finds room for an inquiry; "Young men, you say. But how young? Up to what age?" Charicles replied, "Up to thirty, the legal age for political action." Socrates still inquires: "But may I not buy any thing of a man under thirty, and doing so, ask him what it costs?" "Yes, such things you may ask. But it has been your custom, Socrates, to ask things which you very well know. Do not go on with such interrogations." Socrates still inquires, "May I not answer, if a young man asks me where Charicles lives or where Critias is?" "Yes, you may answer such questions," said Charicles. "But," said Critias, "you are not to go on talking about tanners and blacksmiths and coppersmiths: I think you must have worn them pretty well threadbare by this time." "Then," said Socrates, "I suppose I must not speak of what used to follow these examples of ways of acting; namely, just acting and holiness, and the like." "No," said Critias, "nor of herdsmen either. If you talk of the herdsmen of the city, and of the herd being diminished, take care that the herd is not one fewer *by you*." This shewed that they had heard of the expression which has been mentioned, and were irritated by it.

• Socrates however escaped the dangers of the *Reign of Terror* under the Thirty. In the course of the succeeding year (B.C. 403) the democracy was restored by Thrasybulus. Anytus, who had been unjustly banished from Athens, returned

after the victory of Thrasybulus with other exiles. It is very conceivable, as one of Socrates's commentators supposes\*, that the restored exiles ascribed the revolution which had overthrown the old constitution of Athens to the new doctrines which had been imbibed from "the Sophists" by the young men, and that they regarded Socrates as the leader of such teaching. This Alcibiades, this Critias, this Charmides†, who had done so much mischief to their country, out of what school did they come? it might be asked. From whom had they learnt their contempt of the People, and their pretended wisdom which made them despise their fathers and the religion of their country? On such grounds we may suppose that Anytus became himself the author of that attack on Socrates which in the *Meno* he points out as a probable event.

With Anytus, the politician, two other persons associated themselves in the act of accusation or indictment of Socrates; Lycon, who acted on the part of the orators or public speakers, and Meletus on the part of the poets‡. Meletus is a poet ridiculed by Aristophanes as well as by Socrates; of Lycon, little is known except his place among the accusers of Socrates.

The instrument of indictment was, according to the law of Athens, posted up in a public place, (the King's Portico, where the meeting of Socrates and Euthyphro takes place), and was as follows: (Favorinus, who lived in the time of Hadrian, stated that the original document was then extant§.)

\* Socher, p. 56.

† Charmides was one of those who were associated with the Thirty Tyrants.—*Xen. Hell.* II. 4, 19.

‡ *Diog.* II. 5, 18; *Apol. Soc.* § 10.

§ *Diog. Laert.* II. 5, 40.

“Meletus, son of Meletus, of the parish of Pitthis, lays this charge against Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus, of the parish of Alopekè.

“Socrates is guilty of a crime. He does not acknowledge the gods whom the state acknowledges, and he introduces other and new gods. He is also guilty of corrupting the youth. The penalty, death.”

It is when this indictment had thus been lodged, and Socrates was looking forward to the trial, that the Dialogue *Euthyphro* is supposed to take place: but when was it published?

The *Meno* gives us the view with regard to Socrates which prevailed before the trial: the *Crito* and *Phædo* are the representations of his demeanour as drawn by Plato after the trial. Can we follow the course of feeling among his admirers still more closely? Is it likely that the *Euthyphro* was circulated during the trial?

This seems to be on some accounts likely, and certainly such a supposition gives a peculiar interest to this Dialogue. It is written when the disciples of Socrates hardly yet believe that the accusation is in earnest. The thing seems to them at present to be absurd rather than dangerous. That Socrates, the most religious-minded of men, should be accused of impiety, is too extravagant to be really meant. To condemn him as irreligious would be, as *Euthyphro* says, to begin the destruction of the house by tearing up the hearthstone. And how vague is this accusation of impiety! Who can put such an accusation in so definite a form as to make it the subject of a legal sentence? Who can say what impiety is? The wisest of the Athenians cannot define impiety in any intelligible and consistent way. And if they cannot, surely Socrates may say to his accusers and to his



/ judges, How can you find me guilty of impiety, when you cannot tell what piety or impiety is?

This is the argument implied in the Dialogue. Euthyphro is a person who boasts of a special knowledge on this subject, and is subjected to the questioning of Socrates thereupon. He is engaged in prosecuting his father on a charge of homicide, accompanied with doubtful circumstances. If, as I suppose, this dialogue was published during the trial of Socrates, it seems very likely that some such event as this supposed homicide had really happened about that time; for the question of criminality is left more obscure than it would have been likely to be if the facts had been invented.

Diogenes Laertius implies that the prosecution by Euthyphro was real; for he says that the publication of the Dialogue produced the effect of making him desist from further proceedings. Unhappily it did not produce the effect at which Plato, perhaps, more seriously aimed, of causing Meletus and Anytus to desist from their prosecution.

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## EUTHYPHRO.

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**T**HE Dialogue begins with a meeting between Socrates and Euthyphro in the neighbourhood of one of the Courts of Law.

EU. "What novelty has happened, Socrates, that you have left the walls of the Lyceum and are now pacing the King's Portico? You surely have not a lawsuit in the Court which sits there?"

SOC. "The Athenians, Euthyphro, do not call my business a suit, but an indictment: not a civil, but a criminal process."

EU. "How say you? Has any one brought an indictment against you? For I will never believe that you have brought one against another person." SOC. "No, certainly." EU. "Then another has indicted you?" SOC. "Even so."

EU. "And who?" SOC. "I do not myself, Euthyphro, exactly know the man. He seems to me a young man and an ignorant one. His name is, I think, Meletus. He is of the district of Pitthis. Do you happen to know any Meletus of that district, a man with long smooth hair, a thin beard, and a hook-nose?" EU. "I do not know him, Socrates. But what is his indictment against you, Socrates?"

SOC. "What is it? A very weighty and high-pitched one indeed, as seems to me. That he, young man as he is, should be master of so great a subject, is no small thing. He knows, as he says, in what way the minds of young men are corrupted, and who are the persons who corrupt them. He must be a very wise man; and looking

with displeasure at me, as a person who, by my erroneous views, corrupt young men of his own age, he runs to the City as a boy runs to his mother, and lays an accusation against me. He seems to me to be the only one of our politicians who begins at the right end. It is quite right to attend to the improvement of the young men first, to make them good, as the husbandman considers the young plants as the most important. Meletus will in the first place mend us, who spoil, he says, these young plants, and then no doubt afterwards attend to the older men, and so do infinite good to the state."

We cannot fail to see the indignation that is masked under this ironical praise, calm as the manner is. Euthyphro expresses this feeling more directly.

"I wish it may so turn out, Socrates: but I am afraid that the opposite result will happen. Those who attack you seem to me to begin the destruction of the city by tearing up the hearthstone. But tell me, what he says that you do? what he means by corrupting young men?"

Soc. "It is really an absurd story, my friend. He says that I make new gods, and do not acknowledge the established ones."

Eu. "I understand, Socrates. He means your Dæmon or divine guide that you say accompanies you. And this he makes a point to found his accusation upon, and brings you before the Court of Justice, knowing that such accusations produce an effect on the Many. And so it is. They laugh at me also, whenever I pretend to prophesy, and yet I always prophesy truly. It is all envy: but we must not heed them."

Soc. "Well, Euthyphro: perhaps there is no great harm in being laughed at. But it seems to

me that though the Athenians are not angry with a man for being wise, they are very angry with any one who makes others wise. If they only laugh at me, as you say they do at you, it may be easy to let them have their laugh and have done with it: but if they take the matter in earnest, it is difficult for any one to know what course things will take, except for a prophet like you." X

EU. "But I hope, Socrates, no harm will come of it, and that you will win your cause, and I shall win mine."

Soc. "And pray, Euthyphro, what is your lawsuit? Are you defender or pursuer\*." EU. "I am *pursuer* in a case where it may appear insane to *pursue*." Soc. "What? are you pursuing some one who has wings like a bird?" EU. "He is very far from having wings: for he is a very old man." Soc. "And who is it?" EU. "My father." Soc. "Your own father?" EU. "Even so." Soc. "And what is the complaint? What is the charge?" EU. "Homicide, Socrates."

Soc. "Bless me! Certainly, Euthyphro, common folks know very little what is right and what is wrong. For I do not think any common person could have thought such a proceeding right: you must have reached a high pitch of wisdom to see that."

EU. "Undoubtedly, Socrates, a very high pitch."

Soc. "But is it one of your own family who has been killed by your father? But I need not ask. It is plain it must be so. You would not, on behalf of a stranger, have brought such an accusation against him."

EU. "It is very absurd, Socrates, that you

\* I use these technical terms for a reason which will soon appear.

think it makes any difference whether the man who is killed is a stranger or a relative. You ought to know that all that needs attention is this, whether the man that killed him was in the right in doing so; and if he was in the right, to leave him alone; but if not, to prosecute him even if he be your nearest friend. For in any case you make yourself equally a partaker of his crime if you do not invoke the operation of the Law.

“As for the man who is killed, he was a labourer of mine, who worked on my farm at Naxos; and he being in drink and in a rage with one of our servants, slew him. So my father bound him hand and foot and put him into a cellar, and sent a man hither to inquire of the magistrate\* what was to be done. And in the mean time took no care of the prisoner, as supposing that it made little difference if a murderer, as he was, died: and so he did die. He perished from hunger and cold and confinement before the messenger returned from the magistrate.

“And my father and the other servants are indignant that I prosecute my father for homicide; for, as they say, he did not kill the man; and if he did, it was a matter not worth caring about, the man himself being a murderer: and that it is an impious thing for a son to prosecute his father for homicide. You see, Socrates, they do not know what is impious and what is pious.”

The case of homicide is of so mitigated and doubtful a character that there is no great principle of morality involved in the discussion of it: and, accordingly, the discussion does not depend upon the amount of crime, but on the general question whether it is consistent with piety to prosecute

\* The *Exegetes*, a magistrate whose business was to expound the laws in doubtful cases.

one's father; and then, as growing out of this, according to Socratic habits of thought, what is piety and what is impiety. Euthyphro, as we see, sets up for an authority on such matters, and therefore is to be brought to a more moderate mood by a course of Socratic conversation; and the difficulty of finding a tenable definition of Piety is to be made to bear on the accusation of Socrates for Impiety. Socrates immediately makes his attack.

Soc. "But for heaven's sake, Euthyphro, do you think you know so exactly about right and wrong, and piety and impiety, that the case being as you have stated it, you have no fear that you, in prosecuting your father, may be doing an impious thing?"

Eu. "I should be good for little, Socrates, Euthyphro would be no better than another man if I did not know all this exactly."

Soc. "Then, my excellent Euthyphro, the best thing to be done is for me to become your pupil; and before this trial of myself comes on, I will appeal to Meletus, and will tell him that I have always all through my life tried to know about right and wrong, and now that he says I have been too rash and have gone wrong by running after novelties in such subjects, I have become your disciple. I would say to him, O Meletus, you allow that Euthyphro is wise in such matters and knows what is right, so suppose me to be right too and do not prosecute me: prosecute my master rather than me, who does mischief to old men, [as you say I do to young ones:] mischief to me in teaching me wrong, and to his own father in condemning and punishing him. And if he did not do as I requested, and cease to prosecute me, or prosecute you instead of me, I would use the same arguments in the court of justice on the trial, which I had used to him."

EU. "By my troth, Socrates, if he were to set about accusing me, I should soon find out his weak place, and there would be a good deal more to be said about him in the court of justice than about me."

SOC. "My dear friend, I know that very well, and that is why I want to be your pupil; knowing that both Meletus and other persons see no harm in you, but look into me so deeply and so sharply 6 that they accuse me of impiety. So now for God's sake, tell me that which you just now assured me you knew so well: What is pious and what is impious, both in cases of homicide and in other cases? Or is piety a thing which is not in all cases the same? Is impiety not always the opposite of piety? Is everything which is impious conformable to the same idea?"

EU. "Certainly, Socrates."

SOC. "Tell me then, what is Pious and what is Impious?"

EU. "I reply, that is pious which I am now doing, in prosecuting an offender for homicide or sacrilege or the like, even if he be your father or your mother, and I say that it is impious not to prosecute.

"And I will give you a proof that the rule is so, and that this is right, not to spare an offender whoever he be. For men hold that Jupiter is supremely good and just among the gods, and they say that he put his father in bonds and mutilated him, because he devoured his children, and the like misdeeds. And yet they blame me because I prosecute my father when he is an offender, and thus they contradict themselves in what they say about the gods and about me."

SOC. "In truth, Euthyphro, that is the reason why I am here to undergo this prosecution; that

when any one says such things about the gods, I am grieved, and take it ill; and that is the wrong which they object to on my part.

"But now, as you who know so well about such matters, are of the same opinion, we must I suppose make up our minds to believe these stories: for we have no pretension to know anything about them. But tell me, for friendship's sake, do you really think that those things happened?"

EU. "Yes, and more wonderful things still, Socrates, which the common people know nothing about."

SOC. "And so you think that the gods really did make war upon one another; and that there were among them enmities and fightings and the like, such as the poets tell of; and such as we see in the tapestry which is exhibited at the Panathenian festival."

EU. "Not only there, Socrates, but as I just now said, I could, if you liked to listen, tell you many things about the gods which it would astonish you to hear."

SOC. "I should not wonder; but you shall tell me these at some other time when we have leisure. But now, if you please, try to answer my question more precisely than you have yet done. For I asked you what is Piety, and you replied that it is what you are doing now, prosecuting your father for homicide."

EU. "And I said truly, Socrates."

SOC. "May be so: but, Euthyphro, there are other things which are included in piety, are there not?"

EU. "Certainly."

SOC. "Well then; remember that I did not request you to name to me one or two of the many things which are included in piety, but to tell me



in virtue of what essential character pious things are pious. For you said that there was a general idea by which pious things were pious, and impious things were impious. Or do you not remember?"—EU. "I do."

Soc. "Well now; tell me what this idea is, that I may be able to look at it: and use it as a criterion, and may know that what agrees with it, done by you or any other, is pious, and what does not agree is impious."

EU. "Well, Socrates, if you wish it I will tell you that."

Soc. "I certainly do wish it."

EU. "What is pleasing to the gods is pious; what is displeasing to them is impious."

Soc. "Excellently well said, Euthyphro, and just such a definition as I wished for.

"But whether it is true, I do not yet know. Of course you are ready to prove to me that it is true." EU. "Certainly."

Here we have obvious matter for discussion. For Euthyphro, who now says that piety is what is pleasing to the gods, had just before asserted that the gods quarrel with one another. But when persons quarrel they differ, and they quarrel most when they differ about right and wrong. If the gods differ about anything, they must differ about such things. Then what is pleasing to one of them will be displeasing to another; and so the same  
9 thing may be pious and impious. "And so, Euthyphro, you have not answered my question, which was, the difference between what is pious and what is impious. You in prosecuting your father, may be doing what is pleasing to Jupiter, and displeasing to Saturn and Uranus." Euthyphro says that the gods cannot differ as to whether a man should be punished who has committed

homicide wrongfully. "No," says Socrates; "did you ever hear any one say that a man should not be punished who has done anything *wrongfully*? But then they dispute whether the thing *was* done wrongfully. And so as men differ about right and wrong, the gods may do so too. And 10 so tell me, my dear Euthyphro, how you know certainly that in such a case as yours, you are right." Euthyphro says, "It would be a long story." "Ha," says Socrates, "I see you think that I am harder to satisfy than your judges will be. You expect to convince them." "Yes," says Euthyphro, "if they will hear me." Socrates, "Oh, they 11 will hear you, who speak so well. But even if you had proved your case to me ever so well, this would not have answered my question, What is pious and what is impious? Let us return to that question."

But they return to the question under a new aspect. The former argument had been derived from the circumstances of the Grecian polytheism; but the question to which they now proceed belongs to the theology of all times of careful thought about the foundations of religion and morality, and is indeed a question still discussed among theologians: it is this: Is what is right, right *because* it is pleasing to God, or is it pleasing to God *because* it is right? Instead of *right* the word is that which is mainly the subject of discussion in this dialogue, *hotion, holy* or *pious*, but the question will be best understood as I have stated it. Euthyphro requires to have the question explained and illustrated before he can understand it. This being done, they come to agree that what is right, is pleasing to the gods because it is right; and thus Socrates then requires still a definition of what is right independent of its being pleasing to the gods.

Upon this Euthyphro confesses himself puzzled and perplexed by the way in which all the suppositions which he makes—his “hypotheses”—successively slip away from him.

Socrates on this uses the same illustration which we had in the Meno; he says that these hypotheses are like the images of Dædalus which slip out of our hands. He says: “If my hypotheses had done this you might have made this jest upon me: but now I have the jest against you.” Euthyphro replies, “But it is you who make my hypotheses run away. If you had left them alone, they would not have gone.” Socrates replies, “You make me a cleverer person than Dædalus himself: and in truth I am clever in this way against my will. I should like to find doctrines that *will* stay permanently with us. I should like this much better than to have, as I seem to have, the cleverness of Dædalus added to the treasures of Tantalus.”

- 13 Socrates then goes on to accuse his companion of being too delicate and indolent to pursue these discussions with proper spirit, and propounds to him another question, whether piety is the whole of rightness, or (to use a more appropriate word,) *righteousness*, or only a part of it. Euthyphro at first is puzzled by the question; and Socrates to illustrate it quotes the poet Stasinus:

Jupiter, maker of all, who arranged the world that surrounds  
us,

Darest thou not to name: for where there is fear there is  
reverence.

“I,” he says, “differ with the poet; for men fear things which they do not reverence, poverty for instance. But I say that where there is reverence there is fear. Men reverence righteousness, and thence fear to do wrong. Fear is a wider expres-

sion than reverence. Reverence is a kind of Fear, and therefore a part of Fear, as Odd is a kind of Number, and a part of the notion of Number. And now, are we to say that where there is Righteousness there is Piety; or are we rather to say that where there is Piety there is Righteousness, but that where there is Righteousness, there is not necessarily Piety, Piety being only a part of Righteousness?"—So led, Euthyphro assents to this view.

Socrates points out that the question then 14 arises: *What* part of Righteousness is Piety? "Tell me," he says, "that I may require Meletus not to do me wrong by accusing me of impiety, when I have learnt so well from you what piety is."

Euthyphro is now able to give a definition to his own satisfaction. He says, "Piety is the part of Righteousness which is concerned about the service of the gods. The remainder of Righteousness is that which leads to the utility of men."

This Socrates praises as well said. "But still," 15 he says, "there is one small matter wanting. This *service* of the gods, what is it? To *serve* the gods is expressed by the same word as to *tend* horses, and dogs, and oxen, and this tendance is for the benefit of the thing tended. Well then, is this service of the gods for the benefit of the gods? Do you do the gods any good by your service? Of course you did not mean it. But I asked you that you might tell me what kind of service of the gods you do mean." Euthyphro answers, "The service of servants to masters."

"But this kind of service again is described by 16 the same word as the office of the physician, or the house-builder, or the shipwright. Now each of these has it for his business to produce some work—health, a house, a ship. What then is that

work,—most admirable it must be—which we can do for the gods?”—“O,” says Euthyphro, “we can do many such works.” “But,” says Socrates, “what is the best of these works?”

Euthyphro answers with some circumlocution, but the main point of his reply is that we must by prayers and sacrifices make the gods propitious to us, our families, and the state.

- 17 Socrates receives this reply with his usual playfulness. “You might have told me in a shorter form,” he says; “but I see you do not wish to instruct me. If you had gone a step further, I should have known what piety is. But I must follow you as well as I may. You say then that piety consists in prayers and sacrifices. Now sacrifice is giving something to the gods, and prayer is asking something from them. Is it not so?”

Euthyphro says, “You have well caught my meaning.” “That is,” says Socrates, “because I am so eager to learn from you. Nothing which you say falls to the ground. And so you say that the service of the gods is giving to them and asking from them?”—EU. “Even so.”

- 18 Soc. “But then to ask aright we must ask what we need; and to give aright we must give what they need.”—EU. “Granted.”—Soc. “Then piety is a sort of bargain with the gods?”—EU. “Why yes, you may call it a bargain if you like to do so.”—Soc. “I do not like to do so unless it be true. But tell me what use can our gifts be to the gods? What they give us is plain, for everything which we have is their gift. But what can they be advantaged by what we give? Or have we so much the better of the bargain, that we receive all good from them, and they get no good from us?”

EU. “Why, do you think, Socrates, that the

gods are benefitted by what they receive from us?"

Soc. "If they are not, what are these gifts of ours to the gods, which you have been speaking about?"

Eu. "What can you suppose, except honour and reverence and gratitude?"

Soc. "Then, Euthyphro, piety is gratitude to the gods, and not anything which is useful or pleasing to them?"

Eu. "I think that piety is in the highest degree pleasing to them."

"Soc. "And so piety is what is pleasing to the gods?"

Eu. "Certainly."

Soc. "When you speak so, you cannot wonder that your assertions will not remain fixed, but move away. You say that I am the Dædalus who makes them go away, but you are a cleverer artist than Dædalus, for you make them go round in a circle. Do you not see that we are come round to the point that we started from? Do you not recollect that piety, and that which is pleasing to the gods, were held by us not to be the same thing, a little while ago? And now you say they are the same thing. Either we were wrong then, or we are wrong now."—Eu. "So it seems."

Soc. "Well then we must begin again from 20 the beginning, for I will not give it up. Now pray give me your full attention and tell me the truth; for of a surety you know it, if any one does. I will hold you, like Proteus, and not let you go till you tell me. If you had not known quite well what was pious and what was impious, you would not have undertaken a prosecution against your father. You would have been withheld by fear of the gods and reverence for men.

Of course you know what I ask. Tell it me therefore."

Eu. "Another time, Socrates. I have now an engagement which must take me away."

Soc. "Alas! my friend, what are you doing? You kick me down from the lofty summit of my hope, and go away. I expected to learn from you what piety really is, and thus to get rid of the accusation of Meletus; shewing him that I have taken lessons of Euthyphro and am no longer in the way of propounding rash and newfangled speculations about divine matters; but am a reformed man for the rest of my life."

It is evident that the dramatic catastrophe of this dialogue is the defeat of Euthyphro, who had throughout claimed a complete knowledge on the subject of piety, and who is so entirely driven from his ground by the arguments of Socrates, that he covers his confusion by going away on the pretext of an engagement elsewhere.

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## REMARKS ON THE EUTHYPHRO.

I HAVE already, in the Introduction to this Dialogue, given a view of it which, if assented to, determines both the time of its publication and the object of the writing. According to that view there is no force in the objection which has been made to it by Ast, that it contains none of Plato's higher speculative views. It would be hard upon Plato if he were not to be allowed to have written any one piece in which there were no high speculative views; and the view which I have supposed him to have in writing it is at any rate definite and clear enough.

How far was it likely to answer the purpose of stopping the prosecution of Socrates? I fear we must allow that it was more likely to prove the prosecution to be illogical and unreasonable than to stop it. Popular anger and dislike are not logical or

reasonable passions ; and the Athenian people (and the judges and jurymen were of the people) were not likely to be brought to disregard the charge of impiety by any proof how hard it was to define impiety. Moreover in this Dialogue there is much that would seem to confirm the suspicion that the School of Socrates did not think of the gods as the old Athenians thought. Socrates dwells upon the wars of the gods, their quarrels, their differing with each other about some things, and possibly about right and wrong. He starts the inquiry whether the gods love what is right because it is right, or whether it is right because they love it. Such inquiries always startle and alarm the vulgar mind, and give rise to a suspicion of impiety, whichever side is taken. Like Anytus in the *Meno*, the many hate Sophists, but they hate, hardly less, those who reason against Sophists.

It is not wonderful therefore that, notwithstanding the *Euthyphro*, the process against Socrates went on ; and we have now to attend to the further steps of it.





**THE APOLOGY,**  
**OR DEFENCE OF SOCRATES.**  
*(APOLOGIA SOCRATOUS.)*

I have retained the term "Apology," as the best-known description of Plato's Defence of Socrates, although that word does not imply the assertion of entire blamelessness which is conveyed in the Greek *ἀπολογία*.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE APOLOGY.

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PLATO'S argument, implied in the *Euthyphro*, that the charge against Socrates was too vague and undefined to be a reasonable ground of judicial proceeding, was urged in vain; and did not prevent his accusers from supporting the indictment by arguments as loose and overstrained as the accusation itself. We may be the less surprised at this, when we recollect on what loose grounds and by what forced interpretations of words and facts charges of being "evil-disposed" to the state have been maintained in our own times, both in democracies and in despotisms. And if we find that quotations made by Socrates from Homer and other ancient poets are among the arguments urged against him, we must recollect that Homer was, in a certain sense, the Bible of the Greeks, and that to take texts from him in favour of treasonable doctrines, seemed to be not only perverse but profane. Xenophon has given us some of the arguments of the accusers which suggest these remarks\*.

"Socrates," said the accuser, "taught his disciples to despise their fathers. He persuaded those who listened to him that he would make them wiser than their fathers. He urged that by the law, a man who is mad may be put in bonds,

\* *Mem.* i. ii. 49, 56.

though he be one's father; and he urged that if a man did this (or any other atrocity), under the influence of moral ignorance, he himself ought to be put in bonds by those who knew better. And he held that as mad men were fit only to be bound, so the morally ignorant were fit only to be taught."

"Again; Socrates," said the accuser, "made his disciples despise not only their fathers, but their other relatives, telling them that relatives are of no use to them, for instance, when they fall ill, or when they go to law. In the former case, they want physicians, in the latter, lawyers."

He complained also that he said, "that friends were of no use; their friendship is worth nothing if they cannot do you good: and that those who know what is right and can teach it are the only persons worth anything; and so he persuaded the young men that he was the wise man, and could make others wise; and thus he brought his disciples to think other persons worth nothing in comparison with himself."

The accuser further said, "that he picked out wicked passages from the most illustrious poets, and used them as arguments to teach his listeners to be wicked and tyrannical. He quoted from Hesiod the line\*,

Nought that is work is disgrace, but idleness ever disgraceful,  
and said that the poet exhorts us not to abstain from any work, good or bad; we may do any work for gain."

"Also," the accuser said, "that he often quoted the passage in Homer, concerning Odysseus, when he checks the retreat of the Greeks†:

\* The reader will recollect that this line is quoted in the *Charmides*, § 23.

† *Il.* II. 190 and 198.

He, when a chieftain he found, a princely man in the wild crowd,  
 Him with gracious words from intended flight he recalled :  
 Sir, for such as thee it is not to yield to a panic :  
 Stay at thy post thyself and restrain the fugitive rabble.  
 But if a man of the rabble he saw, fear-stricken and noisy,  
 Him with his staff he smote and joined his blows to reproaches ;  
 Sirrah, be still thyself and list to the words of thy betters ;  
 Theirs it is to speak, but thou art a slave and a coward,  
 Useless ever in war and still more worthless in council :

and that he interpreted this as if the poet spoke with commendation of beating poor common people."

"Again\*," the accuser said, "Socrates makes his companions despise the established laws. He says that it is absurd to appoint the rulers of the city by the bean-ballot, when no one would like to have a pilot chosen in that way, or a builder, or a flute-player, or the like, where a mistake in the election is far less mischievous than a mistake in choosing public officers. Such discourse," he said, "makes the young men despise the established constitution and become revolutionary."

And again†, "Two men, Critias and Alcibiades, who were habitual companions of Socrates, were the source of great evils to the state: Critias as the most tyrannous of the oligarchy; Alcibiades as the most insolent and overbearing in the democracy."

Xenophon explains how unreasonable and unproved these charges were; but as my object is rather to illustrate the *Defence* which Plato has put in Socrates's mouth, I omit the replies with which these reports of the accusations are accompanied.

In the Platonic Apology, Socrates, before replying to the indictment of Meletus and Anytus, notices at some length the older calumnies against him, which, he says, had long poisoned the minds of the Athenians towards him, and of which the

\* *Mem.* i. ii. 9.

† *Ib.* i. ii. 12.

most conspicuous expression, though not the only source, could be pointed out in the Comedy of Aristophanes, *The Clouds*. This play had been acted twenty-four years before the trial, and it is necessary for the understanding of the Defence to bear in mind the purport of it. Aristophanes, though writing as a Comic Poet, very often with great coarseness, put himself forward as the champion of the old Athenian plainness and simplicity, in opposition to the newfangled schools of wisdom and eloquence. In doing this, he naturally fastened upon Socrates, as a leader among these speculators and talkers, without regarding, and probably without knowing, how far his speculations were opposed to those of the Sophists in general; and he made him the representative of the Sophists. His marked physiognomy could be exhibited with poignant effect in the Comic mask; and that he might be presented in connexion with the remote and unsubstantial subjects about which the new schools were understood to employ themselves, he made the *Clouds* the chorus of the play, and from them is the drama named.

*The Clouds* of Aristophanes is a drama highly satirical and highly entertaining. The satire is of the most extravagant kind; and not only is it certain that the features of character here ridiculed did not really belong to the historical Socrates, but it is very probable that the practices and opinions here ridiculed did not really belong to any body—or at least, only in the most distant and loose forms of resemblance. Public ridicule, when appealed to by a skilful writer, is quite satisfied if the caricature be but lively and laughable, though there be little or no resemblance between the caricature and the original. We, who have seen what hearty applause has been called forth in our own

times by professed parodies of some of our poets who were well known by name, but little read by the many,—for instance, the parodies of Wordsworth and Coleridge in the *Rejected Addresses*,—know how remote the picture may be from any likeness to the reality. The traits, however, which the comic poet fastened upon, were probably such as the public opinion of Athens had already ascribed to the Sophists, the Professors of Education, who were then exciting notice in that city. And of these traits, the principal are, the art of teaching men “to make the worse appear the better reason,” and the pursuit of inquiries into natural phenomena, carried on in an impious spirit. The former element constitutes the main action of the piece; Strepsiades, an old country gentleman, plagued with an expensive son, comes to Socrates to be taught to plead in such a way that he shall escape paying his debts. He applies at the school, the Phrontisterion, the Thinking-shop. The physical researches of the school supply, of course, excellent materials for farcical representations. In the beginning of the drama Socrates is discovered suspended in the air, in a kind of frame; probably suggesting a comic parody of the manner in which the gods were sometimes exhibited, when they were brought in to turn the plot of a tragedy. “Ha!” says Strepsiades to the scholar who has opened the door and admitted him into the school, “who is that man in the hanging basket?” “That,” says the scholar, with mysterious deference, “is *himself*.” “Who himself?” says Strepsiades, as yet untouched by the reverential feeling of the school. “It is Socrates,” says the pupil. Strepsiades then calls to him, and asks him what he is doing. Socrates replies—

Air-travelling and questioning the Sun.



Probably this exhibition of the Professor as suspended in air was suggested in a great measure by the combined notion that, literally, such persons studied the skies and the air, and that, metaphorically, their speculations had no solid foundation. The term *Meteorology* described the studies so pursued, including, not only what we now call by that name, but Astronomy, and the like: and the word from which this term of science is derived, and from which our word *meteor* comes, was used to designate everything which was raised above the earth so as to have no apparent connexion with it. Socrates himself is made to give this reason for his position. "I should never," he says, "have made discoveries about meteoric things\* if I had not suspended and airified my mind." And when Strepsiades has expounded his object, Socrates offers to summon the Clouds, who shall aid him. These are, he professes, his deities. "The gods," he says, "do not pass current with us." He then proceeds to give a mechanical explanation of the phenomena of thunder and lightning. "The clouds," he says, "are whirled together, and burst with a noise, and that is the cause." Strepsiades, who, with his traditional feelings, considers this speculation as an impious boldness, taking from Jove his thunderbolts, asks still, with some pertinacity, "But who whirls them? Is it not Jove who does that?" "No," says Socrates, "it is an *Etherial Vortex*." "So," exclaims Strepsiades, "Jove is no more, and *Vortex* now is king." And this suggestion of impiety is again and again introduced, and, no doubt, found a public belief and public sentiment very extensively responding to it. The supposed physical inquiries of the school are ridiculed in other ways.

\* *μετέωρα πράγματα.*

Thus one of the scholars speaks with profound admiration of the way in which they had solved the problem, "How many times the length of its own foot a flea had leapt which sprang from Chærephon's eyebrow to Socrates's head." "They took the flea," he says, "dipt its feet in melted wax, pulled off these waxen shoes when dry, and measured them." Chærephon is in this play repeatedly mentioned along with Socrates, and seems to have been as well known, as to his person at least. Pheidippides, the son of Strepsiades, refuses at first to become a pupil in the school. "If I do," he says, "I shall become yellow and corpselike, as Chærephon is."

I have already, in the Introduction to the Charmides, noticed the picture, given in this drama, of the good old Athenian education by which those who fought at Marathon had been trained, as opposed to the new mode of education; and the way in which the art of making the worse appear the better reason is satirized by bringing forwards two strange personifications, *Good Old Cause* and *Bad New Cause* (*Logos Dikaios* and *Logos Adikos*). The altercation between them goes on beyond the point there mentioned. "You," says Good Old Cause to his opponent, "you accustom boys to warm clothing, so that they are unfit for exercises in public. Do you, young man," he adds to the audience, "stick to me, Good Old Cause; keep away from the marketplace; do not bathe in warm water; blush at what is shameful; and if any body laughs at you for doing so, blaze out; make way for your seniors; obey your parents; do not call your father Japetus—the Old Fellow;—do nothing base, and make Modesty your guardian goddess." And in spite of the sneers of the antagonist, who says, "If you

do this, you will be called a sheepish lout," Good Old Cause goes on to describe the benefits they will thus attain, health, strength, activity and freedom from care. "But if you follow the new fashions you will be feeble, talkative, vicious, litigious; and he, my opponent, will teach you that wrong is right and right wrong."

Bad New Cause is not at a loss for something to say on his side, and the altercation is made the vehicle of a great deal of drollery and satire. "As to warm baths," he says, "are not such places commonly called 'the Baths of Hercules'? As to going to public places, do not Homer's heroes constantly go to the Agora? As for Modesty, who ever got anything by Modesty? Consider what pleasures you will lose by following his advice. But if you take my help, even though you indulge your passions and are taken in the act, you will be able to make a good defence." All this reasoning is clothed in detail and personal allusions which cannot here be given. The end of the matter is, that Good Old Cause at last is challenged to look at the audience, and to say whether there are there present more saints or sinners. He cannot resist this blow, and acknowledges himself beaten. Such a stroke of bold general satire was, of course, not intended as a real confession of inferiority.

The sequel is, that as the result of the victory of Bad New Cause, the young man Pheidippides is committed to Socrates for education. He is instructed in the new arts, and has soon occasion to put them in practice, for the pay-day arrives, and his father's creditors press in upon him. They are supposed to be foiled by some very impudent quibbling, and the father is delighted. His satisfaction is however of short duration; for the

young man begins to beat his father, and defends his proceeding by a fresh example of his newly-acquired talking powers. This drives the old man past his patience. "May you," he says, "go into the bottomless pit with your Socrates and your Bad Cause. O Clouds," he addresses the chorus, "why did you not warn me of these consequences? Me a simple old countryman who trusted you?" The Clouds, who throughout speak in a tone removed from all buffoonery, and often in a strain of beautiful poetry, give the moral of the piece; they say, "Such is our way. When we see a man in love with wrong, we let him take his course, that by the calamities which he incurs, he may learn to reverence the gods."—"Alas!" sighs the old man, "Severe but just!" He will not be content however without revenging himself on the wicked Chærephon and Socrates. He calls upon his son to help him: and on his refusing to be concerned in maltreating his teachers, he adjures him by the Jove of his fathers. The young man says, "Who is Jove?" and, referring to the lore which Socrates had before delivered, adds: "Jove is no more, and Vortex reigns supreme." It would seem that on adopting this opinion he had put a visible image to represent Vortex before his door, in place of the usual image of Mercury; this image being, it would seem, a large vessel made on the potter's wheel, and very naturally called a *whirl*. The father says, "How mad I was, when I believed Socrates and rejected my gods!" He then resolves to avenge himself by main force; summons his slaves for the purpose; calls for ladders, mattocks, torches, and attacks the house of Socrates; the Thinking-shop of which we heard before. The scholars look out and ask him what he is doing. He replies,

"I am chopping logic on your beams. I am on your roof here, air-travelling and questioning the sun." Socrates exclaims that he is suffocated; Chærephon, that he is burning; and Strepsiades says they are rightly served, for offending the gods.

The reader will have before him, in the *Apology*, Socrates's remarks upon this caricature, and upon its effect on the Athenian mind.

There are other points in Socrates's history, which are noticed in the *Apology*, but so fully narrated there, that no prefatory account is needed here: his refusal to proceed in an illegal manner against the ten captains after the battle of Arginusæ, in consequence of which he had very nearly been involved in their destruction; and his refusal to take part in the atrocities of the Thirty, when also he put his life in danger. He narrates these occurrences, in order to shew how impossible it would have been for him to take a part in public business without incurring destruction. And undoubtedly his unbending spirit, as shewn on these occasions, must have made him to be looked upon with dislike, as a person who would not accommodate himself to the sympathies and proceedings of those among whom he lived. And, as I have already said, he was suspected of tyrannical leanings in consequence of his connection with Critias, Charmides and others.

When the accusation had been made, on such grounds as I have stated, what defence did Socrates really make?

Xenophon says\*, "I will relate what I have heard concerning him from Hermogenes, the son of Hipponicus. He said that when Meletus had laid his indictment against him, and when he (Hermogenes) heard Socrates talking on all sub-

\* *Mem.* iv. viii. 4.

jects but the accusation, he had said to him that it would be well to consider what defence he would make. And that at first he replied, 'Well, but does not my whole life appear to you to be a preparation for a defence?' And when he asked, 'How?' he answered that he had spent his life in nothing else than in doing what was right and avoiding what was wrong, and this he thought was the best way of preparing a defence. And that when he said again, 'Do you not see, Socrates, that the Athenian judges have put to death many persons who had done no wrong, because they were offended at what they said, and have acquitted many who had really committed crimes?' he replied, 'In truth, Hermogenes, several times when I have begun to consider about the defence which I am to address to my judges, my Divine Monitor has stopped me.' On which he had said, 'You surprise me.' And he had replied, 'Are you surprised that God thinks it best that I should end my life now? Do you not know that up to the present time no one seems to me to have lived better or more pleasantly than I have done? For I think that those live the best, who attend most to what is good, and try to become good themselves; and that those live most pleasantly who most surely perceive that they are making progress in goodness. Now this is what I have experienced up to the present time; and noting others with whom I lived, and comparing myself with them, I have the persuasion that this is so. And my friends as well as myself hold this opinion concerning me: and this not because they love me; (for men in general do not think thus of their friends;) but because they think that by keeping company with me, they too become better.

“‘Now if I live a much longer time, probably

the evils of old age will come upon me. I shall see worse, and hear worse, and understand worse, and become dull to learn, and lose my memory, and grow worse in points in which I had grown better. And if I was not aware of this, my life would not be worth having: and if I was aware of it, my life would be less valuable and less pleasant.

“ ‘And if I am put to death wrongfully, that would be a disgrace to those that so put me to death, but what disgrace can it be to me that others can neither discern nor do what is right with regard to me? I see that in the case of men of past time, those who have done wrong and those who have suffered wrong have left behind them a very different reputation: and I know that if I am now put to death I and my persecutors will hereafter be looked upon in a very different light by those who come after us. I know that men will bear me witness that I never wronged any man nor made him worse than he was; but that those who were with me I always tried to make better than they were.’ ”

Xenophon's account of the Defence which Socrates made, given in his *Apology*, and in the *Memorabilia*, agrees in many points with the *Apology* of Plato, and especially in the notice of the murmurs which were uttered at several points when what he said was offensive to the audience.

Of Anytus, and circumstances which may have influenced him in taking the part which he took, we have some notices in Xenophon's *Apology*. “ ‘When Socrates, after his condemnation, saw him pass, he said: ‘The man is quite elated, as if he had done some great thing in procuring my death; because when I saw him placed in the highest offices of the city, I said he ought not to have his

son brought up as a leather-dresser. How blind he is not to see that of us two, *he* is the conqueror whose good deeds last for ever. Homer tells us that they who are leaving life have the gift of prophecy: so I will now utter a prophecy. I was for a short time in the company of Anytus's son, and he seemed to me to be not without certain powers of mind; so I think he will not remain in the servile occupation in which his father has placed him: and then, because he has no serious pursuits, he will fall under the sway of low desires and go far in evil courses.' And as he said, so it turned out. The youth took to drinking and drank night and day. And Anytus, though no longer alive, has still a bad name for having brought up his son so ill."

I have written the name of the other accuser of Socrates, *Melétus*, following Mr Grote, instead of *Melitus*, as it is written in several of the authorities.



## THE APOLOGY OF SOCRATES.

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1 “ **H**OW you, men of Athens, have been affected by my accusers, I know not; but for my part, in listening to them, I no longer knew myself, so persuasively did they speak. And yet there \* is not a word of truth in what they have said. But among the false statements which they made, there was one at which I especially marvelled, namely, when they warned you to take care that you were not led astray by me, inasmuch as I was a powerful speaker. It did appear to me supremely audacious in them to make such an assertion, which must immediately afterwards be disproved by the fact; for you will soon see that I have no skill in speaking, unless they call a man a powerful speaker because he says what is true. If they mean this, I certainly must allow that I am a speaker of a very different kind from them; for they, as I have said, have not spoken a word of truth; from me you shall hear the whole truth: and that, not clothed in ornate sentences with studied terms and expressions; you will have from me plain facts expressed in the plainest language. Indeed, Athenians, it would ill become me at my age to come before you with a studied discourse like a boy. And there is one thing, O Athenians, which I must beg and entreat of you: if I use in my defence the same terms which I have been

accustomed to use in the market-place and in the shops, where most of you have heard me talking, do not wonder at that, nor take offence. For this is the fact. I now enter a court of justice for the first time, though I am more than seventy years old. I am therefore altogether strange to the kind of language used here. And therefore excuse me, as if I really were a stranger, if I speak to you in that tone and in that manner in which I have been brought up. I ask you a thing which is, I think, reasonable, that you take no account of the manner of my address to you—it might be better, it might be worse, perhaps—but to consider this, to attend to this, whether I say what is right or not; for that is the virtue of a Judge, as to speak truly is the virtue of an Advocate.

“ It is my business then, Athenians, first to answer the first of the false accusations which have been brought against me, and the accusers who have brought them; and then, the later charges and the later speakers. For I have been the object of many charges, addressed to you, for many years, all false; and of these I am more afraid than of Anytus and his associates, though they are formidable enough. But those are more formidable still, O Judges, who have taken possession of the minds of most of you from your boyhood, and have filled them with ill opinions of me, in which there is no truth at all; to the effect that there is a certain Socrates, a wise man, who studies the things that are in the sky, and explores the things that are under the earth, and makes the worse appear the better reason. Those, O Athenians, who have circulated this opinion of me, are my formidable accusers; for those who hear these accusations suppose that the persons to whom they apply do not believe in the gods. Now those who

say such things are accusers who have been urging their accusation for a long time, in the hearing of you, some of you from your boyhood, some of you from your childhood, and so you have come to believe it, the accusation being urged without a word of defence on the other side. And what is very absurd, we cannot know the names of those accusers, except that, it may be, one might point out one who is a maker of comedies. But all the rest who, actuated by envy and calumny, gave effect to these notions, and those who, being persuaded by these, persuaded others, are quite inaccessible: I cannot bring any one of them hither into court, nor cross-examine him; in defending myself against these accusers, I am compelled to fight with a shadow, and to ask questions which there is nobody to answer. Do you then take this into account, that as I say, there are two sets of accusers, those whom you have just heard speaking against me, and those others of whom I have spoken; and you will see that it is best to reply to the latter first; for you heard their accusation first, and they have more influence than the others.

“ Be it so. I have then to defend myself against this ancient calumny, and to remove in a short time a persuasion which has been in possession of you for a long time. I hope I may succeed for your sake, as for my sake, if it is for our good, and that I may plead successfully. But I know how difficult this must be. But let the result be as God pleases; I must obey the law and make my defence.

- 3 “ Let us go back to the beginning, and consider what this calumny is which Meletus has taken up, and incorporated it in his accusation. What is this calumny? Let us put it in the form of an indictment. ‘ Socrates is guilty of a criminal

curiosity, inquiring into things under the earth and things in the skies, and making the worse appear the better reason, and teaching others to do the like.' It is to this effect, for you yourselves have seen stuff of this kind in the comedy of Aristophanes (*The Clouds*). You have seen there a certain Socrates represented, who says that he is 'air-travelling,' and utters many other follies, about matters of which I understand nothing, great or small. I say this not as despising such knowledge, if any one has it. Let not Meletus bring an accusation against me on that account! But, men of Athens! I have nothing to do with such speculations; and to this I call the greater part of you yourselves as witnesses. You may state the facts to one another, as many of you as have ever heard me conversing, and many of you have. Tell one another, then, whether you ever heard me telling much or little about such matters; and from this part of the accusation you may judge of the truth of the rest of the charges. But all this is false.

"And if you have heard from any one that I pretend to teach men, and receive money for so doing, that also is false. I think it is a very admirable talent, if any one has the power of teaching men, like Gorgias of Leontium, and Prodicus of Keos, and Hippias of Elis. Any one of these, O Judges, can go into any of our cities, and so attract the youth, that though they might have the conversation of their fellow-citizens for nothing, they leave that, and induce them to come to them on condition of making large payments, and consider themselves as under an obligation besides. I hear, too, that there is another very clever man arrived, a Parian; for I was lately with a person who spends more money on these

Sophists than all the rest together, Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and I asked him (he has two sons)—‘If, Callias, your sons were colts or calves, we should have been able to find and to hire a manager for them who would bring them into good condition and make them good of their kind; but who can make them good in their actual kind, good as men and as citizens? I suppose that as you have sons, you have considered this question. Is there any such person or no?’—‘Certainly there is,’ said he.—‘And who and what is he, and what are his terms of teaching?’—‘It is,’ he said, ‘Socrates, Euenus a Parian, and his terms are five minæ.’ And I thought to myself what a highly favoured man this Euenus must be, to have this talent, and to exercise it so readily. I should have thought great things of myself if I had had this talent; but, men of Athens, I have it not.

- 5 “But perhaps some one will take me up and say, But, Socrates, what is your real case? How did these calumnies arise? If you had done nothing different from other people, there would not have been so much talk about you. Tell us what you really have done, that we may not be left to guess-work. If any one says this, he seems to me to speak reasonably; and I will try to tell you what has made for me this unfortunate reputation. Attend then to my account of myself: perhaps some of you will think I am in jest, but I assure you it is the exact truth which I tell you. I got this reputation in consequence of a certain kind of wisdom which I have. What kind of wisdom is this? It is a human wisdom: I have no wisdom but the wisdom of a man. Those whom I have just been speaking of are perhaps wiser in some wisdom more than human; I do not know how to describe it. I have it not; and he who

pretends that I have, pretends falsely and calumniates me. And now, Athenians, do not take it amiss, if I seem to claim something extraordinary; for I shall not make the claim on my own authority, but shall refer to an authority which you will allow to be sufficient. I shall refer you to the deity who gives oracles at Delphi, to testify whether I have any wisdom, and of what kind it is. You know Chærephon. He has been my companion from my youth up, and is known to most of you. He was driven into exile with you, and was restored with you. You know the character of Chærephon, how earnest he is in all that he gives his mind to. He, upon a time, ventured to go to Delphi and to propound this question to the oracle—and, O Judges, do not be offended!—he asked whether any one was wiser than I was. The Pythoness answered that no one was wiser. His brother, who is here, can testify this to you, for he himself is dead.

“And pray attend to the object which I have 6 in saying this: I want to shew you how the calumnies against me had their origin. I then, when I heard this, thought thus within myself: What does the God mean, and to what does he refer? For I am not conscious to myself of having any wisdom, great or small: what then does he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? It cannot be false: he cannot tell a lie. For a long time I was at a loss what he could mean. At last with great hesitation I was led to this line of inquiry. I went to one of the men who is reckoned wise; thinking that in that case I should test the Oracle, and be able to say to it, ‘Here at least is a man wiser than I am, and yet you have said that I am the wisest of men.’ Examining this man then—I have no occasion to

mention names—he was one of our wise statesmen—examining him, O Athenians, I came to this result. In conversing with him, it appeared to me that he was so accounted wise by many other persons, and especially by himself, but was not really wise. I then attempted to shew him that he thought himself wise but was not so. And then I became odious to him and to many who were present. And then returning into myself I reasoned thus: I *am* wiser than this man; for it is tolerably plain that neither of us knows what is right and good; but he thinks he does know; I, as I do not know, do not think that I know. I have this small advantage over him, that what I do not know, I do not think that I do know. I then went to another of those who were reckoned wiser than he, and arrived at the same conclusion; and so I became odious to him too and to many others.

7 “After this I still went on, seeing with grief and with fear that I was making myself hated, but still thinking that the answer of the deity must be attended to at any rate: and that therefore I must go on, trying to make out the meaning of the oracle, by application to all who were supposed to know anything. And by heavens, O Athenians,—for I must tell you the truth,—I seemed to come to *this* conclusion. Those who had the highest reputation, seemed to me, thus inquiring, to be most deficient; and others who were less thought of seemed to have more reasonable claims to some wisdom. I am obliged to tell you my wanderings in this way, like a man who had a series of tasks imposed upon him, that the oracle might be duly tested. For after the politicians, I went to the poets—the tragedians, and the dithyrambic poets, and the rest—that I might

then at least catch myself in the manifest case of being more ignorant than them. I took them the poems which they had most carefully written, and I asked them in detail what they meant, that I might then learn something from them. And I am really ashamed, O Athenians, to tell you how this turned out: but I must speak the truth. In almost every case, all the other persons who were present were better able to tell the meaning of that which *they* had composed. So I soon came to the conclusion that poets did not make their poems by any wisdom which they had, but by a sort of inspiration; like that of those who deliver oracles; for they too utter many a beautiful and wonderful thing, but know not what it means. The poets seemed to me to be in the like case. And yet I saw that in consequence of their poems, they were thought to be wiser than other men in other things, though they were not so. So I left them, thinking that I had the same advantage over them as over the politicians.

“And at last I went to the artisans. In their department I was conscious that I knew almost nothing, and I knew that I should find that they knew many beautiful arts. And here I was not disappointed. They knew things which I did not know, and were in this way wiser than I was. But, O men of Athens! they seemed to me to have the same defect as the poets, and other artists. Because they had mastered their own art, each thought that he was also very wise in other things of the greatest moment; and this conceit of theirs spoilt their wisdom. So I asked myself whether I had rather be as I was, not possessing their knowledge and not having their ignorance, or to have both as they had. And I answered to myself and to the oracle, that it was better for me to be as I was.



9 "As the result of this course of inquiry, O Athenians, I have incurred much and heavy odium, and have been the subject of many calumnies, and have got the name of being wise. For all who are present when I prove a man to be ignorant, think that I am wise in that subject. But the conclusion seems to be, O men of Athens, that the deity who gave the oracle is really wise; and that the oracle means this: that human wisdom is worth little or nothing; and that the oracle did not mean me, Socrates, in particular, but used my name as an example; as if it had said: He, O men, is most wise who, like Socrates, knows that, in truth, he has no wisdom that is of any value.

"And so I still go on, asking as the oracle suggests, of all persons, citizens and strangers, if any one is thought to be wiser, and when I find that he is not, I add this to the proofs that the oracle is in the right. And I have been so occupied with this inquiry that I have had no time to attend to any business, public or private, and have remained very poor, as the consequence of this kind of divine service.

10 "And further, the young men who fall into my company, and those who have most leisure especially, young men of fortune, are delighted to hear these questionings of mine, and often imitate me themselves, and try to question others. And I think the result is that they find a great abundance of persons who think that they know something, but who really know little or nothing. And thereupon those who are questioned by them are irritated against me rather than them; and say that there is a certain wicked Socrates who corrupts the young men. And if any one asks them what he does and what he teaches which

corrupts them, they can make no reply, as they have nothing to allege. But that they may seem to have some ground for what they say, they take up all these accusations which have been cast against all who have meddled with philosophy,—that they search into things under the earth and above the earth, and do not believe in the gods, and make the worse appear the better reason. Of course they will not assign the true cause, that they are convicted of pretending to know when they really do not know. They are jealous of their reputation, persons of dignity, numerous; and, urging these charges perseveringly and plausibly, they have for a long time filled your ears with these vile calumnies. And now they have set upon me Meletus, and Anytus, and Lycon; Meletus, urged by the resentment of the poets, Anytus, by the artists and the politicians, and Lycon by the orators: so that as I have said, it will be wonderful if I am able in the short time which is allowed me, to remove a calumny which has been growing for so long. This is the truth, O men of Athens. I speak to you, not concealing or disguising anything, great or small; though I know that I shall still find the hatred of these persons undiminished; a proof that I speak the truth, and that this is the source and cause of the calumny; and this you will find by examination, now or at any future time.”

This lively picture of his character and manner, thus put in the mouth of Socrates, is probably exact, even if Socrates did not so deliver it. We can readily understand the impatience produced in the old-fashioned, quiet Athenians, by the growing spirit of speculation and the spreading habit of cross-questioning; and we can conceive the way in which they assigned grounds for their dislike

of Socrates by ascribing to him opinions which they regarded as irreligious, and which he never held. The picture of a philosophical life, such as Socrates here describes his to have been, seems more likely to be written by a philosophical disciple like Plato, than to have been delivered before a court of justice: especially considering that it goes back at least twenty-four years, to the time when the *Clouds* of Aristophanes was brought upon the Athenian stage. The detailed reference to that play seems to be fitted rather for a literary and philosophical than for a judicial tribunal; and seems thus to confirm the opinion that, as I have said, this Apology was rather written for posterity than addressed to the Athenian judges. We have had, in this part of the Defence, an indication that the judges who tried the case were of the democratic party, who had been exiled by the Thirty. Socrates says, "Chærephon, who was exiled with you and returned with you." A leaning against this democracy was a suspicion under which Socrates laboured. We now come to the more forensic portion of the Defence; which however takes very much the form of a Platonic Dialogue.

11' "I have thus answered, I hope sufficiently, my ancient accusers. And now I will try to answer Meletus, public-spirited man as he calls himself, and the later accusers who are with him. And let us take this indictment, as we took the former one. It runs thus: He says, 'Socrates is guilty of corrupting the youth; of not acknowledging the gods whom the State acknowledges; but of introducing new divinities.' This is the accusation; and now let us examine it part by part. He says that I am guilty of corrupting the young men. I say that he is guilty of trifling with serious subjects, and of bringing grave charges

against men, pretending to have an earnest regard for things for which he cares nothing. And that this is so, I will endeavour to prove to you.

“Stand up, Meletus, and tell me: Is there any- 12  
thing which you have so much at heart as to make our young men good men?”

MEL. “That is what I desire.”

SOC. “Now tell these judges, who makes young men good. Of course you know, for it is your business. You have found out, it seems, who corrupts them and makes them worse, for that is what you accuse me of now. Now tell us, and point out to these judges, who makes them better.

“You see, Meletus, you are silent and have nothing to say. And is not this a scandal in your case, and a proof of what I say, that you have given no attention to such matters? Come: tell me: Who makes the young men become better?”

MEL. “The Laws.”

SOC. “That is not what I ask, my excellent Sir, I ask *Who*? Of course he must begin by knowing the laws.”

MEL. “These Judges, Socrates.”

SOC. “How say you, Meletus? Do these Judges teach our young men, and can they make them become better?”

MEL. “Certainly.”

SOC. “But can they all, or some of them and not others?”

MEL. “All.”

SOC. “By Juno, this is good news. We have an abundance of persons to aid us in this task. But what further? Do these persons, the audience, make men better, or no?”

MEL. “They also.”

SOC. “And the Senators?”

MEL. "The Senators too."

SOC. "And all the people who attend the public assemblies, the voters, do they corrupt the young men? or do all they make them better?"

MEL. "All they."

SOC. "It appears then that all the Athenians make men good and virtuous, except me. I alone corrupt them. Is this what you say?"

MEL. "That is precisely what I say."

SOC. "You make me out to be a peculiarly unfortunate person. But answer me. Is the same true of horses? Is it true that all men make them good, and that there is one single person who spoils them? Or is it true that only one man or a few men, can make horses good—the horse-trainers; but that the greater part of men, if they have to use and to be with horses, spoil them? Is it not so, Meletus, with horses and with all other animals? It certainly is, whether you and Anytus assert it or deny it. It would be a very fortunate thing for our young men, if one man only made them bad, and all others made them good. But clearly, Meletus, you shew that you have never paid any attention to young men. You shew that you know nothing about the matters involved in your accusation of me."

- 13 The next argument is still more in the manner of the Platonic Dialogues. Socrates asks Meletus, whether it is not better for every one to live among good men than bad: and thence argues that he could not have willingly tried to make his Athenian neighbours bad men; and that if he did so unintentionally, he ought to be set right by teaching him better, not by punishment. This argument would not be likely to avail much in the case of such a criminal accusation.

We then come to the charge of rejecting the 14 established divinities.

“You assert,” Socrates is made to say to Meletus, “that I corrupt the youth of Athens by teaching them not to believe in the gods in whom the state believes; and to believe in others, new gods. Is not this the pernicious teaching of which you accuse me?” MEL. “I decidedly accuse you of this.” SOC. “Now, Meletus, by the very gods of whom we are speaking, explain yourself more clearly to me and to the Judges. I do not know whether you declare that I deny the gods altogether: or that I allow gods, but not the established gods, and teach men so.” MEL. “I say that you deny the gods altogether.” SOC. “O strange man, Meletus! How can you say this? Do not I allow the Sun and the Moon to be gods as other men do?” MEL. “No, Judges. He says that the sun is made of stone, and the moon of earth.” SOC. “My dear Meletus, you are accusing Anaxagoras, not me. Do you think that these Judges are so ignorant of literature as not to know that the books of Anaxagoras, the Clazomenian philosopher, are full of tenets like these. Young men may buy these books for a drachma any day, and do you accuse me that they learn such things of me? They will laugh at me if I pretend that these doctrines are mine, especially the doctrines being so absurd as they are. But in heaven’s name, do you say that I do not acknowledge any God?”

MEL. “No, none at all.”

SOC. “What you say is incredible, I think, Meletus, even to yourself. This man appears to me, Athenians, to be acting in the unrestrained insolence of self-conceit, and to have written this

indictment in a fit of youthful impertinence. He proposed it as a sort of puzzle or trap, with this notion: Will this wise Socrates perceive that I am making game of him and contradict myself, or shall I take him in, and the other hearers with him? For he does contradict himself in the indictment, which runs as if he had said, 'Socrates is guilty of crime in not acknowledging gods, but in acknowledging gods;'—which is mere foolery."

- 15 "For consider with me, Judges, whether this is not what he does say: and do you, Meletus, answer me. And do you, Athenians, as I at first requested you, abstain from interrupting me with noises, while I conduct the examination in my usual way."

The argument is then proposed, that as he who holds that there are human things must believe that there are men, so he who holds that there are divine things must believe that there are gods. Socrates, therefore, who believes in his Divine Monitor, must believe in divinities.

Again, the Dæmons or subordinate divinities were children of the gods, as Meletus allows, their mothers being nymphs or mortal women. To believe, then, in Dæmons, and not to believe in gods, would be as absurd as to believe that mules are the offspring of horses and asses, and yet not to believe in horses.

- These arguments seem fitted rather for the school of the philosopher than for the court of justice. They are represented as likely to be received with murmurs by the audience, but still as being unanswered; and Socrates closes this part of his Defence by saying that he has disproved the accu-  
16 sation of Meletus. "But," he adds, "as I said

before, there is a large stock of hatred against me, and this it is which will be the ground of my condemnation, if I am condemned, and not Meletus and Anytus. Envy and calumny have destroyed many good men, and will destroy many more; for it is not likely that it will stop at me."

We then come to a striking part of the Defence, in which Socrates describes the motives and feelings which compel him to go on in the course which he has entered upon.

"Perhaps, some one may say, 'Are you not ashamed, Socrates, to have involved yourself in a business like this, through which at present you stand in danger of your life?' To such a person I should answer, Truly, O man, you judge not well, if you think that a man who is worth anything should calculate the danger, and the chances of living or dying;—if you think that he should consider anything but this, whether what he is doing is right or wrong, whether it is the work of a good or of a bad man. According to your calculation, the heroes who died at Troy were under a mistake. The son of Thetis despised danger in comparison of disgrace. When his mother found him bent upon avenging Patroclus and killing Hector, she, goddess as she was, said, O son, if thou avenge thy friend and kill Hector, thou thyself wilt die; for, said she,

Forthwith thy destiny follows the ruin of Hector;

and he despised this danger, and feared still more to live unhonoured with his friend unavenged; he says,

Forthwith, then, may I die,

provided that I punish him who has wronged me, and become not a laughing-stock,



Nor remain at my ships, of earth a profitless burden\*.

Do you think that he cared for danger and death?

“For so it is, O Athenians, in truth. Whatever is each man’s post, chosen by himself as the better part, or appointed by his leader, there, as I think, he must stay in spite of danger; reckoning not of death, nor of anything except of disgrace and honour.

“For me, Athenians, it would be a shameful deed, if—when your Rulers, whom you appointed to direct me, had assigned me my post at Potidæa and at Amphipolis, and at Delium, I stood my ground where they had placed me, like every other soldier, and faced the danger of death; but when the Deity had assigned me my post, as I think and believe, and made it my business to live a life in the pursuit of wisdom, questioning myself and others, I should then, from fear of death or any other thing, quit my appointed rank:—*that* would, indeed, be a shocking proceeding; and in that case any one might with reason bring me to judgment, as a man who does not believe in the gods, who disobeys their oracles, who fears death, and thinks himself wise when he is not so.

17 “For to fear death, O men of Athens, is to think one’s self wise when one is not so. For no one knows what death is, nor whether it is not the greatest good for man: they fear it as if they knew

\* The passage is:

I seek not in my wishes

Life, or to dwell in the converse of men; save only that Hector  
First may, pierced by my spear, give up his life to my vengeance,  
Fit reward at my hand for spoils that he took from Patroclus.

Then him Thetis answered shedding tears from her eyelids:  
Short is thy fate, my son, if such the spirit that moves thee,  
For forthwith thy destiny follows the ruin of Hector.

Then with indignant throb thus answered rapid Achilles:  
Forthwith then may I die: no longer a help to my loved one,  
Nor remain at the ships, of earth a profitless burden.

II. XVIII. 90—104.

that it is the greatest of evils. And is not this the most shameful kind of ignorance, to think that we know this when we know it not? In this respect perhaps I differ from the rest of mankind. If I am wise in anything, it is in this, that as I know nothing of the state of departed spirits, so I do not *think* that I know: but that to do wrong, and to disobey good guidance, whether of God or man, is an evil and a disgrace, that I know. And so I will never fear nor shun things of which I know not but they may be good, in preference to evils of which I am sure that they are evils.

“And so now if you dismiss me—disregarding Anytus who said at the outset, that either I ought never to have been brought before you, or having been brought, not to be allowed to escape with my life; telling you that if I escape your sons will follow the teaching of Socrates and be perverted;—if you should now say: ‘O Socrates, we shall not now comply with the advice of Anytus; we dismiss you on this condition, that you shall not pursue your accustomed researches nor go on seeking for wisdom; and if you are found still doing so, you shall die:’—If, I say, you should dismiss me on this condition, I should reply: ‘O Athenians, you I love and cherish, but I must obey the God rather than you; and so long as I breathe and have my faculties, I cannot desist from seeking for wisdom, and exhorting you and arguing to those of you who come in my way; and saying what I have been accustomed to say: O excellent friend, can you, being an Athenian, a citizen of the first and most famous of cities for wisdom and power, help being ashamed, while you make riches your highest aim, and reputation and distinction, and give no thought nor care to the pursuit of truth and the improvement of your soul? And if any

one argues with me, and says that he does care for these things, I shall not go away nor quit my hold of him, but I shall examine him and test him; and if he does not appear to me to have acquired virtue, but only to say that he has, I shall reproach him as thinking most of the smallest things and least of the greatest. This I must do to all, young and old, who come in my way, and to stranger and citizen, but to the citizens most, as being most nearly connected with me. For this is what the God orders me to do, ye well know. And I do not think that any greater good can be given to the city than my obedience to the God. For I make it my sole business to persuade you, both young and old, not to care for riches nor anything else so earnestly as for your souls. I remind you that riches do not produce virtue, but virtue brings riches and all other goods, private and public. If to exhort men thus, be to pervert the young, this must be bad advice: but if any one says that I say anything but this, he says what is not true. And so, I should go on to say, O men of Athens, Do as Anytus bids you or otherwise; acquit me or acquit me not, I shall go on doing this and nothing else, were I to die many times."

We may suppose that this resolute defiance of the numerous body who sat as his judges was received with murmurs of dissatisfaction. These he notices,

18 "Do not clamour against me, men of Athens, but as I before requested you, listen quietly to what I have to say. It will be for your own good to do so. I may say other things which may excite your murmurs, but pray restrain them.

"For be well assured that if you put me to death, me who am what I have told you, you will not do me so much harm as yourselves. Neither Meletus nor Anytus can harm me. No; a worse

man cannot harm a better. He may indeed put him to death, or involve him in exile or ignominy; and perhaps he thinks these are very great evils. I do not think so. I think it a far greater evil to do what he is now doing—to try to kill a man wrongfully. And so, Athenians, I am very far from delivering a defence of myself; I am defending you;—defending you from condemning me because I use the gift which God has given me. For if you put me to death, you will not readily find any one who will fasten himself upon the city, (to use a comparison which may seem to you odd, but which is very just,) like a rider upon a horse, powerful and of good blood, but heavy and sluggish, and needing to be roused by the spur. I seem to be appointed by the God such a rider to this city, sitting close to you, and exciting you by persuasion and reproach, all day long without ceasing. Such another, I say, you will not readily find; and if you will take my advice, you will not destroy me. Perhaps you may be like persons who are angry because one awakes them when they are sleepy, and may shake me off, as Anytus bids you, and kill me; and then you may go on sleeping for the rest of your lives, except God in his care for you, send you another like me.

“That I am such a person, so given by God to the city, you may gather from this: it is not like common human conduct, that I should neglect my own private business for so many years, and attend to yours, appealing to each man individually like a father or an elder brother, and exhorting him to aim at virtue. If indeed I had got anything by this, and received pay from those whom I exhorted, there might have been some reason in it: but now you see yourselves that the accusers, who have brought their other accusations with so much

audacity, were not audacious enough to say or to offer to prove by witnesses, that I ever asked or received pay for what I did. I can offer you a very decisive witness the other way, namely, my poverty.

19 “Perhaps it may appear absurd that I go about giving advice to particular persons and meddling with every body, and yet that I do not come forwards before your public assemblies and give my advice about matters of state. The cause of this is, that which I have often said and you have often heard, that I have a Divine Monitor of which Meletus in his indictment makes a charge in so extravagant a manner. This Monitor I have had from my boyhood—a voice which warns me, which restrains me constantly from what I am about to do, but never urges me on to do. This was what stood in the way of my undertaking public affairs. Whence you may be well assured that if I had engaged in public business I should long ago have perished, and should have done no good either to you or to myself. And be not offended with me when I tell you the truth. No man can long be safe who, either to you or to any other democratic body, opposes himself frankly, and resists wrong and illegal things being done by the city. It is necessary that he who really fights for what is right, if he is to be safe even for a short time, should be in a private, not in a public station.

20 “I will give you decisive proofs of this; not words, but that which you have more respect for, facts. Listen then to what has happened to me, that you may know that I am incapable of yielding in any point to injustice from the fear of death; and that by not yielding, I should have perished. I must tell you what will displease you, and what involves points of law, but what is true.

“For, men of Athens, I never had any other

public office in the state, but I had a place in the senate. My tribe, the Antiochian tribe, had the presidency when you had to judge the ten captains who did not save the men who were overboard in the sea-fight of Arginusæ; you chose to judge them, in one lot, against the law, as at a later period you all allowed. Then I alone of all the presidents opposed myself to your taking an illegal course, and gave my vote against it; and when the orators denounced me and were on the point of joining me with the accused, and when you clamoured in an imperious manner, I thought that I ought rather to run any danger, than for fear of bonds or death to join you in an act of injustice. And this was in the time of the democracy.

“And when the oligarchy was set up, the Thirty Tyrants sent for me, along with four others, to their council-chamber, and ordered us to fetch from Salamis Leon the Salaminian, that he might be put to death; according to a practice which they then followed, in order to involve as many persons as possible in their own guilty proceedings. On that occasion too I shewed, not in words but in deed, that I cared, if I may be allowed a rough expression, not a jot for death; but cared mightily about doing nothing unjust or wicked. For that government, strong as it was, struck me with no terror, which could make me do what was wrong. When we left the council-chamber, the other four went to Salamis and brought back Leon; I went out and went home. And probably I should have died for that act, if that government had not soon afterwards been dissolved. And of these there are many who can bear witness.

“Do you then think that I should have lived 21 so many years, if I had entered into public life, and as became a good man, had taken the side of

right on all occasions? Very far from it, O men of Athens; neither I nor any other man could have done so.

“I then, in all the course of my life, public so far as it has been public, and in private, have been the same man, never conceding anything that was wrong, neither to others, nor to those whom in their charges against me they speak of as my disciples. In truth, however, I never was any one’s teacher: but if when I was speaking and doing my own business, any one, old or young, chose to listen to what I said, I never grudged him the opportunity. I do not talk when I am paid, and hold my tongue when I am not. I offer myself to rich and poor to be questioned; or if they like it better, they answer my questions and hear what I have to say. And if any of my hearers becomes a good man, or does not, I cannot justly be charged with the result: I who never taught nor promised to teach anything to anybody. If any one says that he has heard anything from me privately which all the world might not know, be well assured that he says what is not true.

22 “But why is it that some are pleased to spend much time in my company? You have heard already, men of Athens. I have told you the whole truth of the matter. Men are pleased to hear those exposed who think that they are wise, and are not so: for it is an exhibition not unamusing. And to do this, is my task imposed by the God, by oracles and dreams, and in all ways, like any destiny of any other man by which he has his appointed work.

“This, O Athenians, is true, and admits of easy proof. For if I am corrupting some of our young men, and have corrupted others, there must be some of them who are now become older,

and who have known that I have given them bad counsel when they were young; and they would now come forwards as my accusers, and ask for my punishment. And if they did not choose to do this, some of their friends and relatives, their fathers and brothers, and others belonging to them, would bear in mind that their relatives had been damaged by me. Now there are many such persons present whom I have in my eye. Here is Crito of my own age, and of my own parish, the son of Critobulus, who is also here: Lysanias of Sphettios, the father of Æschines, who is here; Antipho of Cephissus, the father of Epigenes; and then these others, whose brothers were habitually in my company; Nicostratus the son of Zotides, the brother of Theodotus. Theodotus himself indeed is dead, and no more needs the help of his brother. And here is Paralos the son of Demodocus whose brother Theages was. Here too is Adimantus the son of Aristo, whose brother is Plato whom you see present, and Aiantodorus, whose brother is Apollodorus, who is before you: and many others, some one of whom Meletus ought to have brought before you as a witness. And if he forgot to do it before, let him bring him forwards now. I allow him to do it: let him speak, if he has such proofs. But, O Judges, you will find that, on the contrary, all these persons are eager to defend me, who have corrupted them, who have done so much mischief to their relatives, as say Meletus and Anytus. And those who have been perverted might perhaps be expected to defend me; but the unperverted persons, the elder men, who belong to them, what reason can they have for being in my favour, but the right and just reason, that they know that Meletus says what is false and I say what is true?



“These then, O Judges, and the like of these, are the reasons which I have to urge in my defence: and this may suffice. But perhaps some of you may be angry with me, from recollecting that he himself, having a smaller danger in the way of judicial proceeding hanging over him than I have, nevertheless used supplications and prayers to the Judges with many tears, and brought forwards his children to excite compassion, and others of his friends and family; he may be angry with me because I do not do the like, even when I am, as it seems, in extreme danger. Any one looking at this demeanour of mine might be irritated, and might thereupon give his vote against me in anger. Now if any one of you has such a feeling—I do not believe it to be so, but if it be so,—I would attempt to conciliate him; I would say: I too, my good friend, have family ties; as Homer says,

I am not born of a gnarled oak, or rock for my parent,

but of human parentage. I have relatives; I have, O Athenians, three sons; one still an infant, two who are children. But I shall not bring them before you and beseech you to acquit me. Why will I not do this? Not from pride, O Athenians, nor from want of respect for you. Whether I can look death in the face or not, is another question: but it does not appear to me to tend to my fair fame, or to yours, or that of the city, that at my age and with my character, whether deserved or not, I should do anything of this kind. It is a settled opinion that Socrates is a man different from other men. Many of you who were supposed to be eminent in courage and wisdom or any virtue, I have seen, when they were brought before a tribunal, behaving, in spite of their reputation, in a wonderfully base manner, as if for them to die were

an unheard of calamity, and as if they would be immortal if you acquitted them. Those who thus behave appear to me to bring disgrace on the city; and strangers seeing their conduct might think that the most eminent of the Athenians, whom you place in positions of honour and power, are as weak as women. Such behaviour, O Athenians, we who are supposed to be good for anything ought not to practise, and you ought not to permit. On the contrary you ought to shew that you will be much more resolved to condemn those who get up these miserable tragedies and make the city ridiculous, than those who retain a tranquil demeanour.

“And besides the reputation of such things, it 24 does not seem to me right to address supplications to a Judge, and to escape condemnation in that way, but to convince and persuade him. For the Judge does not sit in the seat of judgment that he may assign away right as a favour, but because it is right. And he has sworn, not that he will give judgment as a favour according to his liking, but that he will judge according to the laws. It is not fit therefore, either that we the accused should accustom you to violate your oaths or that you should allow yourselves to be so accustomed. Do not then, Athenians, require me to do towards you what I hold to be neither honourable, nor right, nor pious; especially when the accusation made against me by Meletus here is a charge of impiety. For clearly if by my supplications I should persuade you to violate your oaths, I should be teaching you that there are no gods; and while I defend myself against the accusation, I should be passing judgment against myself, that I do not believe in the gods. Far different is the fact. I believe in the gods as none of my accusers does; and I leave

it to you, and to God, to judge concerning me as may be best for me and for you."

Every one must feel, as in all ages it has been felt, that there is a grand tone of elevation and consistency of character in this manner of defence. But it is also plain that it could hardly fail, as he himself anticipates, to irritate a body of Judges, numerous, and of course accessible to popular sympathies, and sensitive to any appearance of want of respect in the accused person. At this period of the defence the votes of the Judges were collected on the question, whether Socrates was guilty or not guilty\*. He was declared guilty by 281 votes. The minority was 275, so that there was only an excess of 6 votes to condemn. If 3 of the majority had voted the other way he would have been acquitted. With all the adverse influences which operated against him, if he had not by his line of defence voluntarily thrown away the chances of acquittal he would have been absolved. It is asserted by Xenophon and implied by Plato that his friends would have obtained his acquittal if he had not thus thwarted their design. We have seen the motives which he assigned for thinking that death, in his circumstances, could not be shunned.

We are now to suppose that the votes are given, counted, and the result declared, *Socrates is guilty*. The next step was to determine the punishment. The accuser has said in his Indictment, *The Penalty, Death*. But the laws of Athens allowed the convicted person to propose an alternative penalty, and the court decided between the two proposals. Socrates now proceeds to address his judges on this point; still retaining the unbending tone of approval of himself and admonition of his hearers which here must be felt as galling, and

\* *Diog. Laert. Lib. II. c. v. § 40.*

must again have inclined them to the severer course.

We learn from Socrates's remarks that the office of accuser in such a case as his was not without its perils. If Meletus had not obtained a fifth part of the suffrages, he would have had a heavy fine to pay.

"There are many circumstances, Judges, which contribute to prevent my feeling any strong emotion at this result, of your having declared me guilty; and especially this, that it is what I expected. I rather wonder at the numbers on one side and on the other. I had not thought the division would have been so narrow. I expected a much larger majority; for it now appears that if three of the majority had voted the other way I should have been acquitted. I have escaped so far as Meletus is concerned; and not only escaped him, but it is evident that if Anytus and Lycon had not joined him in accusing me, he would have had to pay a thousand drachmæ as not having gained the fifth part of the votes.

"He then assigns to me the penalty of death. Good. But what penalty shall I propose instead, O men of Athens. Of course such a penalty as I deserve. What, then? What do I deserve to suffer or to pay in consideration of my having through all my life made it my object to learn, neglecting what others attend to, money-making, and the care of my household, and offices in the state and in the army, and other public employments and party engagements, thinking myself really too honest a man to escape ruin if I engaged in such; I, who never entered upon a line of conduct in which I could not have done any good to myself or to you, but took the course of doing to every one individually the greatest good, as I say,

which I could do; trying to persuade every one of you not to attend to the things which belong to him till he had attended to himself, and tried to make himself good and wise; and not to attend to the possessions of the city, rather than to the character of the city. What then do I deserve for being such a man? Surely something good, Athenians, if you are to estimate me justly, and some such good thing as is suitable to my condition. And what reward is suitable for a man who is poor, who is your benefactor, and who requires to have his leisure that he may use it in giving you good advice. There is no reward which is more fit for such a man than that he should be supported at the public expense in the Prytaneum, (where, along with the Prytanes, those are maintained who have done some distinguished honour to the city). Such a person as I have described deserves this reward much more than he who has conquered in a chariot-race at the Olympic games. For he only makes you *think* yourselves fortunate, but I teach you to *be* happy; and he is not in need of such support, but I am. And thus, if I am to have a reward proportioned to my merit, this is what I deserve, to be supported in the Prytaneum.

- 27 "Perhaps while I am talking thus, you may think, as I said before in speaking of appeals to your pity, that I seem to shew too much pride. That, Athenians, is not the case, but the fact is this. I am sure that I never injured any one, but I cannot persuade you that it is so, on account of the very short time you allow for hearing me. I am persuaded that if you had the law, which prevails in other states, that a trial on a matter of life and death should not be decided in one day, I should have convinced you; but it is not easy in

so short a time to remove such inveterate calumnies. But as I am persuaded that I never did injustice to any one, so I will not do injustice to myself and appoint a punishment for myself. What have I to fear which should induce me to do so? The penalty assigned by Meletus, of which I say that I do not know whether it is a good or an evil? Shall I, in the place of this, choose something which I know to be an evil? Shall I select imprisonment? What would be the good of my living in a prison, always at the mercy of the administration of the time? Or fine, and imprisonment till I pay it? That would come to the same thing, for I have no money to pay with. Shall I choose exile? for perhaps you would accept that penalty. It would shew an overweening love of life, Athenians, if I were so weak as to think that while you, my fellow-citizens, could not abide my ways and my conversation, but thought them so odious and intolerable that you take this way of getting rid of them, other people will bear them easily. Very far from it, Athenians! And what a life for me to lead, going to other countries at my age, and wandering from city to city, as I was driven from each in turn! For I well know that wherever I may go, the young men will listen to my discourse. And if I send them away from me, they will induce their elders to expel me; and if I do not send them away, their fathers and their friends will send me away on their account.

“Perhaps some one may say, But, Socrates, 28 can you not remove into another state and there hold your tongue and live quietly? That I cannot, it is the hardest thing in the world to convince you. For if I tell you that to keep silence is for me to disobey the directions of the God, and therefore impossible for me, you will think I am

jesting, and will not believe I me. And if say that the greatest good for which man can live is this,—to discourse day by day concerning virtue and the other matters about which you hear me conversing and questioning myself and others, and that a life without such inquiries is not a life that I can live,—you will believe me still less. Nevertheless, the fact is so, Judges, hard as it may be to believe.

“I am not wont to judge myself worthy of any evil. If indeed I had money, I would have proposed such a fine as I was able to pay: for I should have lost nothing by that. But as I have no money, unless indeed you choose to fine me such a small sum as I can pay,—I could, perhaps, raise a mina of silver; so I place the penalty at that.—But Plato here, O men of Athens, and Crito and Critobulus and Apollodorus advise me to place the penalty at thirty minæ, and offer to be security for it. So I propose that sum: and you will allow that the security is sufficient.”

The votes are again collected respecting the penalty, and the punishment of death is carried by the majority. Socrates then resumes.

29 “In consequence of your not being willing to wait a very short time, men of Athens, you will soon have to bear the blame, from those who wish to speak reproachfully of the city, of having put to death Socrates, that wise man; for those who wish to say harsh things of you will call me a wise man, though I am not. If you had waited but a little while, this result would have come of itself; for you see my age: I am far advanced in life and near the borders of death. I say not this to all of you: I say it to those who have sentenced me to death; and to the same persons I say this. Perhaps you think, O men, that I should have failed

in gaining your votes from want of power of speaking, even if I had been willing to do everything to avoid this sentence. Far from it. I have failed not for want of words, but for want of forwardness and impudence, and because I would not utter to you such things as you would most willingly hear, complaints and lamentations and other things, unworthy of me, as I say, but such as you have been accustomed to hear from others. But I did not before think that I ought, for the sake of danger, to do anything unworthy of a freeman, nor do I now repent of the way in which I have made my defence: on the contrary, I much prefer dying to living on such conditions. For neither in a court of justice nor in war, am I, or any one, allowed to use every conceivable art and means to escape death. No: often in battle it is plain that a man might escape death by throwing down his arms and asking for quarter from his assailants: and many other ways there are, in other cases, of escaping death, if a person has no scruples about doing or saying anything. But the great object, O men, is not to escape death, but to escape baseness and wickedness, Wickedness runs faster than Death, and so is more difficult to escape. I, old and slow, am overtaken by the slower of these two; but my accusers, quick and clever as they are, are overtaken by the quicker of the two, Wickedness. And now I go hence, sentenced by You to receive the penalty of death; but they go sentenced by Truth to receive the penalty of wickedness and injustice. I stand to my punishment: they must stand to theirs. All this ought to be as it is. Everything is for the best.

“And now, O you who have condemned me! 30  
I wish to deliver a prediction to you; for I am now in that position in which men’s predictions



are most regarded, being about to die. I predict to you, O men who have put me to death, that a punishment will soon fall upon you, and, by the heavens! a much heavier one than that which you have inflicted upon me. For you have done this deed in the hope of being freed from the call to give an account of your lives. But the result will be very different, as I prophesy. There will be many more who will call upon you for such an account, whom I have hitherto kept back, so that you were not aware of their existence. These will be more vehement in their appeals to you than I have been, as being younger, and more indignant at your acts. For if you think that by putting persons to death you can prevent any one from reproaching you that you do not live rightly, you are quite mistaken. Such a way of getting rid of admonitions is neither possible nor creditable. There is a much better and easier way,—not to stop other people's mouths, but to mend one's self. And having uttered this prediction to you who have condemned me, I have done with you.

- 31 “With those who have voted for my acquittal, on the other hand, I would willingly hold discourse on what has occurred for a little while, while the officers who have to see to the execution of the sentence are not yet ready, and I am not yet taken to the place where I must die. Stay then here, I beseech you, for a few minutes. We may still speak of the things which we believe. I would tell to you, as to friends, what is the true import of what has now taken place. To me then, O Judges—you I may well call Judges—a wonderful thing has happened. The accustomed sign of my monitor, which hitherto has always stopped me even on the smallest occasions, if I was about to fall into any calamity; now that there has happened

to me, as any one would ordinarily judge, the greatest of calamities;—the sign of my monitor never restrained me, neither when I went to the bar of the court, nor at any point of my address, though it has often restrained me when speaking on other occasions. It has in the whole of this proceeding, never opposed me either in act or in words. What then do I deem to be the import of this? I will tell you. It means that what has taken place is a good thing for me; and that all we who think that death is an evil, do not judge rightly. Of this, I think it is a great proof: for the accustomed signal would not have failed to warn me, if I were not on my way to what is good.

“And let us consider that there is a strong 32 ✓ reason to hope that this death is a good. For death must be one of two things. Either it must be that the dead are nothing, and have no perception of anything: or according to the common tradition it must be a change and a migration of the soul from its place here to some other place. Now if there be no sensation—if death be like a sleep without even a dream—it must be an immense gain: for I suppose that if any one were to pick out a night in which he slept so soundly as not to have a single dream, and were to compare it with the other nights and days of his life, and say how many of his days and nights were better and sweeter than that night,—I think that any private person, and even the Great King himself, would find that the days and nights which were thus superior to that night were easily counted. If then death be *this*, I reckon it a gain: for the whole time which it occupies is as one night. But if death be a passage hence to another place,—if the ordinary traditions are true, that in that place are all who have ever died,—what greater good, O Judges,

can there be than this? If any one going to the Place of Departed Spirits, and leaving those who are here called Judges, will find there those who are really Judges, and who administer justice there; Minos and Rhadamanthus, and Æacus and Triptolemus, and the other demigods who were just in their lifetime,—is this a change to be lamented? What would any one of you give to join the society of Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? I would die many times, if this be true. I should rejoice beyond measure in the company of Palamedes and Ajax Telamon, and any other of the ancients who were put to death by unjust judgment. To compare what has befallen me with their lot would, I think, be very agreeable: and most of all, to spend my time in questioning and scrutinizing the persons there, as I have done persons here, which of them is wise, and which seems to be so, but is not. What would any one give, O Judges, to examine those who led that great army to Troy, Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or the other thousands of men and women, whom it would be an inexpressible pleasure to converse with, and to question? For there at least men are not put to death for *that*. As they are happier than we are in other things, so are they in this; that they are immortal, if what be said is true.

33 “You then, O my Judges, should nourish good hope on the subject of death, and remain firmly convinced of this one thing: that for a good man no event can be evil, whether he lives or dies, seeing that his concerns are never disregarded by the gods. Nor does what now happens to me happen without purpose on their part; for I am persuaded that it is better for me to die and to have done with the things of this world. And therefore it is that the sign never warned me nor

turned me from my course, and that I feel no anger either towards those who have condemned me or towards my accusers. Though certainly they did not condemn me with that intention, but thinking to harm me; and for this I may justly blame them.

“One thing more only will I request of you; when my sons grow up, do your worst to them in the way of tormenting them as I have tormented you: that is, if they seem to care for money or anything else more than for virtue, and if they pretend to be anything when they are nothing, reproach them, as I have reproached you, that they do not attend to that which alone deserves attention, and think themselves good for something when they are really good for nothing. If you do this, both I and my sons shall have had our deserts.

“And now it is time that we separate: I go to die, you remain to live: but which of us is going the better way, God only knows.” X

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### REMARKS ON THE APOLOGY.

SCHLEIERMACHER regards Plato's *Apology* as being in the main the Defence actually delivered by Socrates; and to this opinion both Dr Thirlwall and Mr Grote assent. That many of the points of this discourse agree with what was said by Socrates on his trial, we cannot doubt. But I have in various passages of the Translation noted that the discourse appears to have a wider range than this; and to be addressed, by Plato, to the whole philosophical world and to posterity, rather than by Socrates to his Judges.

I might have noted other passages which suggest the same opinion; for instance, § 30, where Plato appears to refer to his own labours in doing justice to his master.

This agrees with the opinion of an eminent critic of antiquity, Dionysius of Halicarnassus. He calls this discourse "an Encomium in the form of an Apology\*." Again he says, "It is an Apology, but it is also an Accusation of the Athenians for condemning Socrates to death†:" and he explains the force and bearing of its separate portions. In the following passage he speaks more decisively still ‡ :

"I will speak freely of Plato. Some make him the standard of philosophical writing for purity and strength. They say that if the gods speak in human language, the king of the gods must speak like Plato. Now in opposition to such extravagancies of half-cultured men I will speak plainly, without exaggeration or detraction, as my disposition is. The force and gravity of the man§ in his Dialogues, and especially in those in which he keeps the Socratic character, as the *Philebus*, I have always admired and praised; but his bad taste I never liked, nor his accumulative epithets, especially when he mixes in politics, praises and blames, writes accusations and defences. He is then unlike himself, and does discredit to the dignity of philosophy. It has often occurred to me to address to him the words which Zeus in Homer addresses to Aphrodite (when she has been wounded by Diomedes):

Not unto thee, my child, is the work of warfare assigned;  
Thine be it still to watch the progress of love and of beauty.

'Do you content yourself with Socratic Dialogues—political and judicial controversy shall be the care of politicians and orators.' And I appeal to all philosophers, rejecting party men, who judge by party and not by truth. To oppose his worst parts to the best of Demosthenes, as some have done, I shall decline; but to compare the best of each is fair. I might take that professed judicial speech, the *Apology of Socrates*, which certainly never saw the door of a court of justice, or an assembly of the *Agora*, being written with another purpose. It has no place either among the Orations or the Dialogues; nor is it a speech, unless you choose to call epistles speeches, and so we shall say nothing about it."

\* *Ars Rhet.* § 12, 'Ἐγκώμιον ἐν ἀπολογίας σχήματι.

† *Ib.* § 8.

‡ *De Eloq. Demost.* § 23.

§ δεινότης.

Ast objects to the *Apology* that it does not contain the ideal element of Plato; but what nobler ideal element can there be than the idea he has presented of a philosopher and a philosophical life?

Among the arguments urged by Ast against the genuineness of the Platonic *Apology* is this: "Xenophon's *Apology* appeared later than the pretended Platonic *Apology*: but therein Xenophon says that no one before him has sufficiently brought into view Socrates's indifference towards death. Now the Platonic *Apology* does speak of this feeling of Socrates. Therefore Xenophon knew nothing of the Platonic *Apology*; and it is the work of a later rhetorician."

But an examination of the two *Apologies* shews that this argument is of no force. The indifference towards death described by Xenophon is the feeling which arises from a prospect of the evils of old age. As to whether this was Socrates's real sentiment, and whether it was worthy of Socrates, Xenophon must be answerable: but this sentiment is not expressed in the Platonic *Apology*. The contempt of death when balanced against baseness and dishonour is the sentiment of the Platonic Socrates, and this does not anticipate Xenophon's report of the conversation with Hermogenes.

Ast urges also, that in the *Apology* the immortality of the soul is spoken of doubtfully; which, he says, is at variance with the *Phædo*: but there may well be a difference in the way in which the aspect which this doctrine presents to human reason is spoken of in the one case and in the other. In the *Phædo* Socrates is trying to remove the doubts of admiring disciples, and even to them does not speak confidently: in the *Apology* he appeals to opinions such as were naturally current among his Judges.

Diogenes Laertius tells us\* that the orator Lysias wrote a Defence for Socrates, and that when Socrates had read it, he said, "This is a beautiful discourse, Lysias, but not fitted for me," being indeed rather forensic than philosophical.

\* Lib. ii. c. v. § 40.



**CRITO.**

**WHAT IS TO BE DONE?**

***(PERI PRAKTEOU).***



THE second title of the *Crito*, ἡ *περὶ πρακτέου*, describes its purpose, if it be understood to mean, 'Concerning what is to be done in this particular case,' not 'Concerning what is to be done, as a general question.'

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CRITO.

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SEVERAL circumstances have been noticed in the preceding pages which tend to make us think that the Platonic *Apology* is rather a solemn appeal to the world and to posterity against the injustice done to Socrates, than a mere report of the Defence which he actually made on his trial. And yet there seems to be great reason to believe that many of the arguments urged in the *Apology* were among those which Socrates really used; and that the occurrences which the *Apology* supposes to happen during the delivery of the Defence did really happen. So far the *Apology* is the real Defence; as indeed it was the real tone of Socrates's discourse and demeanour on that as on other occasions, which gave the main interest to Plato's dramatic depiction of him.

No less does his demeanour after the trial attract our notice. *Xenophon's Apology* gives an account of it.

“When he had finished his Defence,” we read\*, “he went away with a radiant look and a steady step, such as suited the tone which he had taken. And when he perceived that those who accompanied him were weeping, ‘What is this?’ he said, ‘Do you weep now? Did you not know that from the time of my birth nature had condemned me

\* *Xen. Apol. Soc.* 27.

to death? And if I were now going, by death, to lose good things which are flowing in upon me, both I and my well-wishers might weep. But if I part with life when I have only evils to look forwards to, I think you ought all to rejoice as if a fortunate thing had happened to me.' One Apollodorus who was present, a great admirer of his, but in other respects a simple person, said, 'This, O Socrates, is the hardest thing to bear, that I see you put to death wrongfully.' And he, stroking the youth's head, replied, 'My dear Apollodorus, should you have liked better to see me put to death justly?' and smiled."

After these and other conversations equally serene he was taken to prison where he remained in the custody of "the Eleven;" the officers to whom the business of punishment was assigned, and whose indirect designation implied an inward awe of their office. At ordinary times the execution of the sentence would have followed close upon its delivery. But a particular circumstance intervened in this instance. There took place just then a festival, (the Delian festival,) at which a ship, on a sacred embassy, was sent from Athens to Delos; and during the time between its departure and its return, no one was to be put to death in Athens\*. This delayed the execution of Socrates for thirty days; and during that period, towards the end of it, is placed the occurrence of the Platonic Dialogue termed the *Crito*, which I proceed to give.

\* *Mem.* iv. viii. 2.

## CRITO.

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SOC. "Why are you come so soon, Crito? Is it not very early?"—CR. "It is."—SOC. "How early?"—CR. "Day is scarce breaking."—SOC. "I am surprised that the jailer allowed you to come in."—CR. "He is become accustomed to my visits, Socrates; and besides, he has received benefits from me."—SOC. "Are you just come or have you been here long?"—CR. "I have been here some time."—SOC. "How was it that you did not wake me, but sat in silence by my side?"—CR. "God forbid that I should do that! I should be very sorry to be waked when in such sorrowful case. But I have been admiring you, seeing how soundly you sleep. I purposely abstained from waking you, that what time you have before you, you may pass as lightly as may be. Often in the previous course of your life I have admired your happy temper, but never so much as now in your present calamity, to see how quietly and cheerfully you bear it."—SOC. "Why, Crito, it would be very unreasonable, at my age, to be vexed because one must die."—CR. "Others, Socrates, at your age, fall into the same misfortunes: but their age does not prevent their being angry with their lot."—SOC. "That is true. But why are you come so early?"—CR. "I bring you, Socrates, bad news; not bad to you, as it seems, but to me and your

friends bad and most distressing. As for me, I could have no heavier sorrow to bear.”—SOC. “What is this news? Is the ship arrived from Delos, on whose arrival I must die?”—CR. “It is not yet arrived: but it is probable that it will arrive to-day, from what some say who have arrived from the promontory of Sunium and who saw it thence. From their account it is plain it will be here to-day: and so, Socrates, you will have to end your life to-morrow.”

SOC. “Well, Crito, be the event for good. If the gods so appoint, so be it. But yet I do not think that it will come to-day.”—CR. “What makes you think otherwise?”—SOC. “I will tell you. I am to die the day after the ship arrives here.”—CR. “So they say who determine these matters.”—SOC. “Well then: I think that this will not happen to-day, but to-morrow. I form this opinion from a dream which I had during the past night, a little while ago: and indeed it would seem you did well not to wake me.”

CR. “What was your dream?”—SOC. “I thought that a woman came to me of a beautiful and graceful figure, clothed in white, and called me by name, and said, Socrates,

On the third day thou reachest the soil of Phthia the fertile.”

CR. “A strange dream, Socrates.”—SOC. “But 3 the meaning of it very plain, Crito.”—CR. “Too plain, as it appears. But, my good Socrates, even now be persuaded by me, and save yourself. For to me, if you die, there is an accumulation of calamities. Besides being deprived of you, a friend such as I shall never find again, I shall be thought of by many who know me and you, as having been able to save you, if I would have spent money for the purpose, and having omitted to do so. And

yet what worse opinion can a man suffer than this ; that he esteems his money as of more value than his friends. For the many will not believe that you would not escape from this place when we incited you to do it."

Soc. "But why, my good Crito, should we care so much for the opinion of the many? Reasonable people, whose opinions most deserve consideration, will suppose that things took place as they really did take place."

CR. "But you see, Socrates, that it is necessary also to take account of the opinion of the many. Your present position, if nothing else, shews that these many are able to inflict upon men no light evils, but the greatest of evils, if any one is calumniated to them."

Soc. "I wish, Crito, the many could inflict the greatest evils that they might also be able to confer the greatest good. That would be well. But they can do neither the one nor the other : for they cannot make a man either wise or unwise. They do whatever comes uppermost."

CR. "Be it so : but tell me this, Socrates, 4 Are you not careful for me and your other friends, that if you make your escape, we shall be attacked by informers as having been accessories to it ; and shall be compelled either to lose the whole of our property, or at least large sums, and shall incur other inconveniences? For if you are afraid of anything of this kind, dismiss it from your thoughts. It is fit that we, in order to serve you, should incur this danger, and greater than this. So be persuaded, and do as I bid you."

Soc. "I am careful about these matters, Crito, and many others."

CR. "Have no such fears. For the sum is

not great, for which certain persons will save you and convey you away from this place. And then as to the informers, do you not see how cheap they are? We should not need to spend much money on them. There is my fortune at your service, and that, I think, will suffice. And if you think that I ought not to spend all that I have, here are friends from other parts that will supply the money. Here is one who has brought a large sum here for this very purpose; Simmias, the Theban. And Cebes is ready to do the same, and many others. So, as I said, do not on such scruples, refuse to save yourself. And do not trouble yourself about what you said at the trial, that if you were elsewhere you would not know what to do with yourself. For in many other places, wherever you go, men will love you; and if you will go to Thessaly, I have friends there, who will make much of you, and keep you safe, so that nobody there shall do you harm.

- 5 "I will say more, Socrates. It does not seem to me a right thing in you to give yourself up to destruction, when you may be saved; and to take pains to bring upon yourself all that your enemies in their wish to destroy you would try and have tried to effect. And besides: you seem to me to desert your sons, whom you might bring up and educate, and whom you go away and leave, to fare as it may happen. And they will fare no better, in all probability, than orphans generally do. Either you ought not to have children, or you ought to take some trouble in bringing them up and educating them. You seem to me to act with great weakness and recklessness; and yet you, who have professed to make virtue your study throughout your life, are exactly the person most bound to act with vigour and thoughtfulness.

And the upshot of this is, that I am ashamed both for you, and for us your friends; but the whole conduct of your concerns should seem to be transacted in a cowardly way on our part; both your coming before the judges in the court, which ought never to have taken place; and the result of the trial being what it was; and at last this present absurd conclusion to the story, which will seem to have come to pass by a want of vigour on our part, who did not save you, nor make you save yourself; which we might and ought to have done if we were good for anything. So, Socrates, you have to take care lest not only calamity but disgrace also fall upon you and upon us. Consider, then, the right course; or rather there is now no time to consider; act as if you had considered. And there is only one right course; for in the approaching night everything must be executed. If we wait longer, escape will no longer be possible. By all means, then, Socrates, be persuaded, and do as I bid you."

Soc. "My dear Crito, your friendly zeal is 6 very valuable, if it be consistent with rectitude; but if not, the more earnest it is, the more dangerous. We must then consider whether this is a thing to be done, or not. For I have always been, and am, resolved to follow no principle except reason, making out as well as I can what reason dictates. The reasons which I have always followed during my whole life I cannot deviate from now, because of what has befallen me. These reasonings do not appear to me to be altered. The same which were powerful and impressive then, are so still. Unless I can find something better to go by at present, you may be assured that I shall not be persuaded by you, though the power of the many threaten us with more formidable



bugbears than those which now menace us; chains and death and loss of goods."

CR. "And how can we examine this subject most properly?"

SOC. "We must first consider what you say about opinions; whether it was well said on former occasions that we must attend to some opinions and not to others;—or whether it was well to say this before I was condemned to die; but that now it becomes plain that this was said for the sake of saying it, and was in fact, trifling and child's play. I wish to examine this, Crito, conjointly with you, whether my judgment of it be different now that I am in this situation; or whether it be the same;—whether we are to renounce this view, or to adhere to it."

"It was, I think, often said on other occasions, by those who undertook to speak seriously, as I have now said;—that of the opinions which men form, some are deserving of respect, and some are not. Now pray, Crito, was this well said? You, according to all human appearance, are in no danger of dying to-morrow, and therefore the impending calamity need not disturb your judgment. Use your judgment then. Does it not seem to you to be a proper saying that we are not to respect *all* opinions of men, but to respect some and not to respect others; and not to respect the opinions *of* all, but to respect those of some, and not those of others. How say you? Was not this well said?"—CR. "It was well said."

SOC. "That we must respect good opinions, and not respect bad ones?"—CR. "Yes."

SOC. "And good opinions are the opinions of the wise; bad opinions those of the unwise?"—CR. "Of course."

7 SOC. "But come; how was this followed

out? A man who is practising gymnastic, does he attend to the opinion—the praise or blame—of any one, or only of a particular person, the master of gymnastic or the doctor of medicine?”—CR. “Of him alone.”

After the examples which we have had already of the *Induction* of Socrates, the reader will easily anticipate the manner in which this is applied. In the case of the discipline of the body, our exercises and our diet are to be directed according to the opinion, not of the many, but of the Master alone who knows what is best. And if we transgress his directions, the punishment which falls upon us is the ruin or evil condition of the body. And if we thus ruin the body,—that part of us 8 which is made better by health and worse by disease,—life is no longer life. And in like manner in judging of right and wrong, good and bad, honourable and dishonourable, we must direct ourselves, not by the opinion of the many, but by that of the true Judge of such matters. And if we do not follow his direction we shall injure that part of us which is made better by doing right and worse by doing wrong: and this is the soul; that part of us which is more essential to true life than the body is, and far more valuable.

“And thus we must not consider what the many will say of us, but that one Judge of right and wrong and Truth herself. And thus, Crito, you were mistaken in referring me to the opinion of the many about these points of right and good and honourable.

“But some one may say, These, the many, have it in their power to put us to death. True, my friend, but still we come back to the same point, to which we have often come before. Do we still hold to our principle that the main point is, not

to live, but to live well?"—CR. "We hold to that."

Soc. "And to live well is to live rightly and honourably: does that stand?"—CR. "That stands."

9 Soc. "And must we not then, in accordance with what we have said, consider whether it is right that I should depart hence, without the leave of the Athenians, or not right? And if it appear that it is right, let us attempt it, but if not, let us leave it alone. But as for the considerations about loss of money, and opinion, and the bringing up of our children, see whether these are not rather considerations for those *many*, who would lightly put us to death, and then as lightly, if they could, bring us to life again, with no real grounds for either: see whether for us, according to the principles of reason, the only thing to be inquired be not that which we were just now speaking of; whether we shall do what is right in giving money and incurring an obligation to those who are to take me hence, and in ourselves taking our share in the act, or whether in truth we shall do wrong by joining in such act; and if it appear that we shall do wrong, we ought not to reason about it any more, whether we are to die if we stay here and do nothing, or to suffer any other evil, rather than do wrong."

CR. "You appear to me to say well, Socrates. Consider then what we are to do."

Soc. "Let us consider the matter together, my good friend: and if you have anything to object to what I say, make your objections and I will attend to them: but if not, pray make an end, my excellent Crito, of saying the same thing over and over again to me,—that I must escape hence in spite of the Athenians. For I shall be glad if you can persuade me, but I cannot do it without that.

So consider what principles we are to proceed upon, and answer my questions as you think best."

—CR. "I will try."

Soc. "Do we agree that we are in no case to do wrong to any one willingly? [Or] may we do wrong in some ways and not in others? Or is to do wrong to any never good and honourable, as we have often agreed upon former occasions, and as we have just been saying? Or are all those former agreements of ours within these few days vanished away? Is it true, Crito, that then, at our age, talking together with the utmost seriousness, we were after all no better than boys? Or is what we said then still indisputably true, whether the many agree to it or not? Do we still hold it true, that whether we are to suffer worse evils than we have suffered or not, still to do wrong is an evil and a disgrace to the wrong-doer."

CR. "We so hold."

Soc. "Then we are never to do wrong to any?"—CR. "No, certainly."

Soc. "We are not to render wrong for wrong, as the many think: for we are never to do wrong."

—CR. "So it seems."

Soc. "And how then? May we do evil to any one?"—CR. "We may not, Socrates."

Soc. "To render evil for evil, is it right, as the many think, or not?"—CR. "By no means."

Soc. "For to do evil to any is the same as to do wrong."—CR. "True."

Soc. "We must not then do wrong or do evil to any man, whatever we suffer from men. And take care, Crito, that while you confess this, you do not make a confession contrary to your real opinion. For I know that few do think this and few will think it. And those who think this, and those who think differently, cannot take com-

mon counsel; each party must despise the other, looking at their sentiments. Do you then consider well whether you assent in this, and agree in my opinion; whether we may take that as a principle to start from, that to do wrong and to return wrong to any one is never allowable, nor to protect one's self from wrong by doing wrong; or whether you break off from me here, and do not accept my principle. For this was what I long ago held, and is what I still hold. But if you are of a different opinion, say so and deliver it. But if you adhere to this our old principle, listen to what follows."—CR. "I adhere to it and agree with you."

SOC. "I go on then, or rather, I ask: Whether what one has promised to another is to be done or not to be done?—CR. "It is to be done."

11 SOC. "That being agreed, look at this. If we escape from hence contrary to the will of the State, do we wrong those to whom we ought least of all to wrong, or do we not? Do we keep our just promises or not?"

Crito perceiving that Socrates is merely preparing for the further development of his argument, replies: "I cannot answer you, Socrates, for I do not fully understand you."

SOC. "Consider the matter thus: If when we are on the point of running away, or whatever you call it, the Laws, the State herself, were to meet us, and were to stop us and address us thus: 'Tell me, Socrates, what do you think to do? Are you not, by the act which you are now attempting, doing all you can to destroy the Laws, and the very State itself? Does not that seem to you to be no longer a State, to be already dissolved, in which sentences of law solemnly pronounced are of no force? in which such sentences are set aside

and made invalid by private persons? What shall we say, Crito, to this and the like appeals? A person of any rhetorical skill would have much to say about this abolition of the Law which commands that sentences once pronounced should be valid. Shall we say that the State has done us wrong, and that the sentence was not a righteous sentence? Shall we say this, or what?"—CR. "Nay, we may say that."

Soc. "And what if the Laws say this: 'O 12 Socrates, was this the thing agreed upon between you and us? or was it that you should stand by the legal judgments which the State should pronounce?' And if we appeared surprised at this address of theirs, perhaps they would say, 'Socrates, do not wonder at what we say, but answer our questions, since you are so fond of question and answer. ✓ What complaint have you to make against us and the State, that you endeavour to destroy us? In the first place, were not we the authors of your being? It was through us that your father married your mother and gave birth to you. Say then: do you complain of those of us Laws which refer to marriage? do you think they are bad?' I should say, I complain not. 'Well: but those Laws which refer to the nurture and education of children, according to which you were brought up and educated? Did not the Laws upon that subject direct well, when they enjoined your father to have you taught music and gymnastic?' They did well, I should say. 'Good: and when you had been born, and brought up and educated, can you pretend to say that you were not our offspring, our servant, you and your forefathers? And if this be so, do you think that you stand upon an equal footing with us as to rights, and that what we attempt to do to you, you may

attempt to retaliate upon us? Do you not reflect, that even towards your father you had not equal rights, nor towards your master, if you happened to have one, so that to them you might return evil for evil, or railing for railing, or blows for blows; and is then such a course of proceeding allowable towards your Country and us the Laws; so that if we try to destroy you, deeming it just to do so, you also may endeavour to the utmost of your power to destroy us in return, and say that you are doing right in doing this;—you who really make virtue your study? Does not your wisdom reach so far as this:—to let you know that more precious than father and mother and all your ancestors together is your Country, and more august and more holy and of more account in the eyes of the gods and of all reasonable men? And that if your Country is angry with you, you ought to reverence it and yield to it and soothe it far more than you would your father; and either alter its resolution, or do what it commands, and suffer what it inflicts, taking quietly both blows and bonds; and if it sends you to war to suffer wounds or death, you are to obey, right being so; you are not to back out nor give way nor quit the ranks; in war and in prison and everywhere you are to do what the State and the Country commands; or else you must convince them where the right is; it is not allowable to use violence to one's father or one's mother, and still less to one's Country.' What shall we say to this, Crito? That the Laws speak the truth or not?"

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✓CR. "It appears to me that they do."  
 ✓SOC. "Consider then, Socrates,' the Laws would perhaps say, 'if what we say is true, that you are not treating us rightly in what you now do. We having given you birth, nurture, educa-

tion ; having imparted all the good we had to you and to the other citizens ; nevertheless announce to every Athenian that when he has seen and examined the condition of the city, and us the Laws, if he does not like us, he may take what is his, and go whithersoever he will. No one of us, the Laws, will stand in his way, or forbid him. If he chooses to go into a colony, not liking us and this city, or if he chooses to go into another country, he may go, keeping what belongs to him. But whoever of you stays here, seeing the way in which we pronounce sentence in judicial proceedings, and direct the business of the city in general, we say that he has *ipso facto* promised to us that he will do whatever we command. And if a person does not submit to our orders, we say that he commits a threefold wrong ; refusing obedience to us who brought him into being, who nurtured him to manhood, and to whom he promised obedience. And yet we do not deal imperiously with him, but propose to him the alternative, either to do what we order, or to change our resolution ; and he does neither.

“ And this is the blame that falls upon you, 14 Socrates, if you execute what you are meditating ; and upon you more especially than upon any other of the Athenians.’ And if I were to ask, Why? they would perhaps say, and justly, that I have made this promise more expressly than any other of the Athenians ; for, they would say, ‘ Here, Socrates, is strong evidence, that we, and the city, are approved by you. You live in the city more constantly than any other citizen. You never went out of the city to see sights, except once to the Isthmian games, nor on any other journey except with the army. You never went on a voyage as is the custom of other men ; never were



seized with a desire of seeing other cities and other laws. We the Laws of our country, and our city, sufficed you. So completely were you satisfied with us, and undertook to be governed by our government. And further: you became the father of children in this city, as a further evidence that you were satisfied with it. And further, in the trial itself, you might have proposed exile as your punishment, and thus have done with the permission of the State what you are now doing against its orders. But at that time you made fine speeches, professing that you had no fear of death. You chose, as you said, death rather than exile. And have you no shame now looking at those professions, and no care for us the Laws, that you try to destroy us? You act as the most worthless slave would act, attempting to make your escape in violation of promises and covenants by which you agreed to be governed. First then answer: do we say truly, that you engaged to be governed by us in fact, not in profession merely? Is it not true?

“What could we say to this, Crito, except confess that it is true?”

CR. “We must do so, Socrates.”

SOC. “Then they would say, ‘Are you doing anything else than violating your covenants and promises to us—promises which you had made under no compulsion, under no deceit; and not hurried for your decision, but having seventy years to make it in, during which time you might have gone elsewhere if you were dissatisfied with us, and thought the agreement unreasonable? But you did not prefer Lacedæmon or Crete, which you have often spoken of as well-governed states, nor any other city, Greek or barbarian. No: you left the city less than even the lame, and the blind,

and the maimed leave it. So great, plainly, was your contentment, beyond that of other Athenians, in this city and in us the Laws. And now do you not stand to your promises? Stand by them, Socrates, I advise you, and do not make yourself ridiculous by running away from the city.

“For consider, if you do this wrong act, and 15 violate your engagements, what good you will do to yourself or your friends. It is tolerably clear that these friends of yours will have themselves to fly their country, to lose their home and their property. And you yourself, in the first place, if you go to any of the nearest cities, Thebes or Megara (for both are well governed) you will go thither as an enemy to this government, and all who care for the good order of those cities will look upon you with suspicion, regarding you as a destroyer of the Laws. And so you will justify the sentence of your judges, and they will be deemed to have condemned you rightly. For he who unsettles the Laws may well be deemed a corrupter of young and thoughtless persons. Will you then avoid well-governed cities and men who are friends of order? and if you do this, is it worth your while to live? and if you consort with them will you have the face, Socrates, to go on with the discourses which you have been in the habit of holding here; that Virtue and Righteousness are the most precious of things, and lawful dealings and Laws? Do you not think that the course of action of Socrates will be judged bad and disgraceful? You must think so. ↙

“Or will you pass by these cities and go to Thessaly to the friends of Crito? for there, there is abundance of disorder and license. There perhaps they will be delighted to hear how cleverly you

made your escape from prison, assuming some disguise; clothing yourself in an animal's skin, or practising some other trick of fugitive prisoners. And will nobody ask you how you, an old man, who have but a little of life left, came to be so greedy of life, as to violate the most sacred Laws? Nobody perhaps, unless you offend some one. But if you do, Socrates, you will hear much that you will not like to hear. You will have to live looked down upon by all, cringing to all.

““ And what will you employ yourself about? Will you make feasting your business in Thessaly, as if you had gone to Thessaly to dine? And what will become of your discourse about righteousness and temperance and all the virtues?

““ But perhaps you wish to live on account of your boys, that you may bring them up and teach them. How? Will you take them to Thessaly and bring them up and teach them there, making them cease to be Athenians, that they may have this last benefit at your hands? Or will you avoid this, and shall they be brought up here while you live elsewhere, and will their education go on the better that you are absent? But your friends will take care of your children.—What? will they take care of them if you go to Thessaly, and will they not take care of them if you go into the other world? Certainly they will, if their proposed friendship is of any value.

- 16 ““ No, Socrates, obey the voice of Us who nurtured you; and do not think that your children, or your life, or anything else, is of more value than doing right: do this, that when you come into the other world, you may make this defence of yourself to the Judges there. For if you do what is proposed, it will do you no good either here or there. Now you depart out of life, if you depart, unjustly

treated, not by Us the Laws, but by men. But if you depart having returned wrong for wrong, having broken your promises and covenants, having done evil to them whom you ought most to reverence, yourself and your friends and your country and Us; *We* shall look with anger upon you here; and our *Brothers*, the Laws of the other world, will receive you with condemnation; knowing that so far as was in your power, you tried to destroy Us. Let not Crito then persuade you to do what he purposes, but rather follow our advice.'

"This, my dear friend Crito, is what I seem to hear, as those who are under the inspiration of the goddess Ceres think they hear the sacred flutes. The strain of this expostulation sounds in my ears, so that I cannot hear anything else. And so, if you say anything contrary to this strain, you speak to me in vain. Still if you think you have anything more to say, say on."

CR. "No, Socrates; I have no more to say."

SOC. "Then so be it, Crito: and let us act in the way in which the Gods thus seem to direct us."

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## REMARKS ON THE CRITO.

LOOKING at the general character of this Dialogue, the most natural view of it seems to be that it was a literary work founded upon a real incident, and dramatized by Plato as a part of the monument which he had made it his business to erect to the memory of his master. And this was, I conceive, the opinion entertained by ancient critics. That there was a basis of fact for it, is implied in the *Phædo*, and elsewhere; but Diogenes tells us that the person who really held such a conversation with Socrates while in prison was not Crito, but Æschines; and that Plato changed the name because he did not regard Æschines as a

genuine disciple of Socrates \*. Is there any other view of the Dialogue more probable than this ?

Schleiermacher holds the *Crito*, as he holds the *Apology*, to be a mere report of what Socrates actually said ; and Ast conceives it to be quite unworthy of Plato. The grounds of these two judgments are nearly the same ; the want of that speculative or ideal element which must, these critics conceive, be found in every work of Plato. Ast expresses this somewhat grandiloquently : "The *Crito* is not genuine on this ground. It is the peculiarity of Plato, which we may lay down as a universal principle, that he connects the Ideal with the Factual, and uses the Historical only as external material and groundwork, wherewith to erect his Uranian Temple of the Muses." And so, too, Schleiermacher says, "Could Plato have had a more important occasion to speak of Right, Law, Contract, on which his thoughts were always turning?" Certainly not ; but has he not spoken of these matters in the most striking practical application which they admit of—the choice between Right Action, Obedience to the Law, fidelity to the Social Contract, on the one hand, and Life on the other ? Is there no element of ideal dignity in this fact ? no worthy temple to the Muses, or rather to the Gods, planned and realized in this history ?

But is there here no worthy offering to the Muses also ? "No," says Schleiermacher. "It is probably a mere report of an actual conversation of Socrates which Plato received from the person with whom it was held." No doubt the Greeks were a poetical race ; but a conversation like this, in which the Laws of the Country are introduced as speaking with all the dignity of the Chorus of a Tragedy, must have been beyond the pitch of ordinary conversations, even among them. The *Crito* is, as I conceive, well worthy to be regarded as a part of the Platonic monument to the good fame of Socrates.

I may add, that probably the publication of the *Crito* was thought to be necessary for the defence of Socrates's friends, to shew that they had not neglected any obvious means of saving his life.

\* Diog. Laert. II. vii. 60.

**THE PHÆDO.**  
**OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.**  
*(PERI PSUCHES.)*

The Immortality of the Soul as rendered probable by natural reason is the subject of the Phædo: and the Dialogue is often, among the ancients, referred to by its second title, *περὶ ψυχῆς*.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PHÆDO.

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WE come at last to the closing hours of Socrates's life as presented to us by Plato; and in this scene of the great Socratic drama which Plato wrote, we have, what in such a drama the last scene would naturally be, the point to which all the previous scenes converged;—the result of the various trains of thought which had been followed to a less or greater extent in other Dialogues;—the application of the doctrines previously established;—the practical effect of the Platonic theories, in the manner in which Socrates met death and spoke of prospects beyond it. The action of this drama is as elevated as can be conceived;—the triumph of philosophy over the fear of death; and this triumph is to be exhibited, not as in an ordinary tragedy, by expressing the feelings and emotions which work in the philosopher's own breast under such circumstances, but by bringing out the *reasonings* which have elevated his mind above fear, and presenting them in such a way that they may govern the conviction of the hearer as well as the speaker;—not only to exhibit a triumphant philosopher, but to teach a triumphant philosophy.

The dramatic beauties of the work, therefore, are to be regarded in connection with its philosophical doctrines, in order to see its full purport:



and these doctrines, notwithstanding all the preparation which the previous Dialogues have supplied, it must be difficult to present in such a way as to convey to a modern reader the conviction which they might give to a disciple of Plato. This, however, I must attempt. Fortunately for the reader, the dramatic beauties are so frequent and so striking that the inevitable abstruseness of the philosophical disquisitions is greatly lightened.

## THE PHÆDO.

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THE scene is at Phlius in Argolis. Echestratus, an inhabitant of that place, thus addresses Phædo, a disciple of Socrates.

ECH. "Pray, Phædo, were you yourself with Socrates on the day when he drank the poison in his prison, or did you hear the story from some other person?"

PH. "I was there myself, Echestratus."

ECH. "And what did that great man say in his last moments, and what was the manner of his death? I would gladly hear this; for we have not now any of our Phliasians who is in the habit of going to Athens: and for a long time no Athenian has come to us who could give us any distinct account of what took place. We only know that he drank the poison and died; but no one could tell us anything more."

PH. "Have you not heard then about the trial and what passed on that occasion?"

ECH. "Yes, there was some one who told us of that; and we were surprised that the sentence was not executed till some considerable time after it was passed. What was the meaning of that, Phædo?"

PH. "A particular incident, Echestratus. It so happened that the day before the sentence was delivered, the ship which the Athenians send on a religious mission to Delos, completed its preparation for sailing by having the garlands hung to its stern."

ECH. "What kind of observance is that?"

PH. "This is the very ship, as the Athenians say, in which Theseus, in former times, went to Crete, taking thither the seven youths and seven maidens whom the Athenians were bound to send every ninth year to be devoured by the Minotaur; on which occasion he saved his own life and rescued his companions. They had made a vow, as the story is, that if they escaped destruction, they would every year make a solemn procession to Delos; and this rite has been observed regularly every year from that time to this. And as soon as this procession begins, the rule is that the city must be kept pure from blood during the whole continuance of it; and that no one must be put to death by public execution till the vessel has been to Delos and has returned. This is sometimes a long interval when the ship is detained by contrary winds. The beginning of the sacred period is when the priest of Apollo hangs a garland on the stern of the ship. And this had happened, as I was saying, the day previous to the sentence. And thus it was that Socrates was so long a time in prison between the sentence and its execution."

4 ECH. "And what of that execution, Phædo? What was done, and what was said? and who of his friends were present? Or did the magistrates not allow him to have friends with him, and had he to meet his fate alone?"

PH. "By no means. He had friends with him. Indeed, a considerable number of them."

ECH. "Pray take the trouble to tell me all about this as particularly as you can, unless you have some engagement which prevents you."

PH. "I am quite at leisure, and I will try to tell you the whole tale; for I have no greater pleasure than to have my mind occupied with the

recollection of Socrates, either by speaking of him myself or by hearing others speak of him."

ECH. "Your hearers, Phædo, have the same 5 feelings. Well: tell the story as particularly as you can."

PH. "I experienced peculiar emotions on that occasion. I did not feel compassion, as one might have expected I should on being present at the death of a dear friend. I assure you, Echestratus, he appeared to me happy, both from his behaviour and from his discourse, with so much calmness and magnanimity did he meet death. I felt persuaded that he quitted this life under divine protection; and that in another world, he must be happy if any one ever was. On this account I had no painful feeling of pity as might seem natural to a person present at such a catastrophe; nor did I feel pleasure, as on ordinary occasions when we were talking philosophy; though the discourse was of the same kind. It was a peculiar feeling which possessed me: a strange mixture of pleasure and grief, when I thought that he would soon cease to be. And we were all in this same mood; sometimes laughing; sometimes weeping; especially Apollodorus: he wept violently. You know the man and his way."

ECH. "Of course I do."

PH. "Well: he was entirely possessed by 6 such emotions, and I myself was much troubled in spirit, as were also the others."

ECH. "And pray, Phædo, who were present?"

PH. "Of our fellow-citizens there were Apollodorus, of whom I have just spoken: and Critobulus, and Crito his father; and besides, Hermogenes, and Epigenes, and Æschines, and Antisthenes. There were also Ctesippus of the

district of Paianis, and Menexenus, and some other Athenians. Plato, I believe, was ill."

ECH. "And were any strangers present?"

PH. "Yes; Simmias the Theban, and Cebes, and Phædonidas, and from Megara Euclides and Terpsion."

7 ECH. "Tell me: Were Aristippus and Cleombrotus there?"

PH. "No, they were not. They were said to be in Ægina."

ECH. "Was any other present?"

PH. "I think I have mentioned those who were there."

The persons here mentioned were all disciples of Socrates, of whom we have accounts from Plato himself or from other writers. It is interesting to see his solicitude to explain his own absence. We naturally find, in the company, Crito, who the day before had offered to Socrates the means of escape. The conversation is mainly held with Simmias and Cebes, the Theban disciples.

Echestratus then asks:

"Well: and what was the discourse which took place?"

PH. "I will try to tell you all from the beginning. We had made a habit of going to Socrates daily for some time, I and others; assembling very early in the morning, in the hall in which the trial had been held, for it was near to  
8 the prison. There we waited till the doors of the prison were opened, conversing with one another; for they were not opened very early. As soon as we were admitted, we went in to Socrates, and spent the greater part of the day with him. On this day we had met earlier than usual; for the evening before, as we went out of the prison, we had heard that the vessel was arrived from Delos;

so we agreed with each other to come very early to the accustomed place. The jailer who usually admitted us, came out to us, and told us we must wait, and not enter until he directed us; 'For,' said he, 'the Eleven—that is, the Executioners of the Law,—are taking off Socrates's chains, and announcing to him that he must die to-day.' And after a little while, he came and told us to go in.

"When we entered, we found Socrates just <sup>9</sup> freed from his fetters, and Xanthippe his wife—you know her—close to him, holding one of his children in her arms. As soon as she saw us, she began to wail and lament, as women are wont to do: 'O Socrates, here are your friends, come to look on you for the last time, and you on them!' And Socrates, looking at Crito, said, 'Crito, let somebody take her home;' so some of Crito's servants took her away, crying aloud and beating her breast. And Socrates, sitting on the side of the bed, bent his leg and rubbed it with his hand; and in doing so, said: 'How strange a thing is that, my friends, which is called pleasure; and how oddly is it connected with its supposed opposite, pain. Pleasure and pain do not come to man together, but if a person runs after the one and catches it, he almost inevitably catches the other too, as if they were fastened together at one end. I think if *Æsop* had noticed this, he would have <sup>10</sup> composed a fable to this effect: that the gods tried to reconcile these two opposites, and not being able to do this, fastened their extremities together; so that when you take hold of one, it pulls after it the other. And so it happens to me now; there was pain in my leg when the chain bound it, and now comes pleasure following the pain.'

"Cebes upon this said, 'I am glad, Socrates, that you have reminded me of what I intended to

ask you; about the poems which you have versified, and the hymn to Apollo which you have written: some persons, and especially Euenus, lately, have asked me what the intention was with which you set about such employments, when you were put in this place; having never done anything of the kind before. So if you wish me to be able to answer Euenus, when he asks me the same question again—as I well know he will—tell me what I must say.'

“‘By all means, Cebes, tell him—what is the truth—that I did not do this in any hope of rivaling him and his poems. I know how difficult that would be. I did it, trying to spell out the meaning of some dreams which I had: I wanted to satisfy my conscience as to them; dreams which have often occurred at previous periods of my life, in different forms, but always conveying the same injunction: “Socrates, cultivate the Muses.” Hitherto, I had thought that this was merely an encouragement to me to go on doing what I was doing, as men cheer racers with their shouts. I thought that the dream encouraged me to go on pursuing philosophy, that being the highest province of the Muses; and *that* I was doing. But since the sentence was given, and the festival of the God deferred the time of my death, I thought that if the dream really meant that I was to cultivate the Muses in the popular sense, I must obey it; and so that it was safer, before my end came, to clear my conscience by making verses. So I first wrote a hymn to Apollo, whose festival was the occasion of the delay. And then, recollecting that a poet, to be really a poet, ought to write on a basis of fiction, and I myself not being a dealer in fiction, I took Æsop’s fables, the first that occurred to me, and turned them into verse.

“‘This, Cebes, is what you may tell to Euenus; 13 and give him my best wishes; and tell him, that if he is wise, he will follow me. For it seems I must depart to-day. So the Athenians command.’

“‘On this Simmias exclaimed, ‘Is not that a strange message, Socrates, which you send to Euenus? I have often met the man; and from the judgment which I formed of him, he is not at all likely to take your advice willingly.’

“‘But how so?’ said he, ‘Is not Euenus a philosopher?’

“‘I conceive that he is,’ said Simmias.

“‘Then,’ said he, ‘Euenus, and any one else who is truly a philosopher, will be ready to do what I say. Yet not that he should do violence to himself: that, they say, is not lawful.’

“‘And saying this, he set down his legs from the bed, and placed his feet on the ground, and so sat during the rest of the discourse.

“‘Then Cebes asked him, ‘How is this that you say, Socrates: that it is not lawful to do violence to one’s self; and yet that a philosopher should be willing to follow him who goes the road of death?’

“‘What,’ said Socrates, ‘have you not heard such opinions, you and Cebes, who have kept company with Philolaus?’

“‘Not anything clearly delivered, Socrates.’

“‘Why, indeed, I myself only speak of such doctrines from hearsay. But what I have heard, I am quite willing to tell you. And, indeed, perhaps there can be no better employment for a person who is about to depart hence, than to consider and speculate about this departure, what it really amounts to. What better can we do, in the interval between this time and sunset?’

“‘On what grounds, then, Socrates, do men



say that it is not lawful for any one to kill himself? For it is true, as you asked just now, that I have heard it said by Philolaus, when he was living with us, and by others, that it is not lawful to do so. But I never heard any clear reason given.'

15. "Do not lose heart," said he, 'perhaps you may yet hear a reason. But perhaps you think it strange that in this case alone, the rule is not universal; that we say that it is for some persons better to die, and for some better to live; and you may wonder that those for whom it is better to die are not allowed to do themselves this good office, but must wait till it comes from some other hand.'

"On this Cebes, quietly smiling, said, 'God he knows,' in his Theban way.

"In truth," said Socrates, 'it may appear strange; and yet perhaps there is some reason in it. I will not rely upon what is said when men are initiated in the Orphic Mysteries; that we are like sentinels on a post, and that a man must not, unauthorized, desert or give up his post. This is a deep and obscure saying. But this, Cebes, appears to me to be well said: that the Gods are our masters and men their servants. Do you not think it is so?' 'Certainly,' said Cebes. 'And if any one of your servants, your property, should kill himself without any authority from you, would you not be angry with him, and punish him if you could punish him?' 'Certainly,' said he.

"Well, perhaps there is the like reason why no man should put himself to death, till God imposes some necessity of dying, as he now does upon me.'

"That," said Cebes, 'does not appear unlikely. But what you said just now, that philosophers

would be the most willing to die, seems strange, if what we have been now saying is true, that God takes care of men, and that we are his servants and property; for it is very reasonable that the wisest men should be sorry to go out of this providential custody, in which the Gods, the best guardians, take care of them. No such one can think that he can take better care of himself, when he is left alone without such guardianship. A foolish man might perhaps think that it was a good thing to escape from a master. It might not occur to him that it is wise to stay with a good master, and most unwise to run away from him. A sensible man would desire by all means to be under the guardianship of one wiser than himself. And thus you see, Socrates, that the result would be the opposite of what you were saying. The wise would be sorry to die, the foolish would be glad.'

"At hearing this, Socrates appeared to me to 18 be pleased with the acuteness of Cebes, and looking at us, he said: 'Cebes always finds something original to say, and is not easily led to follow other people.'

"And Simmias hereupon replied: 'But really, Socrates, I too think there is a great deal in what Cebes says. For on what grounds should wise men run away from masters really wiser than themselves, or be glad to leave them? And Cebes seems to me to point at you; that you are so ready to leave both us your friends, and the Gods, who are, as you confess, good masters.'

"'You speak very reasonably,' said he: 'I suppose you wish that I should make my defence against your accusations here, as I made my defence in the Court.' 'Exactly so,' said Simmias.

"'Well,' said he, 'I will try to plead more 19 persuasively to you than I did to my judges.'

“‘If, O Simmias and Cebes, I did not expect that I should go to the realms of wise and good Gods, and to the company of men better than those who are here, I should be wrong not to grieve at death. But be well assured, that I do expect this;—that I shall be among good men, though this I do not feel so confident about: but that I shall go to Gods who are good governors,—be assured that if there be anything of this kind about which I am confident, I am confident of this. And hence it is, that I do not feel sorrow, but am full of hope, that those who have left this life are still in being, and the good in a better condition than the bad.’

“‘But, Socrates,’ said Simmias, ‘do you intend to leave life with this conviction in your own mind only, or will you also impart it to us? For it would be a valuable possession to us, as well as to you. And if you convey to us this conviction, you have made a successful defence.’ ✓

“‘Well, I will try,’ said he. ‘But first let us hear what it is that Crito has long been wishing to say; for I see there is something.’

“‘It is only,’ said Crito, ‘that the person who is to give you the poison has been saying to me more than once, that you ought to speak and converse as little as possible. He says that in conversing, people grow warm, and that this interferes with the effect of the poison: so that in such cases, he has to give them two or even three successive doses.’

“‘Let him take his course,’ said he; ‘let him prepare his potion as if he had to administer it twice, or even thrice.’

21 “‘I knew,’ said Crito, ‘what you would say: but he has been importuning me for some time.’  
‘Leave him alone,’ said he.

“‘But now to you, my Judges, I wish to

render my reasons, why a man who has really employed his life about philosophy, may be of good cheer when he is at the point of death, and may be of good hope that after death he will be happy. And my reasons, O Simmias and Cebes, are these. It is not generally recollected, as it ought to be, that those who really apply themselves to philosophy, are really studying only how to die, and how to be ready for the state after death. But if this is really so, it is a most absurd proceeding that men who have been all their lives studying this thing, when the thing comes which they looked for and studied for, should be startled and grieved.'

"On this Simmias, with a laugh, said, 'In 22 truth, Socrates, you have made me laugh when I had little disposition to laugh. I think that the greater part of persons would agree in your result: and especially my countrymen the Thebans. With their dislike to philosophers, they would say that the philosophers are right in seeking death, and have made the discovery that they are worthy to die.'

"And they would say truly, Simmias, except that they have not discovered, either in what way true philosophers seek death, or in what way they are worthy to die, or by what kind of death. But let us leave these persons to themselves, and discuss this matter without reference to them.'

"Now death is something, is it not?' 'Certainly,' replied Cebes.

"Is it anything else than the separation of 23 the soul from the body? Is not *this* death: that the body is separated from the soul, and is left to itself; and that the soul is freed from the body and is separate and by itself? Is death anything but this?' 'No, it is this,' said he.

“ ‘ Now do you further agree with me in this?— I think it will help us in our inquiry.— Do you think that a philosopher ought to care greatly for what are called pleasures, the pleasure, for instance, of eating and drinking, and the other pleasures of the body? ’— ‘ By no means, ’ said Simmias.

“ ‘ Or will he care for luxuries, dress and ornaments, except so far as necessity requires? Will he not rather despise them? ’ ‘ The true philosopher, ’ said Simmias, ‘ will, I conceive, despise them. ’ ”

A person who makes such concessions as Simmias here makes, and agrees so fully in the doctrines laid down by his teacher, even when they are such as most persons would deem overstrained and extravagant, plays a very subordinate part in the Dialogue: and when this is the case, the meaning comes out more simply and clearly, according to our notions, when delivered directly without interruption. The reader must suppose Simmias to give his assent at due intervals, while Socrates proceeds to this effect:

“ The true philosopher does not care for the things of the body: as far as he can he abstracts his attention from it, and turns to his soul. He, more than other men, removes the soul from the influence of the body. This he does, although the greater part of men value nothing but the pleasures of the body, and think life not worth having without them. And reasonably; for in the acquirement of knowledge, the body is a hinderance rather than a help. The sight and the hearing cannot discover to us truth; as the poets are wont  
 26 to tell us, ‘ The world of eye and ear, delusions all. ’  
 And if these senses are not to be trusted, still less are others. When, then, does the soul apprehend truth, since the body cannot serve it in such

a task? Is it not by reasoning, if at all, that real truth is made manifest? And does not the mind reason best, when it is not drawn aside by the ear or the eye, by pleasure or pain; when it acts for itself and, abstracted from bodily agencies, aims at absolute Truth? Then it is, that the mind of the philosopher feels itself superior to and independent of the body."

This strain of speculation has a natural charm and persuasiveness for thoughtful persons, familiar with examples of abstract truths, such as the truths of Geometry. The kind of truth next referred to, Moral Truth, perhaps has not the same distinctness; but Plato always assumes that it has, or ought to have, the same reality. Socrates goes on:

"Is there such a thing as Rightness or Justice? 27  
Is there such a thing as Honour or Goodness?  
Yet who has ever seen these things with his eyes,  
or apprehended them by any other bodily sense?  
And the same may be said of innumerable other  
things. Magnitude, Strength, Health, and all abstract  
things. Do we see their true nature by  
means of our bodily senses? No: we must conceive  
these things in their abstract form, as the  
true way of understanding them.

"He who, by the aid of thought alone, freed 28  
from the disturbing influences of eyes and ears,  
and the like, can get hold of these conceptions, he  
obtains real Truth. And thus, true philosophers  
will be led to say to one another: We must pursue  
our inquiries and follow our Reason along a bye  
path, different from the highway which mankind  
in general travel. So long as we are entangled  
and oppressed by the body, we shall never arrive  
at the point which we aim at; namely, at Truth.  
The body is a constant impediment to us. The necessity  
of providing for its wants, and the diseases

which fall upon it, are constant interruptions. It fills us with Desires, Cravings, Fears, Delusions, Follies, so that we cannot think calmly for a moment. The Body and its desires are the causes of quarrels, fightings, wars: for we quarrel and fight for the possession of external things; and these things are required by the needs and cravings of the body; and thus, we have no time nor temper for philosophy. And what is worst of all, when it appears to have left us at peace for a while, and we have begun our inquiries, in the middle of them it interrupts us again, and troubles our thoughts and confuses our vision, so that we cannot see the truth. If we are ever to know anything aright, we must get rid of this obstacle, and look at things with the soul. When we come to do that, we shall attain what we seek, Knowledge of the Truth; that is, as it appears from this reasoning, not during our life, but after our death.

“Since it is not possible to know anything rightly while we are in the body, one of two things must be true;—either we shall never know anything, or we shall have true knowledge after our death: for then, and not till then, will the soul act independently of the body. And during life, we shall then come nearest to true knowledge, if we have as little as possible to do with the body, which is not absolutely necessary:—if we do not allow its nature to dominate over us, but keep ourselves from its taint, till God himself shall liberate us from it. And then, purified from its absurdities, we shall be in the company, as I trust, of others who are in the same condition, and shall know the pure essence of things; that is, as I judge, the Truth. But those who are not themselves pure cannot attain to what is pure.

“This is the kind of language, as I imagine,

which true philosophers must hold to one another. Do you not think so?"

Simmias of course assents to this, as to the previous interrogations of Socrates. The sage goes on to say:

“ ‘And if this be true, my friend, may I not <sup>32</sup> have good hope that when I have performed the journey on which I am now setting out, I shall, if ever, obtain that object to which my efforts have been directed during the whole of my past life? The journey now appointed for me is full of hope, since it promises the purification of the soul;—that purification which consists in its separation from the corruption of the body, its liberation from the bonds of the body. This separation, this liberation, is what men call *Death*. And this liberation those most desire who are true philosophers. This separation and liberation are the peculiar aim and study of philosophers. And is it not then, as I said at first, ridiculous, that a man who has exercised himself all his life to live as if he were dead, should be grieved when death itself comes? And thus the true philosopher studies how to die, and death is to him least of all men formidable. If he labours under the load of the body, and seeks to have his soul liberated from it, would it not be very absurd that he should not willingly go thither where he will attain that for which he has been longing? And again: consider the matter thus. Many on the death of dear friends, wives, lovers, children, have been willing to encounter Death, and to descend to Hades, drawn by the hope of seeing there those they loved, and of being in their company. And shall a man who really loves knowledge, and who is firmly persuaded that he shall never truly attain to it except in Hades, be angry and sorry to have to die, and not go willingly to



that region where alone he can find what he wants? Is not such a fear of Death the greatest of absurdities?

“ ‘And therefore when you see a man grieved and alarmed at having to die, is not this clear evidence that he is not really a *philosopher* but a *philosomatist*? not a lover of wisdom, but a lover of bodily enjoyments; a lover of money; a lover of honours; or some of these, or all?

“ ‘And then let us consider that the man who thus disregards the desires and interests of the body, and lives for philosophy, is the man who really has what are held to be Virtues. Courage is especially his: so too is Temperance, that is, moderation and calmness in the desires. The Courage and the Temperance of other men are really self-contradictory qualities. They think Death to be among the greatest of evils, and yet they meet it, those who are deemed courageous, from the fear of a greater evil. All but philosophers are courageous through fear and brave through cowardice. So of men who attend merely to Decency: they are temperate through intemperance. They abstain from some pleasures for the love of other pleasures. They call it Intemperance to be the slaves of pleasure; but it is by serving some pleasures that they conquer other pleasures: and so, as I have said, they are temperate from intemperance. But this kind of barter, my excellent Simmias, is not the true trade of Virtue;—this exchange of pleasures for pleasures, and of pains for pains, and of fears for fears, great against small, as when you take small change for a large coin. The only genuine wealth, for which we ought to give away all other, is true Knowledge. All must really be bought and sold with this: Courage and Temperance and Justice. Virtue

resides with true Knowledge, whether Pleasures and Fears and the like are present, or are absent. When they are separated from knowledge, and merely exchanged against one another, they make a Virtue which is a mere mockery, a sordid game which has in it nothing sound or true. Real Virtue is a purification of such passions; and Temperance, and Justice, and Courage, and Knowledge itself, are only results of the purity of the Soul.

“ ‘Those who instituted the Mysteries did not 38  
frame their doctrines without meaning, when they taught that he who descends to Hades uninitiated in the Mysteries,—unpurified according to their rites,—shall be plunged in mire; but those who have been initiated and purified shall live with the gods. But as the mystic saying runs, “Many begin the rites, but few are fully purified:” those who are so, are in my opinion, those who have truly pursued philosophy. This I have, through my life, honestly and earnestly tried to do. Whether I tried in the right way, and with what success, I shall know certainly when I arrive *there*, if it please God, and as it seems, before long.

“ ‘This then, Simmias and Cebes, is my de- 39  
fence. This is the reason why, now that I have to leave you and the Divine Rulers of this world, I am not troubled or angry; trusting that I shall have, there as here, good rulers and good friends. The many will not assent to these views: but if my defence to you has been more successful than that which I addressed to the Athenians, it is well.’

“ ‘When Socrates had said this, Simmias replied:

“ ‘O Socrates, the rest of what you have said appears to me to be well said, but to what you say about the Soul, the many will not readily assent.

They apprehend that when the Soul is parted from the body, it may be nowhere: that on the very day in which the man dies, the soul may be destroyed and extinguished; that it goes forth and is dissipated, like a breath or a smoke, and ceases to be. No doubt, if it continue to exist, and be gathered to itself, and freed from the evils which you have described, there might be a good hope of the happy result, which you, O Socrates, look to.

40 But a good deal of encouragement, and a great deal of faith is required, to make men believe, that when the man is dead, the soul exists and retains thought and power.

“‘You say truly, O Cebes,’ said Socrates, ‘Well then; what shall we do? Should you wish that we should examine the speculations on this subject; and consider whether it is likely that things are so, or not?’

“‘For my part,’ said Cebes, ‘I would gladly hear what opinions you hold on this subject.’

“‘In truth,’ said Socrates, ‘I do not think that any one, however censoriously disposed, could say that in now discussing such matters, I am dealing with what does not concern me. If you please then, let us examine the question. Let us consider the current notion, whether the souls of the dead are or are not in a place called Hades. For this is a very ancient opinion, that souls go from hence

41 thither, and again return hither from thence. And if it be so—if the living are derived from the dead—it must be that our souls are there after death. For if they were not somewhere, they could not come into life again. And if it can be made clear that the living are derived from the dead, this will be a proof that our souls exist after death. If we cannot shew this, we must seek some other proof.’”

Socrates then enters upon a series of proofs of

the immortality of the Soul. It must be touching to every thoughtful person, to see the human mind, then when its powers of self-contemplation and reasoning were first fully unfolded, as was the case in the Platonic school, exerting itself to prove that powers and faculties so wonderful and exquisite could never be extinguished. Something more than mere reasoning was needed to give to men the assurance of an eternal life. But the highest efforts of human Reason on this subject have always been looked at with great interest; even though some of the arguments may to us be far from convincing. By presenting these arguments in an abridged and continuous form, instead of the prolix dialogue in which Plato gives them, we shall be better able to estimate their force.

The first argument is the one which has just been announced:—That life grows out of death as death grows out of life, because opposites everywhere grow out of opposites and imply their existence. Right implies its opposite Wrong; Fair implies its opposite Foul. Things grow greater 42 from having been smaller; smaller from having been greater, weaker from stronger; quicker from slower; worse from better; more righteous from more unrighteous. And the act of transition is an intermediate process: Greater and Less are exchanged by Increase and Diminution. Things 43 are conjoined and separated, warmed and cooled. And as *to sleep* is the opposite of *to wake*; so *to live* has an opposite. What is that? Plainly, *to die*. And as *to fall asleep* has again its opposite *to awake*; so *to die* has also its opposite *to live again*. And thus living things and living men spring 44 from dead things and dead men. As we allow that opposites imply their opposites in other cases, we must not leave nature lame in this one quarter.

As the dead are derived from the living, so are the living derived from the dead. And thus, as we said, the souls of the dead exist in some intermediate place, whence they can return to life. |

- 45 Cebes assents to this reasoning; and Socrates proceeds to confirm it further, by putting the matter the other way. He says: "If things did not thus go round in cycles, from opposite to opposite;—if they went right onwards in a straight course, proceeding from one condition to the opposite, but never coming back to the first, or bending round in their course, all things would tend to a final condition, in which the end would be attained and change would cease. If there were such a thing as falling asleep, but no such thing as waking, the end would be that everybody would be asleep. Endymion, the celebrated sleeper, would be undistinguished. We should all surpass him in sleeping. The doctrine of Anaxagoras, that all the elements were mixed together, and that Mind separated them, would cease to hold: all the elements would, in the end, run into their original confusion.
- 46 And so, if living things died, and the dead never returned to life, everything would end in death, and nothing would be left alive. And thus our reasoning holds good. We do not delude ourselves. There is a return from death to life; and the souls of men exist after death; those which are good in a better condition, those which are bad, in a worse."

Probably this line of argument, depending, as it does, on special speculations of the Greek philosophers, and in some measure, on peculiar features of the Greek language, will not obtain general assent at the present time. I will pass on to other arguments. The next is one, involving a doctrine on which Plato often dwells with complacency.

Cebes suggests it as a confirmation of the preceding argument. He says:

“And this too follows, Socrates, from that doctrine which you have often insisted on: that our acquired knowledge is merely recollected knowledge; and that therefore, on that account, we must in some previous state, have acquired what we recover the recollection of in this. And this would be impossible, if our souls had not been somewhere before they were in this human form. And thus, in this way too, we have evidence that the Soul is of an immortal nature.”

This proof that all acquisition of knowledge implies a previous possession of knowledge had been presented in detail, in a very dramatic form, in the *Meno*, as we have seen; where a boy is made, by a series of interrogations, to prove geometrical theorems. The proof was evidently regarded by the School of Plato as weighty and striking, and also as novel. Hence Simmias does not at once recollect the nature of this proof, when Cebes refers to it. He says, interrupting:

“What proof is it that you speak of, Cebes? Put me in mind of it. I do not immediately recollect it.”

“I will give you one instance,” said Cebes, “and that a very good one. When men are asked questions in a suitable way, they discover the truth, and bring it out. Now if they had not some knowledge already existing in their minds, they could not do this. By presenting to them geometrical diagrams, and the like, you may prove very clearly that the fact is so.”

This was precisely what had been done in the course of the *Meno*.

“And if you are not satisfied by what he is saying,” interposed Socrates, “consider whether

this does not satisfy you. You are not yet convinced that all learning is only recollecting?"

"It is not that I resist conviction," said Simmias, "but I must have time to do this very thing that we are talking about;—to recollect. And, in fact, since Cebes began to speak of it, I do recollect and am convinced. But, nevertheless, I should be glad if you would go on with what you were beginning to say."

"What I was beginning to say," proceeded Socrates, "is this. We are agreed, I think, that when a person recollects anything, he must have known it before. But there is also a particular way in which knowledge comes to us, in which you will probably allow that it implies recollection; and this way I will explain."

He then goes on to deliver an argument very much like that given in the *Theætetus*, in which it is shewn that our Ideas are not all derived from the Senses.

- 49 "When a person sees or hears anything, and thereupon has brought into his mind not only that thing, but some other, implying another knowledge, it is that he recollects this other thing. Thus a person seeing a lyre or a cloak recollects
- 50 his friend to whom it belongs: a person seeing Simmias thinks of Cebes: or further; a person seeing a picture of a horse or lyre thinks of the man to whom it belongs; a person seeing a portrait of Simmias, thinks of Cebes. And sometimes we thus recollect things from their likeness, sometimes from their unlikeness. But when we recollect things from their likeness, this also happens: we see what is defective in the likeness; what is requisite in order to render the likeness complete.—Consider further: we speak of things as being equal or unequal. We not only see one

stick equal to another stick, and one stone to another stone; but besides this, we think of a real equality. We know what it is.—Now where do we acquire this knowledge? Not from the sticks and stones which we see, for they are not really equal. It is something different from them. For two sticks, or two stones appear, sometimes equal, and sometimes unequal; but real equality is never inequality. And thus, *equality* is not the same as *equal things*. But yet from seeing equal things we think of equality. And thus, as we think of this other thing, which we do not see, there must be recollection.—Now these equal things which we see, sticks and the like, are not exactly equal. They lack something of perfect equality. They try to be equal but are not equal. Now when we regard things as thus trying to be something which they are not, we must have a previous knowledge of that thing which they try to be and fail of being. And therefore we must have a knowledge of equality, before that time when we first saw things and perceived that they aimed at equality and missed it.—Now in this life we could acquire this knowledge only by seeing or touching, or some other sense. But all the objects of sense are defective in the point in question, and only *aim* at it. And hence, before we began to see and hear and use the rest of our senses, we must have obtained somewhere the knowledge of that real equality, to which we refer all things, so as to see that they tend to equality but do not attain it.

“ Now we began to see and hear and the like, immediately at our birth. And therefore we must have received the knowledge of equality at some previous period. And not the knowledge of equality alone: for we judge also of greater, of less, and the like. And not of these only, but of what



is right, and good, and just, and excellent, and pure; and, as I say, of all those things which we call realities, in our questions and in our answers when we conduct our discussions. We must therefore have received knowledge of all these things before we were born. And if, having thus received them, we had not forgotten them, we should know them from our birth, and through our lives; for to know is only to have knowledge and not to have lost it. To forget is to lose the knowledge which we had.

55 “But if, having had this knowledge before we were born, we lost it at our birth; and then, when we came to use our senses, recovered the portions of knowledge which we had before, it is plain that what we call *to learn*, is, to recover our own previous knowledge: and this is properly to recollect. And thus, one of two things must be true; either we had this knowledge from our birth, and have it through our lives, or we recover the knowledge when we say we learn it, and thus to learn is to recollect.”

56 Simmias assents: but Socrates further demands which side of the alternative he takes. Have we our knowledge from our birth, or do we acquire it afterwards? Simmias declares that for the present he cannot tell. “But,” says Socrates, “if men have this knowledge from their birth, they will be able to give an account of such knowledge. Now can they do this?” “Alas!” says Simmias, “I wish it were so. But I fear that by to-morrow there will be no man to be found who can do this.” He feared that all such insight would depart with the departure of Socrates out of life. “Then,” says Socrates, “men have not such knowledge from their birth; they must then acquire it by recollecting what they knew before. And when

did they know it? Not since they were men. Therefore at some previous time. Therefore our souls existed in some previous condition, before they existed in a human form; existed without bodies, and with knowledge."

Simmius makes a momentary suggestion.— 57  
 "Except," he says, "we receive this knowledge at our birth, not before. That supposition is still left us."—"Good, my friend," says Socrates. "But in that case when did we lose this knowledge? Did we lose it in the very moment when we received it? or can you mention any other time when that might happen?"—"No," says Simmius; "I perceive I was talking nonsense."

"Then," Socrates now sums up the argument, "thus stands the matter. If there be such realities as we constantly talk of;—Rightness, Goodness, and the rest, and if we constantly refer the objects of our senses to these realities, which we find in ourselves, as to their standard, then our souls must have existed before we were born. If it is not so, our argument fails. But if those Ideas really exist, our souls must have existed no less really, before we were born."

Simmius expresses his assent to the conclusion and his satisfaction at the doctrine. He says, "The necessary connexion appears to me quite evident. The soul must be as real as those realities. And I know nothing which appears to me more evident than such realities; Rightness and Goodness and the like. I am satisfied with the demonstration."

Though this argument no longer finds general acceptance in the exact form here followed, yet the considerations which are thus presented to the disciples of Socrates have still no small influence on the convictions of thoughtful men. The *pre-exist-*

ence of souls, indeed, is a doctrine now hardly contended for by any; and any argument which depends on this doctrine would in general be rejected. But the existence of *Innate Ideas*, of Ideas not derived from the senses but from some other source, has many adherents in modern times; and those who hold this doctrine hold also that the soul is thereby shewn to be so far independent of the body, that it may be expected to survive the body. And of those who do not allow any Ideas to be properly innate, many still allow that we have *Connate Faculties*, Faculties born with us, by which Ideas are formed such as could not be derived from the senses alone; and persons, too, find in this doctrine a ground for believing that the soul is independent of the body, and will survive the body. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, when regarded as a part of natural religion, is still deeply concerned in the discussions which Plato here presents to us.

When Simmias has thus expressed himself satisfied with the demonstration which Socrates has delivered of the immortality of the soul, we have a little Dialogue which relieves the argument, and fixes our attention on the further explanation which the dying sage gives of his belief and his hope.

Simmias is satisfied: "But how is it with Cebes?" Socrates asks. "We must convince Cebes too." Simmias at first answers for his companion. "He too is pretty well satisfied, I believe: though he is the hardest of mortals to convince of anything." He then goes on to limit somewhat the assent which he had given to the argument of Socrates, by acknowledging that he shares in the doubts which he ascribes to his friend. He says: "I think he is fully persuaded of this: that before

we were born our souls existed. But whether after we are dead the soul still subsists, he has doubts, and indeed so have I. That notion still sticks in our heads which the common people entertain: that when the man dies, the soul evaporates, and there's an end of it. For what reason is 59 there why it should not be constructed and composed in some way or other, and exist, before it enters into a human body, and yet, when it is liberated from that vehicle and goes away, should come to an end and perish entirely." Cebes assents to this. "You say well, Simmias. Only half the proposition has been proved; namely, that our soul existed before we were born. It must be proved also that when we are dead, the soul will exist as much as it did before birth, if the proof is to be completed."

Socrates meets this doubt very calmly. "The proof has been given, my friends, if you will put together this proof, and the doctrine which we agreed to before we came to this; namely, that every living thing comes from a dead thing. For if the soul exist before our birth, and if when it passes into life it cannot come from any other quarter than from death and the state of the dead, it is inevitable that it must exist after we are dead, since it is again to come into life. And so I have already given you the proof which you ask for.

"But you and Simmias seem as if you would 60 willingly have the proof a little further explained. You seem to be frightened, as children are, that when the soul passes out of the body, the wind may blow it quite away and disperse it entirely, especially if there be strong breezes stirring when the man dies."

"At this Cebes laughed, and said: 'Well, Socrates, suppose that we are frightened; and do

you encourage and comfort us. Or rather, suppose, not that *we* are frightened, but that there is a child within us who is so. Let us try to persuade *him* not to fear death, as a kind of bugbear or hobgoblin.'

" 'Yes,' said Socrates: 'and to do this, we must use some charm, that we can sing over him day by day, till the incantation has quite dispelled his fears.'

" 'But alas, Socrates, where shall we find any one who is master of such a spell; since you, the most likely to impart it to us, are on the point of leaving us?'"

61 Socrates replies: "Greece is a wide place, Cebes; and there are in it many good men. And there are, besides, many races of barbarians, all of whom are to be explored in search of some one who can perform such a charm as we have spoken of: and we must spare no pains nor expense in the search, for on what better object could we expend money or labour. And you must too search among yourselves for this gift: for perhaps you will not easily find any one who has this power more than you have."

This injunction, to seek some teacher who can raise men above the fear of death, not only among the Greeks, but among other nations also, cannot but strike us, who know that such teachers have proceeded from a nation of whom probably Plato never heard. The Hebrew disciples of a far greater teacher, referred to other proofs than such as Socrates here expounds. Yet some of them, as Paul of Tarsus, did not disdain to illustrate the subject by references to speculations of the Greeks; and in addressing the Athenians four hundred years after Plato, referred to convictions of natural religion, such as Socrates and his disciples had

cherished. Socrates goes on to give some further account of the grounds of these convictions.

"This the future will determine," said Cebes. "But let us return to the point from which our digression began, if it be agreeable to you."

"To me it is most agreeable. How should it be otherwise?"

"That is well," said Cebes.

Socrates then begins to expound an argument which has still a strong effect upon our convictions, though it is commonly put in a form somewhat different from that in which it is here given by Socrates. The argument, as we are accustomed to it, is this. Compound things are the things most obviously subject to perish; for they perish by being resolved into their parts;—they suffer dissolution. Thus our bodies, when the soul has left them, perish and are dissolved, because they are compound. But is our soul compound? If not, it cannot thus perish. It has no component parts of which it is made up, and into which it can be dissolved. Now that the soul *is* simple, we have evidence in thought and consciousness: for thought and consciousness are the acts of a simple principle which thinks and is conscious. Hence the soul cannot perish, as the body does, by being dissolved into parts. It is simple, and therefore indestructible and immortal.

This is the way we, in modern times, often see the argument presented.

The latter part of this argument, which proves the simple and indestructible nature of the soul from its acts of thought and consciousness, is somewhat different from Plato's argument here; for he proves the immortal nature of the soul from its being concerned with unalterable and eternal Ideas. But the evidence that the soul's operations do not

result from the combination of parts, is resumed in a later argument of Socrates, where he discusses the doctrine of the soul being a harmony of parts. For the present, we will briefly expound his argument from the composite nature of the body: to which, as usual, his hearers assent from point to point.

- 62 “We must ask first, what kind of things are most liable to this lot, the being dispersed; for what things we may most apprehend such a result, and for what, not; and we must then consider to which class the soul belongs, and pitch our hopes or fears accordingly.

“Now it is things compounded of parts—composite things—that are liable to separation into the parts of which they are compounded. If there be anything which is uncompounded—incomposite,—*that*, if anything, must be exempt from such a lot. Now those things which are always the same and in the same state, are most likely to be the uncompounded things: and those which are constantly changing and never constant to the same state, are likely to be the compounded things.

“Now the Ideas which we spoke of a little while ago; the realities to which we refer in our discussions, absolute Equality, absolute Goodness, absolute Beauty, and the like; these are always the same: they admit of no change: they are simple and uniform and do not suffer the smallest alteration.

- 63 “Whereas *things* of any kind, beautiful things, for instance, beautiful men, beautiful horses, beautiful garments, and the like; are they always the same, or do they not constantly differ in their state,—never remain the same? These you may touch or see or apprehend by other senses; but the constant and permanent essences of them you

can only apprehend by an act of thought. They cannot be seen by the eyes.

“Now let us take two classes of existences; 64 the visible and the invisible;—the invisible always the same; the visible always changing. Does not our Soul belong to the former, our Body to the latter kind? Our Body is visible: our Soul, is it visible?—Not by mortal eyes, and that is what we have here to do with. And thus the soul belongs to the invisible class of existences, and approaches the nature of the eternal realities of which I spoke.

“But there are other arguments. When the 65 soul (as we have already said) regards objects by the aid of the senses, and thus uses the body in its contemplation of the world, it is disturbed and distracted by contact with the body. It wanders, and grows giddy as if intoxicated. But when it considers objects by the help of its own powers alone, it is then drawn to that which is pure and eternal and immortal and uniform, and feels that it is of the nature of that. Its wanderings end; it becomes steady and uniform like its objects: and this condition is called *Wisdom*.

“Now which of the two kinds of existences, the permanent or the perishable, does the soul seem more to resemble and agree with, from these considerations?”

Cebes answers, “There is no one, Socrates, so 66 stupid as not to say, when led by this method, that the Soul resembles permanent more than transitory things, while the body is of nature transitory and not permanent.”

Socrates, though Cebes is so well satisfied, still proceeds to confirm his conviction by another argument.

“Consider the matter thus,” says he. “The



Soul and the Body are joined, and work together by nature; but the same nature directs the latter to serve and obey, the former to rule and govern. And in this aspect which of them appears to you more like the divine nature and which more like the mortal? Is it not an attribute of divinity to rule and direct, and of mortal creatures to be ruled and directed? To which then of these two is the soul like? Plainly the soul is of a divine, the body of a mortal nature.

“Now putting all these things together, Cebes, is it not evident that the soul is to be classed with things divine, immortal, thinking, simple, indissoluble, unchangeable; and the body with things human, mortal, unintelligent, manifold in its composition, dissoluble and constantly changing? Can we deny it, my dear Cebes, or is it so?”

“It is so.”

And then comes the application of this doctrine of the nature and prospects of the soul, which is no less interesting than the doctrine itself. The doctrine is Immortality, the inference, the claims of Virtue.

“Well but,” Socrates says, “this being so, the body is appointed to be soon dissolved, and the soul to be, in comparison, indestructible. And yet when a man dies, the visible part of him, his body, which lies before our eyes and which we call his corpse, which is appointed to be dissolved, to fall to dust, to evaporate, still does not immediately undergo this lot, but remains without much alteration for a considerable time;—especially if the body be in good condition and the season favourable. And indeed if the body be embalmed, as is practised in Egypt, it will remain without perishing a wonderful length of time. And some parts of the body, as the bones, even when the

rest decays, remain almost for ever. The soul then, 68 the immaterial part, which goes to a place similar to itself, immaterial, pure and exalted in nature, namely to Hades, to the good and wise God;—whither, if God please, my soul must very soon go:—the soul, I say, being of a nature so superior to the body as we have seen, can it, as soon as it is separated from the body be dispersed into nothing and perish, as the majority of mankind hold? O far otherwise, my dear Cebes and Simmias! Rather will this be the result. If it take its departure in a state of purity, not carrying with it any clinging impurities of the body, impurities which, during life, it never willingly shared in, but always avoided, gathering itself into itself and making this separation from the body its aim and study—that is, devoting itself to true philosophy and studying how to die calmly;—for this is true philosophy, is it not?—Well then, so prepared, the soul departs into that invisible region which is of its own nature, the region of the Divine, the Immortal, the Wise; and then its lot is to be happy, in a state in which it is freed from Fears and Wild Desires, and the other Evils of Humanity, and spends the rest of its existence with the Gods, as those are taught to expect who are initiated in the Mysteries. Shall we say it is so, or otherwise, Cebes?”

Cebes, carried away by the appeal, says, “So, and not otherwise, assuredly.”

Socrates then gives the other side of the picture:

“But if the soul depart from the body, polluted and impure, as having always been mixed with the body, and having served it and delighted in it; and having allowed itself to be bewitched by it and its desires and pleasures; so that nothing appeared to be real which was not corporeal—

something that could be touched and seen and eaten and drunk and used for enjoyment;—and having always hated and feared and shunned that which is invisible to the bodily eyes, the intellectual objects at which philosophy aims;—do you conceive that such a soul can be pure in itself, or fitted for a region of purity? No: it is swathed in the incumbrance of its corporeal covering, which this constant intercourse and too close union have rendered part of its nature.” And hence, it is implied, it cannot go to a region of purity and happiness. And the belief in ghosts, common then as now, is referred to in such a way as to give confirmation of this doctrine.

“The covering which such souls retain after death, we must needs suppose to be gross, heavy, earthy, visible. The soul, loaded with such a weight, is again dragged down into this visible region, by the fear of that invisible region, Hades. And thus these souls are led to wander among the tombs and monuments of the dead; where such phantoms have often been seen. These are the appearances of souls which have been dismissed from the body in a state of impurity. They partake of the corporeal and visible elements, and therefore they are seen by human eyes.”—“That, Socrates, seems probable.”—“Probable it is, Cebes; but these are the souls, not of good men, but of bad men; which are thus compelled to wander after death, undergoing punishment for their past deeds which were evil. And thus they wander, until, by the longing which they feel for the corporeal element which thus clings to them, they are again inclosed in a body. And they are inclosed in a body, as may be supposed, corresponding in its habits with the habits which they had during their former lives. Those which had been

addicted to gluttony, to intemperance, to lust, those which had known no restraint, pass into the bodies of asses and the like. Those which had a propensity to injustice and wrong, to tyranny and violence, pass into the bodies of wolves and hawks and vultures. And so of the rest, each goes into a state resembling the propensities which they had cherished. How should it be otherwise?

“And those are the happiest, and go into the best places, who had practised those social and public virtues which men call temperance and justice;—practised them by habit and nature, without philosophy and without reflection. And what course does their happiness take? It is probable that they resume their life among social and political creatures, such as they have been, bees and wasps and ants; or perhaps they return again into human bodies, and become good men.

“But none can attain to the rank of Gods but those who pursue philosophy, and depart from the body pure; none but the lovers of true knowledge.

“And on this account, my dear friends Simmias and Cebes, those who truly pursue philosophy, abstain from the gratification of bodily desires, and bear all trials, and resist all temptations; they fear no privations and no poverty, like common men who are enslaved by the love of wealth. They fear no obloquy nor loss of good name, like those who are carried away by the love of honours and of power. They leave such men to go their way, 72 and heed them not. They care for their souls, not their bodies, and take another course. They reckon that such persons do not know to what they are tending. They will not run counter to philosophy and her teaching;—they aim at the liberation and purification which she gives, and follow where she leads.

“ You ask how they do this? I will tell you. Those who really love truth know how philosophy benefits the soul. They know that she receives it completely bound up in and fastened to the body; compelled to look at everything, not directly, but as it were, through the walls of a prison; and thus condemned to darkness, and feeling that the strength of its prison consists in the strength of its own desires, and that it is itself the accomplice of its own  
73 captivity. They know that philosophy receives the soul thus entangled, and comforts it, and sets about liberating it; by shewing it that perception by the eyes and by the ears is full of deceit; by persuading it to trust these as little as possible, and to collect itself into itself, and to trust its own peculiar and innate powers of contemplating realities: to ascribe no reality to what it apprehends in any other way: since all such things are the object only of external sense and vision, but the things which it sees directly and by itself are invisible and intelligible only. The soul of a real lover of truth does not oppose itself to this offer of liberation; and hence abstains from pleasures and desires and griefs and fears with all its power; for it considers that when a man is under the sway of strong joy or fear or grief or desire, the evils which thus move him are not so great as he imagines; while the last and greatest of evils he suffers without regarding it:—  
74 namely, the belief that visible things, the objects of these joys and griefs, are the clearest and strongest of realities, and the consequent subjugation of its powers to them. Every pleasure and every grief furnishes a nail which fastens the soul to the body; makes it an appendage to the body, and like the body; judging of things as the body judges. By sharing in the perceptions and in the joys of the body, it acquires the habits and cha-

racter of the body; and thus cannot pass away pure to the other world, but departs still loaded with the body; and hence quickly falls into another body and grows again like a seed that is sown; and thus has no share in the intercourse with the divine and pure and simple essence which is its proper object."

We may at present refuse to assent to the doctrine, here as elsewhere asserted by Plato, that the purification and elevation of the soul is the result of the study of abstract truths, which is what he calls philosophy: but to seek purification and elevation in that way and in such a spirit, was still a noble scheme of life. Socrates goes on in the same strain:

"It is on these accounts, O Cebes, that the 75  
real lovers of truth are temperate and brave, and not from motives such as the great body of mankind assign. The soul of a real lover of wisdom would not reason as they do;—would not think that philosophy must set him free, and that when she has done this, he may again give himself over to pleasures and pains, and thus undo what she has done; weaving her web to unravel it again after the fashion of Penelope. His soul obtains a calm repose from passion; follows reason as her guide, and is employed in the contemplation of what is true and divine and above mere opinion; and nourishing herself on this truth, sees that she is so to live while life endures, and when death comes, is to depart into a congenial region, and to be freed from the evils of humanity. Thus supported and thus prepared, O Simmias and Cebes, the soul has no reason to fear that in passing away from the body, she will be dissipated by the winds, and evaporate and pass away, and cease altogether to be."

This strain of confidence in the final happiness of the virtuous man, and consequent calmness in the presence of death, is a mood of mind which we may well contemplate with admiration in a heathen philosopher. But however much a man may be a philosopher, death, when near and inevitable, must be a solemn thing: and Socrates is not represented as regarding it otherwise. After this effusion, he is for a time silent. If his eloquence is touching, his silence is still more so, as shewing how deeply he felt the solemnity of his position; and such is the impression made on his friends. The narrative thus proceeds:

- 76 "When Socrates had said this, there was silence for a considerable time; he himself being occupied in dwelling upon the thoughts to which he had given utterance, so far as one could judge, as most of us also were. Cebes and Simmias, however, began to talk together a little. And Socrates perceiving this, asked them: 'What are you talking of? Have I left anything unexplained? No doubt there are still many objections to be made, if any one is to go through the whole subject. If you are speaking about other matters, I have nothing to say: but if you are occupied with doubts upon our subject, do not be afraid to utter and discuss them, in any way you like, and take me with you, if you think I can give you any help.' Simmias answered: 'Well, Socrates, I will tell you the truth. We have long been moved with doubts; and each of us urges the other to propose them to you, whose judgment we wish to hear; but we hesitate, from the fear of disturbing you, and occupying you in that which may be disagreeable to you, in the position in which you now are.'
- 77 "Upon this, Socrates said, with a quiet smile, 'Alack, Simmias! I can hardly expect to per-

suade other persons that I do not regard my present position as calamitous, when I cannot persuade you; when you are afraid that I am now more irritable than I have been at former times. You will not even allow me the merit of a swan; they, you know, are said to sing most sweetly when they know that they are going to die; they rejoice that they are to go to the deity whose servants they are. Men, indeed, fearing death themselves cannot understand this; and so they calumniate the swans, and say that they lament their death, and therefore sing their loudest. They do not consider that birds do not sing when they are hungry or cold or in pain; not even the nightingale, nor the swallow, nor the hoopoe, though they say that the song of these is a lamentation expressing pain. I, for my part, do not think that either these birds sing from pain, or that dying swans do. I think that, as they are peculiarly consecrated to Apollo, they have the gift of foresight; and thus, foreknowing the happiness which awaits them in another world, they sing and express more joy on that day than they ever did before.

“And I think too that I serve the same Power as the swans, and am consecrated to the same God; and that I have from our Master as much the gift of foreknowledge as they have; and that I have no more misgivings at quitting life than they have. And therefore go on saying and asking what you please till the executioners—the Eleven sent by the Athenians—come to me.’

“‘You are very good,’ said Simmias. ‘I will tell you what my doubt is; and Cebes also will tell you what objection he has to what you have said.’”

That Socrates, on the verge of death, should express with eloquent fervour his conviction that



there is another life, and that a virtuous character in this life is the best preparation for that, very naturally excited the admiration of his friends: but it raised their admiration much higher than that, in these the closing moments of his life, he could clearly and acutely answer arguments which were brought against his opinion; and do this with a calmness and equanimity that made pleasantries appear not out of place. Simmias propounds his objection with some prefatory remarks intended to justify the freedom of thus philosophizing. He says:

“I think, O Socrates, as you probably think on such matters: that to know anything certainly in this present life about them, is either impossible or at any rate very difficult: but yet that we must examine all opinions, and subject them to the strictest scrutiny; and that to faint and desist before we have sifted them to the bottom, is want of energy and perseverance. We must come to one of two results:—either we must learn what is the truth; or if we cannot do that, we must take the best and most plausible of the doctrines offered to us, and take our chance upon this, like men on a raft, and so try to tide over life; unless we can find some vessel more safe and solid, some divine doctrine on which we may make this passage.

79 “Therefore I will not hesitate to put my difficulty to you, after what you have said. I will not have to blame myself hereafter that I did not now say to you what was in my mind. For looking at what has been said in my own mind, and with Cebes here, I cannot say that I am quite satisfied.”

“Well,” Socrates said, “perhaps you are right: but what is the point in which you are not satisfied?”

“Why,” answered Simmias, “this it is. One might say the same things about a lyre with its chords, and the harmony which it produces, as you say about the body and the soul. One might say that the harmony is something invisible and incorporeal, and beautiful and divine, which exists in the tuned lyre; and that the lyre and its strings are material things, of a corporeal nature, composite things, terrestrial things, and of a perishable character. And thus a person might reason, as you have been reasoning; and might say that if he were to break the lyre and sever the strings, the harmony must still subsist: that the lyre, when its perishable strings were broken, could no longer exist; but that the harmony, which is of a nature agreeing with the divine and immortal, could not so soon cease to be. And thus he might say that the harmony must necessarily survive the instrument; and that when the frame and the strings perish, the harmony still could not cease to subsist. For, Socrates, I conceive you 80 must allow that the soul is connected with the body; that our body being drawn and balanced by opposite agencies, hot and cold and dry and wet, our soul is a mixture and mutual relation or harmony of these elements, resulting from their due and suitable combination. And if the soul be thus a kind of harmony, it follows that when the balance is destroyed, and the body is drawn too strongly or too feebly, by reason of disease or accident, the soul must forthwith perish, all divine though it be. Just as the harmonies of strings, and the fitnesses which exist in any other works of art, perish, while the fragments of the material frame remain long undestroyed. Consider then how we are to answer this argument, if any one shall say that the soul is a result of the combina-

tion of bodily elements; and that in what we call death, it is the first thing that perishes."

81 "On this, Socrates looking keenly at us, as he was wont, and smiling, said: 'Simmius speaks reasonably. And if any of you is abler than I am to answer him, let him do it. But before we set about replying to him, I think we ought also to hear Cebes, and to learn what is his objection to our doctrine, that we may gain time to consider what we shall say. When we have heard both, if they chime in at all with our notions, we can agree with them; and if not we can then reply to them. So tell us, Cebes, what is it that troubles you and prevents your agreeing with us.'

"'I will tell you,' said Cebes. 'I think we are still at the same point at which we were before, and our argument open to the same objection. That our soul existed before it came into its present form, I do not deny that you have ably, and if I might presume to say so, admirably proved: but that the soul will subsist after we are dead, does not appear to me equally clear. I do not however agree with the objection of Simmius. I think the soul is much more strong and permanent than the body. Why then, you may say, do you doubt? When a man dies, you see that the part which you allow to be the weakest, still remains? Must not the more durable remain still longer? Now that I may explain myself, let me make use of an image, as Simmius has done. To me it seems that what has been urged is just as if, when an old weaver died, one were to say the same;—were to maintain that he was not dead, but still exists somewhere or other; and as proof of this, were to produce the garment which he had woven and worn, and were to shew that it is still there and whole; and were to ask which is the more durable, a

man's body, or his garment, especially when in the course of wear: and when the answer was made that the man is much the more durable, should urge this as a proof that the man must be still in a state of preservation, since the garment which is less lasting, is still there.

“But yet that does not follow, Simmias; for 83  
I would have you also attend to what I am saying. For any one would see that such an argument is absurd. For the weaver had woven and worn many such garments in succession; and then he went to decay after those many, but before the last of them: and yet it is not because a man is frailer and more perishable than a garment. And the same is the case with the Soul compared with the Body. One might reasonably say that the Soul is more durable, the Body more perishable; but that the Soul wears out many Bodies, especially if the life be a long one. For if the Body is in a constant state of change and flux, even during life, the Soul weaves itself a new garment as the old wears away, and is weaving its last one, and falls to decay before that only; and when the Soul is gone, the Body shews how frail it is, and soon falls to corruption. And thus you have now no solid reason to believe that when we are dead 84  
our Soul still survives.

“And even if one should grant more than this to the asserter of the Soul's immortality;—if one should allow that the Soul not only existed before we were born, but that even after we are dead the Souls of some may still survive and exist, and may be often born again and again die;—the Soul being supposed to be so durable as to last out many bodies;—still it would not follow that the Soul may not be worn out by a series of such births, and may not at some of these deaths come

to a final end and cease to be. One might say that this final dissolution of the body which brings with it the death of the Soul, no one can know or foresee. But still if this be so, no one can have good reason to think of death without fear, unless he can prove that the Soul is altogether immortal and indestructible. He must still have cause to apprehend that in the death which is imminent, the Soul in its separation from the body, may perish altogether.'”

85 “All we,” Phædo goes on to say, “hearing these discourses, had an unpleasant impression, as we afterwards confessed to one another. We had been convinced by the previous discourse of Socrates, and now we were again thrown into trouble and doubt; not only doubt respecting the arguments which had been urged in favour of the Soul’s immortality, but also misgiving with regard to anything which might be urged afterwards. It seemed as if we might be unable to form a judgment on the question; or as if the subject itself admitted of no certainty.”

ECH. “Assuredly, Phædo, I can excuse you for such a feeling. For at the hearing of your account, the same thought occurs to me: What arguments are we to trust to? For the reasoning of Socrates which seemed so convincing, is, it appears, not to be trusted. In truth, I am much struck, and have often been so before, by this notion, that the Soul is a kind of Harmony; and now that the view is put into words, I recollect that I have often thought the same. And I am now in need, as much as at the beginning, of some new proof that the Soul does not die with the Body. Tell me therefore, I beseech you, how Socrates resumed the discussion: and whether he too was, as you say you were, evidently troubled,

or whether he steadily resumed his arguments; and whether his arguments were satisfactory or not? Tell me everything as exactly as you can."

PH. "Indeed, Echebrates, I had often ad- 86  
mired Socrates, but I never admired him so much as I did then. That he should be able to make a reply, was perhaps not wonderful. But what I admired was especially this: how sweetly, and gently, and kindly he received the objections of those young men; and then how quickly he perceived the impression which they had made upon us; and then how he recovered us from our depression; how he rallied our broken ranks and encouraged us and led us back to the discussion."  
—ECH. "How was that done?"

PH. "I will tell you. I was sitting on his right upon a low seat by the side of his bed, so that he was a good deal higher than I was. So he dropped his hand and stroked my head, and pressed my hair which lay upon my neck—he often used to play with my hair—and said, 'Phædo, I suppose you intend to cut off these beautiful locks to-morrow, as a sign of mourning.'—'So it seems, Socrates,' I replied.—'Do not do it *then*,' said he, 'if you will take my advice.'—'What do you mean?' said I.—'You must cut your locks and put yourself in mourning *to-day*, and I must do the same, if our Doctrine is mortally stricken and we cannot bring it to life again. If I were you, and if this Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul were conquered, I would take an oath, as the Argives did, never to let my hair grow, till in a fresh fight I had overcome the arguments of Simmias and Cebes.'—'But,' said I, 'according to the proverb, even Hercules is not a match for two.'—'Well,' said he, 'take me for your Iolaus, the companion of Hercules, while daylight still

allows you to do so.'—'I take you for my aid,' said I, 'not as Hercules took Iolaus, but as Iolaus took Hercules.'—'It comes to the same thing,' said he. 'But there is one error which we must take care to avoid.'—'What is that?' said I.—'The error of coming to dislike Reason, as some persons come to dislike men, and become misanthropes. There can be no greater misfortune  
88 than to hate Reason. And the hatred of Reason may be got in the same way as some get a hatred of men. Misanthropy is produced by trusting some man entirely, without knowing mankind, and believing him to be true and sound and honest, and then finding him false and dishonest; and then doing the same thing to another, and another. When this has happened to a man often, and especially if it have been among those whom he deemed his surest friends, at last he hates every body, and thinks that nobody is honest. Have you not observed this?'—'Certainly,' said I.—'And is it not,' said he, 'a shocking result? And it is plain that it comes of a man dealing with men without a knowledge of mankind\*. Now arguments are in this respect like men. If a man assent to an argument as true, without knowing how to reason, and then shortly after find it to be false, sometimes when it is so, sometimes when it is not; and so of another and another; you know that he

\* "For if the man really knew mankind, he would judge, as the fact really is, that the very good and the very bad are both rare, and that the greater part of men are between the two."— "How mean you?" said I.—"Just," said he, "as very large and very small men are rare; and very quick and very slow, and very fair and very foul, and very black and very white. In all cases the extreme qualities are rare, the intermediate cases are plentiful. If there were a prize for the worst men, there would be very few who deserved it. But I am digressing."

This digression of a few sentences is intended, perhaps, to show how much Socrates was at ease in mind.

comes to mistrust all argument. Especially those who are most occupied with arguing on both sides of questions, you know that at last they think they are very wise, and can see, what others cannot see, that nothing is solid and certain;—that everything runs upwards and downwards like the currents of the Euripus, and that nothing is permanent and stable.’—‘You say very truly,’ said I. 90  
 —‘Would it not then,’ said he, ‘be a lamentable thing, if, when an argument was really solid and intelligible, a person who had been engaged among inconclusive reasonings, which leave no stable conviction, and had thus become skeptical about the sound argument, should blame, not himself and his own bad reasonings, but Reason itself; and should take to speaking ill of it, and thus lose the benefit of truth and knowledge.’—‘A lamentable thing indeed,’ said I.—‘First then,’ said he, ‘let us take care to avoid this error; and not admit the belief into our minds that there is nothing sound and certain in itself. Let us rather suppose that our minds are not sound, and let us try manfully to make them so:—you and the rest, because you have long to live, and I, because I am soon to die: that I may behave as becomes a philosopher, and not like mere disputatious talkers. They in their 91  
 disputes do not care on which side the truth lies, but merely try to persuade the bystanders to adopt the opinions which they have asserted. I am in a very different state from them. My main purpose is, not that I may convince the bystanders, except as a secondary object, but that I may satisfy myself. And see, my dear friend, under what advantages I am reasoning. If my doctrine is true, it is well to know it; and even if after death there be nothing, I shall still avoid wearying my companions with my lamentations while I live. And



my error will not last long: there will soon be an end of it. And with this preparation, O Simmias and Cebes, I come to the argument. And you, if you will take my advice, will think little about Socrates, but a great deal about Truth; and if I say what seems to be true, take it up, but if otherwise, reject it; being on your guard that I may not, in my eagerness, deceive you as well as myself, and thus depart like a bee, leaving my sting in you.'"

This preparation for the answer to the arguments of Simmias and Cebes is somewhat prolix; and yet the last trait is very affecting, where Socrates begs his friends to prefer the Truth, even to the Hope of Immortality which he cherishes, now that he is compelled to leave life. The preparation is still further lengthened by a brief re-statement of the arguments.

92 "Well: we must get on," he said; "and first put me in mind what you said, if I do not recollect it aright. Simmias, I think, is doubtful and afraid that the Soul, though it be something more divine and more excellent than the body, may yet perish before it, being of the nature of a Harmony. And Cebes seemed to grant me that the soul might be more durable than the body, but he thought nobody would know whether the soul, having worn out many bodies, might perish on leaving the last body; and that this might be death, the true death which annihilates the Soul. Is this what you say, Simmias and Cebes?"—They agreed that it was.

"But whether," said he, "do you reject all our former doctrines, or only some of them?"—They said they rejected some and accepted others.—"And what," said he, "do you say of that doctrine in which we held that learning is recollect-

ing; and that this being so, the soul must have existed somewhere, before it was in the body?"

"I," said Cebes, "accepted that doctrine before with perfect faith, and I still hold to it as firmly as one can hold anything."

"I too," said Simmias, "am of the same mind; 93 and I should be much surprised if I ever came to think otherwise."

"Yet," said Socrates, "my good Theban friend, you must come to think otherwise, if you hold to the opinion that the soul is a Harmony arising from the composition of the body and the relations of its elements. For you will not venture to say that the harmony thus arising from composition existed before the parts were put together."

"Certainly not, Socrates."

"And yet, if you reflect, you will see that you do say this, when you say that the soul exists before that it comes into a human form, and yet that the soul is the Harmony of the parts of the body. A harmony is not like the soul in this. The lyre, the strings, the sounds, must be there first; and the harmony comes last of all. Your two doctrines do not chime together at all."—"They do not," says Simmias.

"And yet if any doctrines should *chime together*, it is doctrines about *harmony*."—"They should," says Simmias. 94

"But at present they do not. Take your choice then. Which of the two opinions will you hold by; that learning is recollecting, or that the soul is a harmony?"

"I must prefer the former, Socrates," said he. "The latter I took up without proof on mere probability, for its prettiness, as other persons do. But I know by experience how fallacious such probabilities are, as one may see especially in geometry. But the doctrine about learning and re-

collecting is demonstrated on sound principles. It was proved that the soul is something anterior to the Body, as the Idea is anterior to the things which we observe and call after the name of the Idea;—as the Idea of Goodness is anterior to our observation of things that are good;—as the Idea of space is anterior to our observation of things in space, such as figures. This, as I am persuaded, is rightly and completely proved; and therefore I cannot say, nor allow others to say, that the Soul is a Harmony.”

95 To confirm him in this judgment, Socrates proceeds to refute still further, the doctrine that the Soul is a Harmony. His arguments are these.

“Harmony is the agreement of parts; and the parts which comprise the harmony may agree more or less; and accordingly as they do, there is more or less harmony. But we cannot say that there is in different cases more or less Soul; that one Soul is more a Soul than another.”

96 Again: “It is held by philosophers that Virtue and Wisdom are the harmony, vice and folly the disharmony or discord of the Soul. Hence if the Soul be a Harmony, we have a harmony *of* a harmony, and a disharmony of a harmony. But how can this be, if one Soul be not more a Soul than another?

97 “And hence, also, if the Soul were a harmony, no Soul would be vicious.”

98 Again: “The parts of the Soul are sometimes opposed to one another: as when a man is thirsty, and controls himself and abstains from drinking. Here one part of the Soul is so far from being in harmony with another, that it checks and thwarts it: Reason opposes Appetite and Desire and Anger. So in Homer Ulysses, repressing his rage,

Smote on his breast, rebuked his swelling heart :  
‘Bear this too, heart; thou hast borne worse than this.’

Do you think that Homer, when he wrote this, thought that the soul was a Harmony? Did he not think it something of a much higher nature, in which there is a ruling principle? and shall we contradict the divine poet?"—Simmias assents to these arguments.

The arguments against the soul being a mere Harmony of the parts of the Body, are really ingenious, and acutely put; and we can assent to the conviction which they are represented as producing: especially if we accept Plato's doctrine of Preexistent Ideas, which, as I have said, is replaced among the moderns by the doctrine of Innate Ideas. And having thus victoriously disposed of one of the objectors, he turns somewhat triumphantly to the other, with an allusion to the two founders of the city to which Simmias and Cebes belonged, whom mythology spoke of as Harmonia and Cadmus. "We have found Harmony propitious to us," he says, "let us now propitiate Cadmus:" perhaps implying that he would make Cebes's arguments destroy one another, as Cadmus's earth-born soldiers did.

This, the last of the arguments for the Immortality of the Soul which the dying Socrates delivers, we should be especially desirous of presenting in an intelligible and persuasive form. It is however very difficult to do so; for though he begins by re-stating Cebes's difficulty, his reasonings do not apply with any closeness to Cebes's view, but rather fall back upon the most general questions, and seem addressed to other arguments rather than that of Cebes. In order to preserve unity in this Dialogue, I shall, in translating this part of it, abridge some portions so as to carry on the argument more directly.

"Cebes said, 'I do not doubt but that you will 100

answer my objection; you have answered that of Simmias about harmony, in a way incomparably more complete than I thought possible. He was defeated at the first onset. The same will very likely happen to me.'

"'My friend,' said Socrates, 'let us have no boasting, for fear that envy may damage our discourse beforehand. We are in the hands of God; but let us go on side by side, as Homer says.

101 "'The sum of what you say is this: you wish to have the soul proved to be indestructible and immortal, that a person who has lived as a philosopher, when he comes to die, may have reason to trust that he will be happy after death. You are not satisfied that the soul should be very durable only. If we cannot prove it to be immortal, we have still reason to fear. I repeat your objections on purpose that nothing may escape us. Have you anything to add or to take away?'—'Nothing,' says Cebes: 'you have stated my meaning rightly.'

102 "Then Socrates, having been silent for a time, as to collect himself, said: 'It is no small matter, Cebes, that you require. For we must discuss the causes of generation and destruction. Well then; I will, if you choose, tell you the course of my thoughts on such subjects; and you may judge if the history is of any use in this case.'—'I should by all means,' said Cebes, 'wish to hear it.'

"'Then I will tell you. When I was a young man, Cebes, I was wonderfully taken with what they call Natural Philosophy. It seemed to me an admirable thing to know the *cause* of everything; why it is produced and why it is destroyed, and why it exists. I was vastly curious about such inquiries as these: whether heat and

moisture by fermentation give birth to animals, as some said: whether that by which we think be the blood, or air, or fire; or whether none of these, but the brain be the organ by which we have our sensations—hearing, seeing, smelling; and whether memory and opinion arise from these, and when these acquire fixity, they become knowledge. And in the same way, looking at the causes of 103 destruction, and at the phenomena of the earth and the heavens, at last I appeared to myself to be as stupid at these matters, as it is possible to be. And I will give you a proof of this. I got so perplexed, that what I had seemed to know well before, I no longer knew. For instance: how it is that a man grows? I had thought that it was by eating and drinking; and that out of his food flesh is added to flesh, and bone to bone, and to each organ its appropriate substance, and thus a small body becomes a large one, and a little man a great one. Does not this seem to you reasonable?—‘Certainly,’ said Cebes.”

He then goes on to explain how these simple 104 and obvious notions of causation had been perplexed and obscured by more subtle speculations. We must suppose that the speculations to which he refers had obtained a considerable hold upon the minds of men at that time, though to us now they appear puerile and barren subtleties. The questions discussed were of this kind: What is the *cause* why ten is more than eight? Is it the two that are added to the eight? When one added to one makes two, is the cause of its being two the first one, or the second one, or the addition? If neither of the ones was two, how did they become two by being put together? If one is divided into 105 two, does division make two here, as addition did before?

We need not wonder that Socrates was dissatisfied with such inquiries as these. He sought, he says, for some other line of speculation. And he happened to hear some one read from a book of Anaxagoras that Mind or Intelligence was what had ordered everything, and was the cause of everything. With this notion he was delighted. He thought it was a promising doctrine, that Mind was the cause of everything. He thought that this being so, Mind must place each thing and person  
106 where it is best that they should be. And therefore, if we would learn the cause why anything is produced or destroyed or exists, we must learn where it is best that it should exist or do or suffer: and thus, man would need no study, except the study of What is Best. Knowing this, he would know all. "And so I was delighted to have found in Anaxagoras the teacher of causation whom I had sought for."

"I thought that he would tell me whether the earth is flat or round, by shewing which of the two it was better that it should be: that if he said it was in the middle of the universe, he would shew that it was better that it should be in the middle. And if he could shew me this, I should not want,  
107 I conceived, any other cause. And so about the sun, and the moon, and the stars, their rates of moving, their paths in the sky, and their other phenomena, I expected that he would shew how it is best that each should do what it does. I thought that, as he said it was Mind which ordered the whole, he would never assign any other cause for their arrangements than that it was best they should be so arranged. I thought he would apply this notion of what was best to each part and to the whole. I would not for any consideration have parted with my hopes. I got his

books immediately, and read them eagerly, that I might forthwith know about the better and the worse."

This craving for a system which should give a reason of this kind for all the arrangements of the physical and moral world is, doubtless, very natural to the human mind, when it has accepted the belief of a Supreme Intelligence directing and disposing all things. Systems of Natural Philosophy framed on such a basis have been devised by ingenious men at various times; for instance, by Descartes, and by Leibnitz. But they have always failed to bear a close examination; and it does not appear that such knowledge is within the reach of the human powers. Hence those who cannot be satisfied without such systems are always liable to the disappointment which Socrates describes as having befallen him.

"I was dashed down," he says, "from these 108 lofty hopes, when as I went on, I found that my author made no use of his 'Mind,' nor referred to it as the source of the arrangements of the world; but assigned as causes, airs and ethers, and fluids and the like. It seemed to me as if any one, after saying that Socrates does all that he does in virtue of his Mind, and then proceeding to assign the cause why I am sitting here, should say, that my body is composed of bones and muscles; that the bones are solid, and separate, and that the muscles can be contracted and extended, and are all inclosed in the flesh and skin; and that the bones, being jointed, can be drawn by the muscles, and so I can move my legs as you see; and that this is the reason why I am sitting here.

"And as if again he were to assign the like 109 causes for the fact that I am now talking with you;—making the causes to be air and voice and



hearing, and the like ; and were not to mention the true cause,—that the Athenians thought it best to condemn me, and that I thought it best to remain here, and to suffer the sentence which they have pronounced. For most assuredly these bones and muscles would long ago have carried me to Megara or to Bœotia, moved by my opinion of what was best, if I had not thought it more right and honourable to submit to the sentence pronounced by the State, than to run away from it. To call such things *causes* is absurd. If indeed any one were to say that without having bones and muscles and the like I could not do what I wish, he would say truly : but that I do what I do *because* of these, and not because of my choice of what is best, would be a gross abuse of language.

110 “For there is a great difference between that which is *the cause*, and that without which the cause would not produce its effect. And yet many men, groping in the dark, as it were, call this, which is a mere condition, *a cause*. And hence one man surrounds the earth with a vortex which revolves while the earth is at rest ; another puts a large bowl over the air ; but they never attempt to shew that it is best it should be so : they do not place their universe upon this, the strongest foundation, namely, the Greatest Good ; but seek for some Atlas stronger still, to bear it up upon his shoulders.”

As I have said, a sound system of the *physical* universe, founded upon the doctrine of the Greatest Good, is perhaps not possible for man. But the belief that the *moral* world—that man and his destinies—are directed for the best, has been always one of the strongest grounds for the belief in a future life, in which virtuous men will receive the happiness for which they were preparing them-

selves in this life. That the world is governed by Intelligence on such a plan, was a consideration which, it would seem, Socrates might here have introduced with great propriety to justify the hopes which he was cherishing. If Anaxagoras had not so used his doctrine of a Supreme Intelligence, Socrates might have, on this occasion, supplied the deficiency left by his predecessor. This he does not expressly do: though the thought is perhaps suggested by what is said, and has its influence upon the reader's convictions\*.

But instead of dwelling upon this view, Socrates goes on to describe the next line of speculation into which he was led; his second voyage in search of a satisfactory view of causation, as he calls it: which he says he is willing to relate, and which Cebes expresses a great desire to hear. His 111 account is that he was then led to look at things themselves; and, in short, led to the doctrine of 112 Ideas, which he afterwards so constantly insisted upon;—that Beauty, and Goodness, and Greatness, and the like, were realities, by partaking of which things were beautiful, and good, and great: that 113 the real *cause* why anything was beautiful was the presence of beauty: that greatness was the cause why things were greater, and smallness, why they were less. One man cannot be *greater* than 114 another *by the head*, as a *cause*. For then the second would be *less* than the first by the same cause; an absurdity which makes Cebes laugh. When one is added to one, two is produced, not by 115 addition, but by partaking the nature of duality.

This is assented to as a very clear account of 116 the matter by Simmias and Cebes in the Dialogue;

\* Some further remarks on this subject will be made at the end of the Dialogue.

and by Echecrates the listener, and Phædo the narrator, in this repetition of it. And upon this is founded a chain of reasoning of some considerable length and complexity, of which the result is declared to be that the Soul is immortal and indestructible.

I have already said we are naturally desirous of seeing this last argument of Socrates in an intelligible and persuasive form. It is difficult to give it such a form, but the general purport of it  
 117 may be stated to be this. The Ideas of things,  
 to which represent their essence, are really their  
 128 causes; and no external causes can overmaster these. And in these Ideas, besides the fundamental attribute, we have often some accessory attribute, necessarily combined with it: thus with the Idea of *three* is necessarily combined the Idea of *odd* number. Now the Soul is the Principle of Life; and as such, our Idea of it is opposite to Death: and thus by its Essence it is Immortal. And with the Idea of Immortal is necessarily connected the Idea of Indestructible: the soul therefore is immortal and indestructible, in spite of any external cause, such as the physical circumstances of death. When death comes to a man, his mortal part dies, the immortal part lives; and thus our souls shall  
 129 exist in another world. Cebes and Simmias assent to this reasoning; though with some remaining scruples, Simmias says, arising, he adds, from the greatness of the subject.

Socrates then draws his inferences from this doctrine. "It is right," he says, "to bear in mind this: that if the soul be immortal, it requires our care, not only during the time that we call life, but for all time; and great is our danger if we neglect  
 130 it. If death were the end of all, it would be a gain for the wicked to get rid of their body and of

their wickedness at the same time, when their soul departs. But since the soul is immortal, there is no help for it except to make it good and wise: for it carries nothing with it into the other world, but the preparation which it has received here."

Having thus asserted his conviction of a life of the soul after death, Socrates is led to describe in detail the condition and history of the soul after it has quitted the body, and the regions to which it is then admitted. He does this without pretending that his account is exact, but this he says, or something like this (§ 146), must be true. His picture of the other world is borrowed partly from the mythological tales of the poets and priests, partly from the physical speculations of the philosophers, and is in a good measure, as we can perceive, expanded and adorned by Plato's own imagination.

"This," he says, "is the account. The 'Dæmon' or Angel which had the care of each man while he was alive, proceeds to take him to the general place of judgment, there to be detained his appointed time, and to return after stated periods. The roads to Hades are many and complex, and a guide is needed. The good and well-ordered soul 131 follows the guiding angel gladly; but the carnal soul clings to the body, and lingers about its earthly haunts, and can hardly be led away. The impure soul, polluted with evil deeds, is shunned by other souls and wanders long in misery: the pure and well-conducted soul finds its appointed habitation."

He then proceeds to describe the Universe, and 132 the regions of happiness and misery which exist in it; and here we see many traces of Plato's own speculations on these subjects. He makes Socrates say that he is convinced that the earth is in many respects different from the account commonly

given of it. "I am persuaded," he says, "that if it is circular and placed in the middle of the heavens, it requires neither the surrounding air nor any other machinery to prevent its falling: it will preserve its balance and its centrality.

- 133 "In the next place, it is very large. The part that we inhabit, from Phasis in the Euxine to the Pillars of Hercules, is a small depression, in which we live like frogs or ants round a pool. There are many other such hollows of various forms and sizes, and in these are collected all the water and vapour and air; but the earth, where it rises above these depressions, is a purer region, being there in the ether which is above the air, and in which the
- 134 stars are. We are in the mere sediment of the Universe. We think we are on the surface of the earth; but that is only as if any one living at the bottom of the ocean, and seeing the sun and the stars through the water, should think that the water was the sky. So we think the air is the sky. If we could rise above the air into the ether, the change would be as great as for the supposed spectator to rise out of the ocean into the air. We should then see the
- 135 true light and the true heaven. And in those ethereal regions everything is bright and pure. Here everything is dimmed and corroded as things in the sea are by the salt water. As the sea is full of mud and dirt, while the objects on the earth are brighter and finer, so the objects in the ethereal region are brighter and clearer far than what we
- 136 have here. The earth is a ball like one of the balls which are made with twelve faces, of different bright colours, of which the brightest colours used by painters are faint shadows: one part is purple of exquisite hue, another golden, another whiter than alabaster or snow; and other colours more beautiful than we have ever seen. The ob-

jects which are produced here, in these lower parts, immersed in water or in air, have some tinge of those colours; but the trees and the fruits which are produced there, and even the mountains and the stones, have colours and a polish and a transparency far more exquisite: of which our most precious gems here are only specimens; sardine stone, and jasper, and emerald, and the like; there, these and things more beautiful still, are the common materials of the earth. For there nothing is 137 corrupted or corroded. And thus the earth is a fit spectacle for blessed spectators. And this earth has inhabitants, some of whom live on the shores of those seas of air, others in more central parts of the continents, and some in islands surrounded by air. Our air is as their water, their ether as our air. Their climate is such that they have no dis- 138 eases, and live far longer than men here, and hence the senses of sight and hearing and smell are as much more acute with them as air is clearer than water, or ether than air.

“They have also temples and sacred groves, in which the gods really inhabit; and oracles and prophecies and visions of the gods and intercourse with them. They see the sun and the moon as they are. And with them all is happiness.

“This is the condition of the upper earth: and further, there are in it cavities which run much deeper than the hollow which we inhabit. And 139 these subterraneous cavities all communicate with one another. Through these communications run subterraneous rivers, some of cold, some of hot water; some of fire, some of mud, like the streams of lava and of mud which flow in Sicily; and these are all kept flowing by a kind of see-saw inside the earth. The oscillation is thus produced. One of the chasms in the earth, the greatest of all, is

bored entirely through the earth;—the one of which Homer speaks,

Far down the deepest gulf that yawns in earth :

and he and other poets call it Tartarus. Into this gulf flow all the rivers, and out of it again: and the  
 140 cause is this. The gulf has no bottom; and the fluid which falls into it oscillates up and down, and the air and the vapour follows it both when it moves to that side of the earth and to this: and thus there is a motion like breathing, by which the waters and the winds go in and go out. And thus the waters come forth and make rivers and  
 141 lakes and seas, and then run in again, by courses of various lengths, and fall back into Tartarus; some at points much lower than their source, some only a little lower; but all somewhat lower; and some on the same side as their source, others on the opposite side; for some make a whole circle in their course, or even wind round the earth several times like a snake: and thus they fall in at some lower point, which may be as low down as the centre on each side, but cannot be lower; for after that point, they would have to reascend.

“Among these rivers, there are four especially noticeable: Oceanus which runs round the whole; Acheron which runs in the opposite direction to this, and ends in the lake Acherusias; where the souls of the dead arrive and stay an appointed time, longer or shorter, till they again enter living  
 142 bodies. The third river is Pyriphlegethon, a fiery river which makes a lake of boiling water and mud and fire larger than our sea; and flows round the earth, and touches the Acherusian lake but mixes not with it: of which we see fiery streams break through our earth. The fourth river makes the Stygian lake, of azure hue, which sinks into

the earth, curves round opposite to the Pyriphlegethon, and falls into the Acherusian lake on the opposite side, and into Tartarus: this is the Cocytus.

“This being the state of the region, the angel 143 takes each departed soul first to the place where judgment is passed, as to who have lived well and holily and who have not. Those who have lived a medium life, not quite good and not quite bad, are made to float down the Acheron till they come to the lake, and there they stay till they are purged from their misdeeds. They who have been guilty of deeper crimes, sacrilege and murder and the like, are cast into Tartarus, whence they never come forth. Those who have committed crimes great, 144 but not beyond cure, as violence done to parents, or homicide committed in wrath, and who have repented all the rest of their lives, those too must be cast into Tartarus, but when they have been there a year, the flood casts them forth, and drives them—the homicides to Cocytus—the strikers of father or mother to Pyriphlegethon; and when they have been carried to the Acherusian lake, they call for mercy to those whom they have injured, and if they obtain it, they are liberated and their torments cease; but if not, they are again carried to Tartarus, and again along the rivers, and so round and round till they have obtained the forgiveness of the injured persons.

“But those who have lived in eminent holi- 145 ness, are taken from this region as from a prison, and placed in that pure upper region of the earth. Those who have been duly purified by philosophy live without bodies ever afterwards, and arrive at even more glorious habitations, which we have neither time nor power to describe. But even for the sake of those which I have described, we must,



Simmius, do everything we can, to be good and wise in this life. The prize is high, the hope is great.

“To assert positively that everything is as I have described, is not the part of a sensible man. But that this, or something like this, is the destiny of our immortal souls, appears to me a reasonable belief,—a belief on which one may fairly rest one’s hopes. For the risk is overbalanced by the gain; and it is well to find a charm for one’s fears; and on this account it is that I thus prolong my tale.

146 Let him then take courage as to the destiny of his Soul, who has, during life, disregarded bodily pleasures and worldly adornments, as things strangers to him and leading rather to evil; and who has adorned his soul with the true graces which do belong to it, justice and courage and freedom and truth; and who then awaits his passage to the other world, when his time shall come. And you,” said he, “Simmius and Cebes, and the rest, will each have to make this voyage at your appointed time. But as a tragedian would say, Destiny calls me now: and it is almost time to go to the bath; for it seems better to bathe before I drink the poison, than to leave the women the trouble of washing a corpse.”

147 “When he said this, Crito remarked: ‘Be it so, Socrates: but what directions have you to give to me or to your other friends about your children, or any other matter which we can do to gratify you?’—‘What I have always been saying,’ he replied: ‘nothing new. That if you take good care of yourselves you will always gratify me and mine most, even if you made me no promise now: and that if you neglect your own real good, and do not follow faithfully the course of life which I have urged both now and on former occasions,

you will not do anything to any purpose, however much you may now promise.'—'This,' said we, 'we will do with all our hearts. But in what way shall we bury thee?'—'Even as you will,' said he, 'if you catch me, and I do not give you the slip.' And then smiling quietly, and looking at us, he 148 said: 'I cannot persuade Crito, my friends, that it is I who am now talking with you, and determining what to say. He thinks that *I* am that dead body which he will soon see here, and asks me how he shall bury me. And all this long discourse which I have been delivering, to shew that when I have drunk the poison I shall be with you no longer, but shall depart hence to the happiness of the blessed, I have delivered to no purpose, so far as he is concerned; as if I had said it merely to comfort you and myself.

“‘My friends, Crito offered to be my security to the judge, that I would *not* run away: I want you to be my security to him that I *shall*, when I am dead, go away to another place. Assure him of this, that when he sees my body burnt or buried, he may not grieve for me as if some terrible calamity had happened to me; that at the funeral, he do not say that *Socrates* is laid on the bier, or carried to the grave, or laid therein. For be well 149 assured,’ said he, ‘my excellent Crito, that to use such improper language is not only an absurdity but also does harm to people. You must speak comfortably, and say that you bury *my body*. And bury it, I beg, in that way which is most pleasing to you and most agreeable to the laws.’

“As he said this, he rose and passed into an inner chamber, to take the bath, and Crito followed him; but us he bade remain behind. So we stayed, partly discoursing and speculating about what had been said, and partly speaking of the

great calamity we were about to suffer: we were, we said, to be fatherless for the rest of our lives. And when he had bathed, and his children were brought to him—he had two small boys and one great one—and the women of his family came, and he had talked with them in the presence of Crito, and given his directions, he ordered the women and the children to be taken away: and he himself came to us.

150 “It was now near sunset, for he had stayed a long time within. And coming to us after his bath, he sat, and did not say much after this. And the Servant of the Eleven came and stood before him, and said, ‘Socrates, I shall not have to complain of you as I have of many, that they are angry with me, and curse me when I announce to them, as my duty to the magistrates requires me, that they must drink the poison. On all former occasions I have found you the most generous and gentle and best of all who ever came here; and now I know that you do not blame me, for you know who are the cause of it, and you give the blame to them. And now—for you know what I come to announce,—be of good cheer, and try to bear as best you may what must be borne.’ And so saying, he wept and turned away.

151 “And Socrates, looking at him, said: ‘And do thou, too, be of good cheer. We will do what thou sayest.’ And then, to us, ‘How courteous,’ said he, ‘is the man! During the time I have been here, he has been in the habit of coming to me and talking with me, and was the best of men. And now how kindly he weeps for me. But come, Crito,’ said he, ‘let us do as he bids. Let some one bring the poison if it is ground; and if not, let the man grind it.’ And Crito said, ‘I think, Socrates, the sun is still upon the mountains, and

has not yet set. I have known persons who have drunk the poison late in the evening; who after the announcement was made to them, supped well and drank well, and enjoyed the society of their dearest friends. Do not act in haste. There is yet time.'

" 'Probably,' said Socrates, 'those who did as you say, thought that it was a gain to do so: and I have equally good reasons for not doing so. I shall gain nothing by drinking the poison a little later, except to make myself ridiculous to myself, as if I were so fond of life that I would cling to it when it is slipping away. But go,' he said; 'do as I say, and no otherwise.'

"On this, Crito made a sign to the servant 152 who stood by: and he going out, after some time, brought in the man who was to administer the poison, which he brought prepared in a cup. And Socrates, seeing the man, said: 'Well, my excellent friend, you are skilful in this matter: what am I to do?'—'Nothing,' said he; 'but when you have drunk it, walk about till your legs feel heavy, and then lie down. The drink will do the rest.'

8 And at the same time he offered the cup to Socrates. And he, taking it, said very calmly (I assure you, Echecrates, without trembling or changing colour or countenance, but, as his wont was, looking with protruded brow at the man,) 'Tell me,' said he, 'about this beverage; is there any to spare for a libation; or is that not allowable?' And he replied, 'We prepare so much, Socrates, as we think to be needed for the potion.'—'I understand,' said he: 'but at least it is allow- 153 able and it is right to pray to the gods that our passage from hence to that place may be happy. This I pray, and so may it be.' And as he said

this, he put the cup to his lips and drank it off with the utmost serenity and sweetness.

“Up to this time the greater part of us were able to restrain our tears; but when we saw him drink the potion and take the cup from his lips, we could refrain no longer. For my part, in spite of myself, my tears flowed so abundantly that I drew my mantle over my head and wept to myself, not grieving for Socrates, but for my own loss of such a friend.

154 “And Crito had risen up and gone away already ready, being unable to restrain his tears. Apollodorus, even before this, had been constantly weeping; and now burst into a passion of grief, wailing and sobbing, so that every one was moved to tears except Socrates himself. And he said: ‘O my friends, what are you doing? On this account mainly I sent the women away, that they might not behave so unwisely: for I have heard that we ought to die with good words in our ears. Be silent then and be brave.’ And we, at hearing this, were ashamed, and refrained ourselves from weeping. And he walking about, when he said his legs felt heavy, lay down on his back; for so the man directed. And the man who gave him the poison came near him, and after a time examined his feet and legs, and squeezing his foot strongly, asked him if he felt anything; and he said he did not. And then he felt his legs, and so upwards; and shewed us that they were cold and  
155 stiff. And feeling them himself, he said that when the cold reached his heart, he would depart. And now the lower part of the body was already cold, and he uncovering his face, for he had covered it, said—the last words that he spoke—‘Crito,’ said he, ‘we owe a cock to Æsculapius: discharge it and

do not neglect it.'—'It shall be done,' said Crito.—To this he made no reply; but after a little time there was a movement in the body; and the man uncovered him, and his eyes were set. And hereupon Crito closed his mouth and his eyes. This 156 was the end, Echecrates, of our friend: of all the men whom we have known, the best, the wisest, and the most just."

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### REMARKS ON THE PHÆDO.

It seems almost superfluous to discuss the genuineness of the Phædo as a work of Plato. The dramatic beauty and the philosophical interest of the Dialogue place it in the foremost rank of the Platonic Dialogues. The manner in which the work has been accepted in all succeeding ages as an example of the style and the philosophy of Plato, and as the best picture of the character which he ascribes to his Master, Socrates, make it necessarily a cardinal point in the general conception of Plato the writer, as well as of Socrates the philosopher. This is so much the case that if it could be proved that the Phædo was not the work of Plato, we should still continue to feel at least as much interest and curiosity about the author of the Phædo as about the Plato the author of any of the other Platonic Dialogues. If there were another writer who was the author of a class of these Dialogues and not of this Dialogue, still there must have been a most admirable philosopher and beautiful writer who was the author of this and of those which are to be classed with it; and this author is a Plato as remarkable and valuable as Plato the son of Aristo.

But in fact there is no reasonable ground to doubt that the author of the Phædo was the historical Plato. The only objection which has been raised against this is an Epigram in the Greek Anthology, in which it is supposed by some to be asserted that Panætius denied the genuineness of this Dialogue. In this Epigram, the Dialogue itself is introduced as stating its case; a

mode of representing the argument of which Plato himself has examples. It says :

“If Plato did not write me, then were there two Platos. I exhibit all the flowers of the Socratic Discourses, yet Panætius called me spurious. He who denied the immortality of the soul, denied the genuineness of me.”

This single anonymous testimony, (for the author of the Epigram is quite unknown,) even if it meant what is supposed, can be of no weight against the host of witnesses whose testimony we have on the other side. But in addition to this, we can point out what was probably the purport of the Epigram.

Panætius was a moralist of the Stoic school ; much admired by Cicero, whose Treatise *On Duties* had a similar work of Panætius for its basis. As was the manner of the Stoics, Panætius did not assume the Immortality of the Soul as one of the bases of his doctrine. This Cicero repeatedly says. The same Cicero also repeatedly and undoubtingly speaks of the Phædo as a genuine work of Plato. Does Cicero then take no notice of the opposition of Panætius to the Phædo of Plato ? Of the opposition of doctrine with regard to the Immortality of the Soul, he does : but of the opposition of Panætius to the genuineness of the Phædo, he says nothing, and knows nothing. What he says is this \* : “Herein Panætius does not agree in opinion with his Master, Plato. From him—whom he everywhere calls the divine, the wisest, the holiest ; whom he names the Homer of philosophers ;—from him, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul alone he does not accept.” If Panætius had denied the genuineness of the Phædo, Cicero must have said so here. He must have said that he did not accept the doctrine and that he denied the genuineness of the Dialogue in which the doctrine is most emphatically asserted. Certainly the doctrine is abundantly asserted in other Platonic Dialogues ; and the contrast between Panætius’s admiration of Plato and his rejection of this leading doctrine of his, would still have remained : but the contrast would have been so curiously modified by such an opinion about the Phædo, which Cicero himself esteemed certainly genuine, that he must here have referred to the opinion.

But there can be little doubt that the Epigram-writer either

\* *Quæst. Tusc. l. 32.*

intended to say what Cicero has said, or that he had read some such statement and misunderstood it. Panætius had perhaps asserted the Immortality of the Soul not to be a *genuine* part of the Platonic philosophy: this is very possible. And the Epigrammatist either meant to say the same, or mistook the genuineness of the doctrine for that of the Dialogue.

The Phædo, then, is to be taken, not only as a genuine but as a cardinal work of Plato;—as one of the Dialogues which most prominently exhibit Plato's doctrines and his mode of presenting them. At what period of Plato's life was it written and published?

If we read this Dialogue without any reference to a general system of exposition supposed to be traceable in the Platonic Dialogues, it will not occur to us to assign its composition to any other period than the time immediately following the death of Socrates.

The Dialogue is an account of Socrates's discourse and behaviour in his last hours, given in detail with the utmost particularity, going into minute circumstances, as his looks and attitudes, living and dying; an account addressed to all Greece, so far as he and his disciples and his philosophy had been heard of. Such a narrative would be of the greatest interest at the time, but would lose its charm with the lapse of every year. It bears the impress of the feeling of the scene, still living, still present. There breathes throughout a deep melancholy, made more poignant by the cheerfulness of Socrates himself. It does not hold by time, to write in this strain while the grief is recent, to readers who share the recent grief.

Schleiermacher however holds an opinion concerning Plato's mode of expounding his doctrines, which leads him to place the Phædo at a later period. He conceives that Plato had always and from the first a complete scheme of doctrine and exposition in his mind, that he (Schleiermacher) has discovered this system, and that the chronology of the Dialogue must be arranged in conformity to it. I have already said that the general habits of philosophical writers are not thus methodical and systematic, and that Schleiermacher's attempt to trace such a system in the



Platonic Dialogues appears to me to fail entirely. There is not, for instance, the relation between the doctrines of the Protagoras, the Charmides, and the Laches, which the system assumes. Let us see what is the theory for the Phædo. It is this\*: Plato had in the Sophist propounded the triple Problem:—What is the Sophist?—What is the Ruler?—What is the Philosopher? He had answered the first two questions in the *Sophistes* and the *Politicus*. He had to answer the third. This he has done in the *Banquet* and the *Phædo* combined. In the *Banquet* and the *Phædo* we have a representation of the Philosopher living and dying; pouring libations from the winecup or from the poison-chalice; in the *Phædo*, drawing from the contemplation of Ideas, Wisdom immortal as Ideas are; in the *Symposium*, implanting Wisdom in the souls of others and thus making it immortal."

Hence it is inferred that the *Phædo* was written many years after the death of Socrates, and contemporaneously with the *Symposium*.

To a person who is not disposed to receive this complex theory with implicit deference on the ground of its authorship, many questions must occur, which seem to admit of no answer, except such as destroys the theory. Are the *Symposium* and the *Phædo* Dialogues thus parallel and thus complementary to each other? Does the *Banquet* represent the life of a Philosopher? Does the *Phædo* represent the death of the philosopher in the abstract? Does the *Banquet* shew us how the Philosopher gives immortality to wisdom? And then, with regard to the relation between these two Dialogues and the *Sophistes* and *Politicus*: what resemblance of parallelism or sympathy is there between the living, intense drama of the *Banquet* and the dead, strings of questions and answers in the *Sophistes* and *Politicus*, mere catechetical lectures of an anonymous Eleatic stranger, undramatic, un-Socratic, (for Socrates is entirely obscured,) un-Platonic, (because undramatic,) and as we hold, anti-Platonic in doctrine. To make a Trilogy of which these two Dialogues are the first terms, and the *Banquet* and *Phædo* combined, the third, appears to be carrying the process of arbitrary system-making as far as it can go.

\* Schl. *Introd. to Banquet and to Phædo.*

But a more plausible ground for questioning the early date of the Phædo may be found in other considerations. We may ask, Was Plato, at the time of the death of Socrates, in his thirtieth year, in possession of the doctrines which are asserted and explained in the Phædo? and especially the doctrine of Ideas, which is made the basis of one of the arguments for the Immortality of the Soul?

The doctrine, it will be recollected, is this: that to learn any truth involves a recollection of Ideas already existing in the soul, which that truth implies (§ 47): thus that when we judge stocks or stones to be equal, we must already have an idea of equality (§ 50). And this idea of equality is expressed in a peculiar and technical manner, *Equality itself*\*: and is distinguished from the objects to which the adjective is applied, *equal things*†. There are two different classes of things, the invisible, which are permanent and unchangeable; the visible, which are always changing (§ 64). All these changeable things have their qualities by partaking of the essential thing. Things which are beautiful are beautiful by *partaking* of beauty‡.

Undoubtedly these are leading points in the Platonic doctrine of Ideas; and we have here, even the technical expressions which are employed in expounding that doctrine, even in the latest Dialogues; for instance, in the Republic. Is this a valid argument that the Phædo is not an early Dialogue?

I reply that it is not, on this account: We cannot trace, in the Platonic Dialogues, any progressive stages of this doctrine. It would seem that Plato held the doctrine from the first, and in this form. We have strong reason to believe that Socrates did not hold it; at least in any steady and systematic manner. We are told by Xenophon§ that at one time, he rejected the notion of an abstract good, which was absolutely good, and not merely good in relation to its purposes. But Plato probably held this doctrine, even during the life of Socrates; and probably it was discussed among the friends of Socrates, and held by many of them. It is referred to in the Phædo, as having been constantly assumed and asserted. It is, Socrates says (§ 112), what I have

\* αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον.

† τὰ ἴσα, § 51.

‡ § 112, καλὸν εἶναι διότι μετέχει ἐκείνου τοῦ καλοῦ.

§ Mem. iv. 6.

always been saying. I recur to those expressions we are always using\*: I begin from these. I assume that there is absolute beauty, absolute goodness, and the like. And Simmias declares that the existence of these Ideas, the Beautiful, the Good, and the like (§ 58) is an indestructible part of his belief. Whether Socrates, in his dying conversation, argued upon the assumption of this doctrine, may be doubted, notwithstanding this representation: for the whole style of the argument is Platonic, and so far as we know of Socrates from any other source, not Socratic. And we are compelled to suppose that in general Plato puts in the mouth of Socrates his own reasonings, rather than those which Socrates himself employed. But that Plato held these doctrines at this early period, we must needs suppose. The doctrine of Ideas is asserted in the Phædrus, which Schleiermacher and others hold to be an early Dialogue: and though we dissent from this opinion, we can point to the Meno, which we assign, on the strongest grounds, to the period before the death of Socrates; and there we find the tenet, that learning is recollecting, asserted distinctly, and proved at some length, as if it were a new doctrine. And this tenet, and the proof there given in the Meno, are expressly referred to, as we conceive, in the Phædo (§ 47). Hence I conclude that the doctrine of Ideas as here exhibited was an early opinion of Plato's; and that no argument can be founded on that opinion to make it probable that the Phædo was written at a later period.

In the speculations of Plato when he started from a Socratic ground, namely in his ethical speculations, we can perceive a progress: from the Charmides and the Laches, through the Philebus, the Phædrus, the Gorgias, to the Republic. The Socratic inquiries on *Ethics* gradually converged to the Platonic Ethical System; but the Platonic doctrine of *Ideas* was in Plato's mind from an early period of his speculations.

But did not Socrates also, at least before the close of his life, adopt this doctrine of Ideas? And did he not reason from it to prove the immortality of the Soul, as he is represented doing in the Phædo? Certainly it is difficult to believe that he did not in some degree do so. The Dialogue not only represents him as explaining and reasoning from this doctrine, but also as saying

\* ἐκεῖνα τὰ πολυθρύλλητα.

that he had long done so, and referring to the knowledge of his habitual companions for testimony of the fact. In his argument to prove that all learning is recollecting, he speaks of these Ideas as commonly referred to in a special technical form in their discussions (§ 54). Equality, and Beauty, and Goodness, and Rightness, and Holiness, and all those Ideas on which we put the seal of *Absolute* or *Essential*\* in our questions and in our answers. He returns to these Ideas in his concluding argument, (§ 112), and says there that he is propounding nothing new, but what he has all along been saying; and speaks of these Ideas of absolute Beauty and Goodness, and the like, as "those much talked of notions †;" and as I have said, Simmias recognizes them as long established and settled convictions in his mind (§ 58). Socrates had in his speculations tendencies which pointed towards such Ideas, for he sought in every case for Universal Definitions, as Aristotle says ‡: did he finally accept these Ideas as what he sought?

Considering how unlike Plato's technical mode of presenting Ideas is to all that we know from other sources, of Socrates's mode of teaching, I am disposed to say that, though that mode may have been current among the friends of Socrates before his death, and may have been accepted by some, for example, Simmias, it was not employed by Socrates himself. In this, as in other cases, Socrates, in Plato's Dialogues, expounds *Plato's* philosophy, not his own. And assuming this, I am inclined to think that the passage where Socrates is made to speak narratively of his adoption of the doctrine of Ideas (§§ 111, 112), *Plato* really had in his mind *his own* adoption of that doctrine. He says that he turned away from Sense to Reason; and resolved to find in Reason the cause of everything; and thus was led to conceive Ideas as the principle of all things. This, I consider, *Plato* gives as the history of his own mind; and this took place, even before the death of Socrates.

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As bearing upon the genuineness of the Phædo, I may make a remark suggested by a Dialogue commonly associated with the

\* οἱς ἐπισφραγίζομεθα τούτο, \*Ο'ΕΣΤΙ. † ἐκεῖνα τὰ πολυθρύλλητα.

‡ *Metaphys.* LXIII. c. 2.

Platonic Dialogues, but universally condemned as spurious, the *Aziochus*. This Dialogue is said by Diogenes to have been ascribed to *Æschines*, a scholar of Socrates. We may there see how possible it was for a Greek writer, perhaps of Plato's own time, to write a Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul, introducing Socrates as the teacher of that doctrine, and clothing the discussion in a garb of dramatic liveliness, and yet missing altogether the propriety and reality of feeling which we have in the *Phædo*. The Dialogue begins in a way that reminds us of the *Republic*.

“As I went out to the *Kunosarges*, (a gymnasium near Athens,) and had got as far as the *Ilissus*, I heard a voice behind me, crying, *Socrates, Socrates*: and when I turned round and looked to see who it was, I saw *Clinias* the son of *Axiochus*, running along *Callirhoe*, with *Damon* the musician and *Charmides* the son of *Glaucon*.” He describes the relations of these persons, and says that he turned back to meet them; and that *Clinias* said, weeping, “*Socrates*, now is the time to shew that wisdom of yours which is so much talked of: for my father is suddenly taken violently ill, and is at the point of death. And he is in consternation at the prospect of his end, although he has always been accustomed to deride and ridicule those who made a bugbear of death. Do you then come and persuade him, as you are wont, to bear with fortitude what must be borne. It is a duty of kindness and religion.” *Socrates* goes, and finds the sick man somewhat relieved, but still terrified at the prospect of death:—“to lie in cold obstruction and to rot”—to be turned to worms and vermin. *Socrates* represents to him that he is irrationally combining in his thoughts sensibility and death: that he will feel nothing because he will not exist. Further, he urges that we are soul, not body; that the soul is an immortal thing, imprisoned a while in the body; that the pains of life far surpass the pleasures. *Axiochus* asks him, why then he does not die. On this *Socrates* acknowledges that he has assumed a knowledge which is not his own; that he had bought it of *Prodicus* for a certain number of *drachmæ*: but that it was so convincing that he longed to die. He then goes on to speak further of the miseries of life; the disappointing nature of all professions and occupations; the diseases of age. He adds as evidences of the immortality of the soul, the

sciences which man has framed, and the great things which he has achieved, which shew it to be divine; "so that," he says, "Axiochus, you are not going to death, but to immortality; to a region of happiness, freedom, and truth." On this, Axiochus says: "You have changed my feeling entirely. I have no longer a fear of death, but even a desire for it. I already seem to tread on air, to run the eternal course. My weakness is gone; I am a new man." Socrates adds a mythological account of the next world, and the Dialogue closes.

This sudden conversion of the dying man by a few commonplace arguments, is very different from the struggles of feeling and opinion exhibited in the *Phædo*,<sup>9</sup> and any one can judge which is the more natural, dramatic, and philosophical.

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The subject of the *Phædo*,—the arguments which human reason can supply to establish the immortality of the human soul,—is of such immense interest to men in all ages, that attempts have naturally been made to adapt these arguments to the apprehension of each age. Such an adaptation is in some degree needed; for Plato's reasonings depend to a considerable extent upon the philosophical views and abstract phraseology current in his times, and are not, many of them, generally intelligible or convincing, in consequence of these views and this phraseology being now obsolete; and in each generation the most persuasive arguments on this subject, or at least the most persuasive ways of putting the arguments, must be governed by the current philosophy and current phraseology of the time. In each generation there can be no worthier employment for a philosopher than to present such arguments in the most lucid and convincing form; but such an undertaking would require a volume of itself. In the way of remarks on this Dialogue of Plato, I will only notice a few of the modes in which his reasonings have been dealt with.

English readers, who are most familiar with the notion of Plato as an advocate for the immortality of the soul by the way in which his name is introduced in the soliloquy uttered by Cato in Addison's celebrated Tragedy, will probably be surprised to

find that the reasoning which there seems to be ascribed to him is not to be found here.

It must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well—  
 Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
 This longing after immortality?  
 Or whence this secret dread, this inward horror  
 Of falling back to nought? Why shrinks the soul  
 Back on herself, and startles at destruction?  
 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us—  
 'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,  
 And intimates eternity to man.

This hope and longing, this secret dread, this inward horror, this shrinking and startling of the soul at the prospect of annihilation, this belief that these feelings are the suggestion of a great truth by a divine impulse, does not, as we have seen, occur in the Phædo. This reflexion must, it would seem, be regarded as an additional argument, arising in the mind of the speaker, and added by him to what he had read in Plato. In this mode of dealing with the subject there is nothing undramatical; but it is perhaps not made clear to the reader that this is what is intended.

In the last century considerable notice was excited in Germany by an attempt to modernize the argument of the Phædo. Moses Mendelssohn published in 1767 his "Phædo, or On the Immortality of the Soul;" a translation, or rather an imitation of Plato's Dialogue. In this work the arguments were, as was suitable to the design, connected with the current views of philosophy; though as the author maintained, without assuming any principles which were merely modern. The part to which we naturally look with most interest is the part which, as I have said in the translation, is least satisfactory in the original; namely the answer of Socrates to Cebes, in which is contained the last of the arguments before Socrates runs into mere mythology. Instead of this, we have, in Mendelssohn's Phædo, an argument introduced derived from the capacity for indefinite progression which exists in human nature;—an argument which also found great favour in the eyes of Addison, and to which he has devoted more than one paper in the *Spectator*. The nature of this argument will perhaps be sufficiently understood from the following sentences\*:

\* *Drittes Gespräch*, p. 194.

“We may then,” said Socrates, “with good grounds assume that this struggle towards completeness, this progress, this increase in inward excellence, is the destination of rational beings, and consequently is the highest purpose of creation. We may say that this immense structure of the world was brought into being that there may be rational beings which advance from stage to stage, gradually increase in perfection, and find their happiness in their progress: that these all should be stopped in the middle of their course, not only stopped, but at once pushed back into the abyss of nothingness, and all the fruits of their efforts lost, is what the Highest Being cannot have accepted and adopted into the plan of the universe.”

This is an important and weighty line of argument: but I think that speculations of Plato's own, published at a later period, might have supplied him with reasonings which might better take the place of those which in the Phædo we feel to be unsatisfactory.

I refer especially to speculations concerning the nature of the Soul and of the Universe contained in the Seventh Book of the Republic. We are there told that while the phenomena of the Universe are the objects of sensation and mere opinion, there are realities which are the object of true knowledge. The former compose the Sensible World,\* the latter the Intelligible World. The former is a world of transient appearances, the latter a world of eternal truths. These eternal truths are the real constituent principles of the Universe; the laws according to which the Creator has framed the world; the fundamental types in the Divine Mind of all that exists in Nature.

Now the human mind, by the aid of philosophy, can rise to a knowledge of these realities; can become acquainted with the existence and can discern the evidence of these eternal verities. So far the human mind has a community of nature with the Divine Mind.

‘But if this be so, O my friends! Socrates might have said— If the human soul be so far like the Divine Mind which framed the universe, that it can see some aspects of that universe as the Divine Mind itself sees them, how can the Soul itself be otherwise than divine? And if it can possess within itself truths which are eternal, how can it be otherwise than eternal? And



if it can take hold of indestructible realities, how can it be itself otherwise than real and indestructible ?

This argument must, it would seem, have had great weight with those who accepted the Platonic doctrines, concerning the nature of knowledge and the constitution of the soul, which are contained in the latter part of the Republic. If Plato had re-edited the Phædo at a later period of his life, he might very naturally and very effectively have introduced an argument something of this kind, in the place of Socrates's last argumentation with Cebes.

But has this argument, it may be asked, lost its force for *us* ? Some would reply that it has : That we no longer accept the doctrine of types in the Divine Mind, according to which the universe is constituted, or of a divine nature in the human mind, evidenced by the possibility of its apprehending eternal truths.

On these subjects each person must form his judgment by thinking for himself. No one will be able to think with steadiness and clearness on such subjects without considerable efforts of attention and abstraction of thought ; and persons who make such efforts will find that whatever difficulties may belong to these doctrines, any doctrines different from these are by no means exempt from the like difficulties. The divines of our Church two centuries ago found in such doctrines copious nutriment for a fervent and exalted Christian piety ; and we may hope that if any one's reflexions led him to include such doctrines in his religious philosophy at present, he might do so without any offence to his Christian neighbours.

We might easily put the argument for such doctrines in the form of a Platonic Dialogue. 'You grant, our Socrates might say, that the human mind can apprehend geometrical truths, and that geometrical truths are eternal. Can an intellect which apprehends eternal truths be otherwise than itself eternal ?

'You grant that the Divine Intellect in contemplating and in constituting the Universe contemplated the truths which concern space ; the truths which we call the truths of Geometry ; and that the Universe is constituted in conformity with these. Are not the truths of Geometry, as contemplated by the human mind, and by the Divine Mind, the same truths ? And if this be

so, has not the human mind something in common with the Divine Mind? And may not the human soul be called, in this sense, divine?’

The truths of Geometry are constantly referred to, expressly or implicitly, in these Platonic speculations; and with very good reason. It was those truths which really gave origin to sound philosophy, by exhibiting examples of *certain* truths. They refuted the skepticism which had begun to cry out, *Nothing can be known*, by saying, in a manner which men could not deny, *This can be known*. In like manner they may refute the skepticism which says, *We can know nothing of God*, by saying, *We know this of God, that necessary truths are true to Him*.

To those who follow this line of reasoning, there are consequent important inquiries: *What* truths are necessary? Does man become acquainted with *new* necessary truths in the progress of human knowledge? If so, how do these truths bear upon our knowledge of God?

Some of these questions I have attempted to answer elsewhere. To discuss the last here would carry me too far; but I may venture to say this: that I believe a person who has adopted the Platonic view of the relation of God to the Universe, will find that modern science falls in with such a view, and extends, or at least substantiates and enriches it; and in doing this, refutes forms of skepticism which have arisen in modern as they arose in ancient times, persuading men that they *can* know nothing by turning away their attention from what they *do* know.

I may add also, that the relation of God to the Universe, thus viewed, and followed into the spiritual as well as the natural world would, I think, give us additional grounds of conviction of the Immortality of the Soul.

Of that great doctrine there are many grounds of conviction, according to the constitution and habits of different minds; and it is most fitting that we should speak with respect, and even with sympathy, of any arguments and convictions of other persons on this subject. At the present day, as in Plato's day, there may be arguments which appear to us weak, and which yet shew their force in the way in which they touch the hearts, and raise the hopes, and confirm the love of virtue, in those who adhere to them. A man really and practically looking onwards

to an immortal life, on whatever grounds, exhibits to us the human soul in an ennobled attitude.

I do not wish therefore to put forwards any one of the arguments on this subject to the disparagement of others. And with this reservation, I may say that it seems to me that the argument which most extensively weighs in men's minds, is that a Future State is requisite for the reward of the good and the punishment of the bad, a process which is, as seems to most persons, so imperfectly effected here. Accordingly, Addison makes this one of the arguments on which his philosophical Roman most rests :

Here will I hold. If there's a power above us,  
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud  
Through all her works,) he must delight in virtue;  
And that which he delights in must be happy.  
But when! or where! This world was made for Cæsar.

And Mendelssohn has, with great propriety, made this one of the prominent arguments in his Dialogue, while he has not put it in the mouth of Socrates, as anything recondite, but in the mouth of Simmias, as what he already assents to. He says\* :

“If I stir doubts respecting the Immortality of the Soul, I argue, not against the truth of this doctrine, but against its demonstrability on rational grounds; or rather against the way in which you, O Socrates, have chosen to convince us thereof by reason. For the rest, I accept with my whole heart this consolatory doctrine—not only so far as you have delivered it to us, but as it has been handed down to us by the wisest men of old; with the exception of some falsifications which have been added by the Poets and Fable-makers. Where our Soul finds no ground for certainty, it confides itself to opinions that tranquillize it: and these, like skiffs on a bottomless sea, may if the weather be fair, carry it over the waves of this life. I feel that I cannot reject the doctrine of immortality, and of a retribution after death, without raising up before me endless difficulties: without seeing all that I hold true and good robbed of its certainty. If our soul be mortal, then reason is a dream which Jupiter has sent to delude us miserable mortals; then virtue loses all the brightness which makes it godlike in our eyes; then the Beautiful and the Sublime, moral as well as physical, is no impress of the divine perfection;

\* *Zweites Gespräch*, p. 127.

(for nothing which perishes can bear any trace of the divine perfection :) then we are placed here, like cattle, to take our provender and to die: then will it in a few days be all the same, whether I have been an ornament or a blot in creation: whether I made it my business to increase the number of the happy or of the miserable: then the most abject mortal has the power to withdraw himself from the government of God, and a dagger can loose the tie which binds man with God. If our Spirit be perishable, the wisest Legislators and Founders of human Society have deceived us, or themselves: then has the whole human race entered into an agreement to cherish a lie and to honour those who invented it. Then is a State of free, thinking men nothing more than a herd of irrational cattle; and man—I am horrified to contemplate him thus degraded! Deprived of the hope of immortality, this wonderful creature is the most wretched animal on earth, and has only the peculiar attribute to mark its importance, that it can reflect on its condition, fear death, and despair. Not an all-good God who rejoices in the happiness of his creatures, but a malignant Being must have given him qualities which only make him wretched...The hope of a future life solves all these difficulties, brings the truths, of which I am convinced on so many grounds, again into harmony. It justifies the Deity, gives to Virtue its nobility, to Beauty its brightness, to Pleasure its charm; sweetens pain; and makes even the plagues of this life respectable, since we can trace endless consequences of all that happens here."

Recently, among the arguments for a future state, that has been asserted to be the most cogent which is derived from the effect of the human affections. When those whom we love die, we cannot believe the separation final. If we did so, how, it is asked, could we stand up and live? As I have said, I am far from wishing to disparage this or any other argument on this subject which is felt by any one to be powerful. But it seems to me strange that this argument should be regarded as potent by those who think lightly of the argument founded on the need of a future retribution. If without the belief in a future state it is difficult to stand up and *live*, when those whom we love are taken from us, is it not still more difficult, without that belief, to stand up and try to *live well*, when we have seen the righteous unjustly slain. If the family

affections are universal and imperious, are not the moral sentiments equally universal, and in their nature more entitled to exercise command? Without this hope, it is said, the purest and noblest elements of our nature conspire to deceive us. But the purest and noblest elements of our nature are the belief that what is right must in the end, triumph; that he who is good, must, somewhere, and somehow, be happy. And so this proof is really one of the oldest and most familiar proofs of this doctrine of the immortality of the soul; as indeed, all the proofs most efficacious in their influence upon men's convictions naturally are; although they change their aspect and mode of presentation according to the changes in thought and language which take place among men, as I have already had occasion to remark.

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