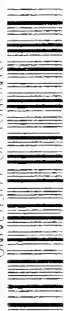


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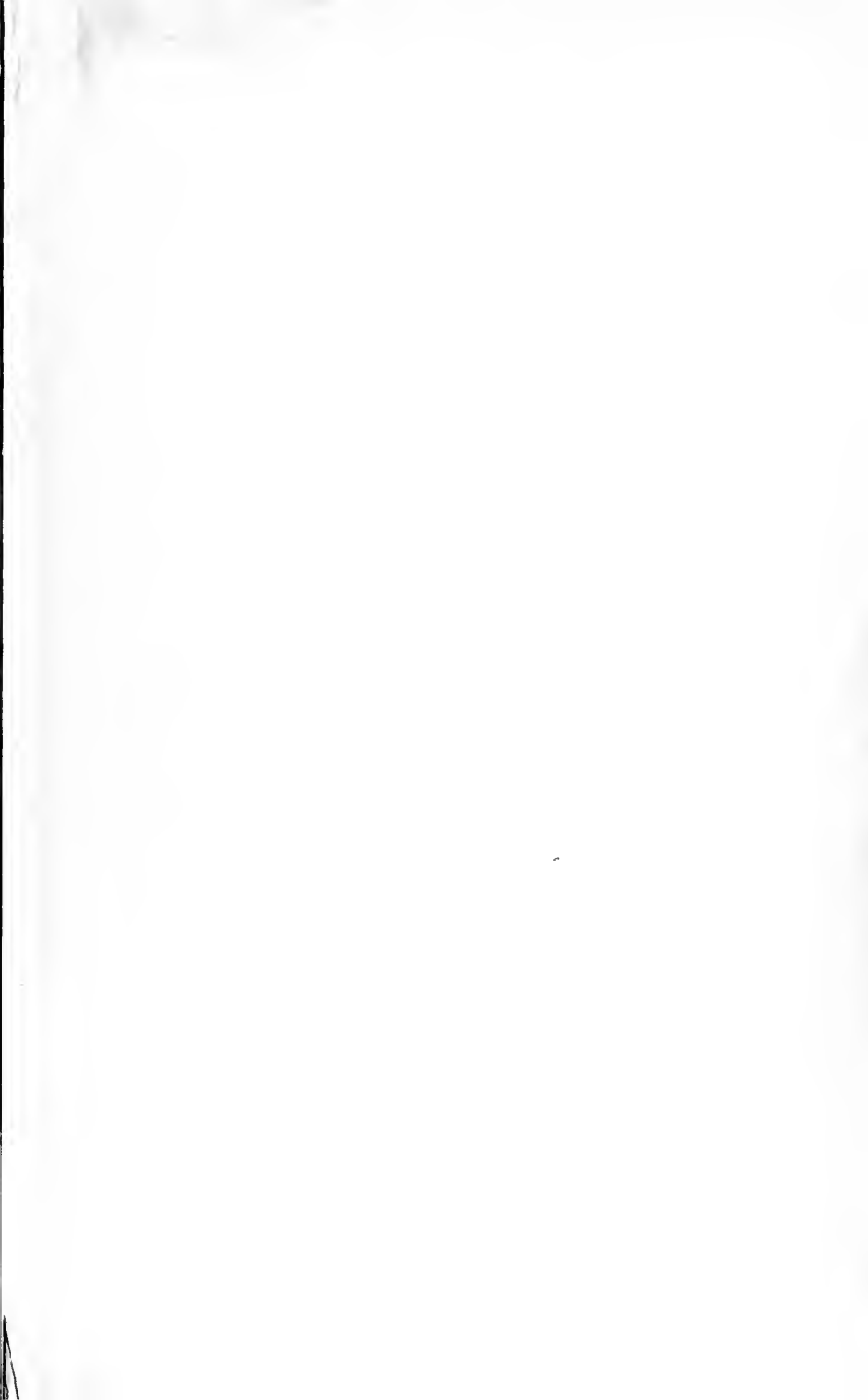
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PLATO'S PHÆDO.



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# PLATO'S PHÆDO,

*LITERALLY TRANSLATED,*

BY THE LATE

E. M. COPE,

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

*EDITED FOR THE SYNDICS OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.*

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

AS this translation of the Phædo has not had the benefit of its author's last corrections, it is proper that I should state the main rules which I have endeavoured to follow in preparing it for the press.

It would appear that Mr Cope had subjected his version (which was, I presume, originally intended for use in the lecture-room) to more than one careful revision, and had decided in all cases of doubt which interpretation he preferred. In such cases I have regarded his decision as final. On the other hand he had not made his choice between the various alternative renderings which he had from time to time recorded. In the work of selection, which has consequently rested with me, my rule has been to prefer the latest rendering; but I have considered all the renderings suggested in the manuscript, and have now and then taken one of the earlier ones.

It will be remembered by readers of Mr Cope's version of the Gorgias that his theory of translation differs in some important respects from that

generally entertained at the present day. In the first place his version is essentially a literal one,—that is to say, it aims at the greatest fidelity which the English idiom permits: in the second place his English style is more colloquial, and the structure of his sentences less exact, than is usual in translations of the Platonic dialogues. Thus he is careful not only to represent every anacoluthon which occurs in the original<sup>1</sup>, but also to introduce wherever it is possible those laxities of construction which, though usually avoided in written compositions, are common in spoken English. In general I have retained these irregularities; but in a few instances, in which laxity of English construction not warranted by laxity in the Greek seemed to cause needless obscurity, I have allowed myself a certain license of modification.

In imitation of Mr Cope's practice in the *Gorgias* I have taken the Zürich text as the standard of reference, noting at the foot of the page the few places in which the version deviates from it. In two instances only he introduces emendations of his own<sup>2</sup>.

I have appended to the text a few explanatory notes, but only where such adjuncts seemed indispensable. These notes are extracted, as nearly as possible verbatim, from the fragmentary commentary which in Mr Cope's note-book accompanies

<sup>1</sup> See (for example) pp. 55, 62, 76, 87 of this volume.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 77, 84.

the translation. Had he lived to complete his work, he would doubtless have written an introduction similar to that prefixed to the *Gorgias*; but the manuscript contains no sketch of one, and I have not attempted to supply the deficiency.

Indeed I have throughout endeavoured to preserve his work in its integrity, thinking it better that it should remain incomplete than that it should be supplemented by another hand. Unfinished though it is, I think that students of Plato, and especially those who, like myself, gratefully remember the accurate scholarship and profound erudition which characterized Mr Cope's lectures, will rejoice that the Syndics of the University Press with their customary liberality have undertaken its publication.

HENRY JACKSON.

TRINITY COLLEGE,  
*March 4, 1875.*



PLATO'S PHÆDO.

*CHARACTERS OF THE DIALOGUE.*

ECHECRATES.

CEBES.

PHLEDO.

SIMMIAS.

APOLLODORUS.

CRITO.

SOCRATES.

ATTENDANT.



## PLATO'S PHÆDO.

ECH. Were you present yourself, Phædo, with So- 57  
crates that memorable day when he drank the poison in  
the prison, or did you hear the story from some one else?

PH. I was there myself, Echecrates.

ECH. Then do pray tell me what it was that he said  
before his death and how he died. I should be so glad to  
hear. For in fact none of my fellow-townsmen, of Phlius,  
are just now very much in the habit of going to stay at  
Athens, nor has any stranger paid us a visit from that  
place for a long time who<sup>1</sup> might have brought us an  
accurate report of all this—except indeed merely that he  
was put to death by poison; but of all the rest no one  
could tell us anything.

PH. Then I suppose you didn't hear the account 58  
of the issue of the trial either?

ECH. Yes, some one brought us news of that; and  
surprised we were, to be sure, to hear that he seems  
not to have suffered till long after it took place. Now  
why was this, Phædo?

PH. It was quite an accident, Echecrates: for it

<sup>1</sup> Or (better) without *δύ*: 'who was able to bring us,' &c.

happened that the stern of the vessel which the Athenians are in the habit of sending to Delos had been decorated just the day before the trial.

ECH. And pray what vessel do you mean?

PH. This is the vessel, according to the Athenian tradition, in which Theseus once went with those twice seven to Crete, and saved their lives and his own to boot. So they made a vow to Apollo, as the story goes, at the time, that if they got safe back they would despatch a sacred embassy to Delos every year: which in fact they have sent ever since year by year to the God, as they still continue to do. Well, from the very commencement of the sacred embassy, it is the custom with them that their city be kept pure all this time, and that no state execution be allowed until the vessel has made its voyage to Delos and back again here: and this occasionally requires a long time, whenever the crew chance to be arrested by contrary winds. The commencement of the sacred embassy dates from the crowning of the vessel's stern by the priest of Apollo: and, as I say, this happened to have been done the day before the trial. And this was the reason why Socrates had so long an interval in the prison between the trial and his death.

2 ECH. Well, but the story of the death itself, Phædo: what was all that was said and done? and which of his friends were with him? or did the magistrates refuse them permission to be present, so that he had no friends near him at his death?

PH. By no means: on the contrary, there were some present, aye and a good many.

ECH. Then pray be good enough to give me as exact an account as you can of it all—unless you happen to be engaged.

PH. Oh no, I am not at all busy, and I will do my best to tell you the whole story: for indeed to recall Socrates to mind, whether by talking of him myself or by listening to another, to me has ever been the most agreeable thing in the world.

ECH. Well, Phædo, you may make sure of finding a similar feeling in the audience that is going to be. So pray try to describe all the circumstances as precisely as you possibly can.

PH. Well, to be sure, for my own part I was in a strange state of mind all the time I was there. For no feeling of compassion such as might be expected in one who is present at a friend's death entered my mind—for the man seemed to me, Echecrates, quite happy both in his behaviour and in his language, so fearlessly and nobly did he meet his death: so that to my mind he presented himself as one whose journey even to the world below was not unattended by a divine providence, nay, whose lot when he arrived there would be a happy one, if any human being ever was happy: for this reason, I 59 say, no feeling at all of pity entered my mind, as would seem natural to one present at a scene of woe, nor on the other hand of pleasure, as was to be expected when we were engaged in our ordinary way upon philosophy—for in fact our conversation was of that nature—but I found myself in quite a singular state of mind and in an unwonted mixture of feeling, a feeling at once of pleasure and of pain, when I reflected that our friend was presently to die. And all of us that were there were pretty nearly in the same state, laughing one while, and anon weeping; and one of us, Apollodorus, beyond all the rest: you know the man, I dare say, and his humour?

ECH. Of course I do.

PH. Well, as I say, he abandoned himself without

reserve to these emotions; but at the same time I myself and the rest participated in them.

ECH. But who were they, Phædo, that chanced to be present?

PH. Why of natives there was this same Apollodorus, and Critobulus and his father Crito, and besides, Hermogenes, and Epigenes, and Æschines, and Antisthenes. There was also Ctesippus the Pæanian, and Menexenus, and some other native Athenians: but Plato, I believe, was ill.

ECH. And were there any strangers there?

PH. Oh yes, Simmias of Thebes of course, and Cebes, and Phædonides, and Euclides and Terpsion of Megara.

ECH. Well? but Aristippus and Cleombrotus were with him, I suppose?

PH. No they were not: they were said to be in Ægina.

ECH. And was there any one else there?

PH. I think that these were pretty nearly all.

ECH. Well to proceed then—let us have your account of the conversation.

- 3 PH. I will endeavour to relate it all to you from the first. And so to begin. We had been in the constant habit, I and the rest, of visiting Socrates also during the preceding days, beginning to assemble in the early morning at the court in which the trial was held, as it was in the neighbourhood of the prison. Well, we used always to loiter about conversing amongst ourselves until the prison happened to be opened—which did not take place very early—but as soon as it was opened we went in to Socrates, and generally spent the whole day with him. However on this particular occasion we met earlier than usual: for having learnt the day before, when we quitted

the prison in the evening, that the vessel had returned from Delos, we parted with mutual admonitions to be present as early as possible at the usual spot. So when we came, the porter who was accustomed to answer our knock came out to us and told us to wait and not appear until he summoned us himself. 'For,' said he, 'the Eleven are taking off Socrates' irons, and bidding him prepare for death to-day.' However he did not wait long before he 60 returned and bade us walk in. So we entered, and found Socrates just released from his fetters, and Xanthippe, whom you know, holding his little boy in her arms and seated near him. As soon as she saw us she burst into lamentations and exclamations such as women are wont to indulge in: 'O Socrates, this is the very last time that your friends will speak to you and you to them.' And Socrates with a glance towards Crito said, 'Crito, let some one take her away home.' So some of Crito's people led her away screaming and beating her breast: but Socrates lay down again upon the bed, and bending his leg together rubbed it with his hand; and as he was rubbing it, he said, 'What a strange thing that seems to be which men call pleasure: how wonderfully it is associated by nature with that which seems its opposite, pain;' in that the pair of them will never present themselves to mankind together, and yet if a man pursue the one and grasp it, he is almost always obliged to take the other too, as if, distinct as they are, they were fastened together from one head. And I think,' continued he, 'that if Æsop had noticed them he would have made a fable upon it, that God, anxious to compose their differences, but finding himself unable to do so, fastened their heads together, and that that is the reason why, if any one has obtained possession of the one, the other also is sure to follow upon it: just, you see, as it seems in my own

case—after the pain had been first caused in my leg by the irons, the corresponding pleasure seems now to have come in its train.’

- 4 Here Cebes broke in. Aye indeed, Socrates, I am much obliged to you for reminding me. For to be sure about those poems which you have composed—your metrical version of the fables of Æsop and your prelude to Apollo—I have been asked already by several people, and quite lately by Evenus himself, what could possibly have been your intention in writing them since you came here, when you never yet wrote any verses before. If then you care for my having an answer to give to Evenus when he repeats his question—for I am sure he will—tell me what I must say. Well then, said he, tell him the truth, Cebes: that it was from no desire to set myself up as a rival to him or his poems that I composed them—for I knew it was not easy to do that—but that I did so in an attempt to make out the meaning of certain dreams, and to acquit my conscience in respect of them in case this might chance to be the kind of ‘music’ that they enjoined me to cultivate. Something like this they were: the same dream used constantly to haunt me during my past life, assuming different shapes at different times but always with the same burden: ‘Socrates,’ it said, ‘cultivate music and practise it.’ And I used formerly to suppose that it was encouraging me and cheering me on in the very occupation which I was following—that, exactly as people cheer the runners in a race, even so my dream was urging me onward in my ordinary pursuit, the cultivation of music—under the idea that philosophy was the highest-kind of music, and that that was what I was practising. But now, since my trial took place and the festival of Apollo meanwhile delayed my death, I thought

it my duty, in case perhaps it might be this popular kind of music that the dream enjoined me to cultivate, not to be disobedient, but to try. For it was safer, I thought, not to depart ere I had discharged my conscience by composing poems in obedience to the dream. Thus it was then that I first addressed a hymn to the God in whose honour the present festival was held: and after the God, having conceived the notion that it was the poet's business, if he meant to be a poet, to write fables and not mere histories in verse, whilst I myself had no genius for fiction, for this reason I turned into verse accordingly the fables that I had ready to my hand and knew by heart, Æsop's namely, just as they happened to occur to me.

- 5 This then, Cebes, is what you may tell Evenus; and at the same time bid him fare-well, and, if he be wise, follow me as soon as he can. And I am to depart to-day, as it seems; for the Athenians will have it so.

And Simmias said, How strange an exhortation is this, Socrates, to convey to Evenus! I have often met the man ere now, and I am pretty sure from what I have remarked that he will not have the smallest inclination to comply with your suggestion.

How say you? said he. Isn't Evenus a philosopher? Oh yes, I suppose so, replied Simmias.

Well then, said he, he will desire it, and not only he but every one who worthily takes part in this study. However I don't exactly mean to say that he will lay violent hands on himself; for they say this is wrong. (And as he said this, he let his legs drop from the bed upon the ground, and in this posture he remained during the rest of the dialogue.)

Thereupon Cebes asked him, What do you mean, Socrates, by saying that it is not right for a man to lay

violent hands upon himself, and yet that the philosopher would desire to follow the dying man?

How, Cebes? have you and Simmias never heard anything on such subjects during your intercourse with Philolaus?

No, Socrates, nothing distinct.

Well to be sure I myself speak of them from mere hearsay: however what I have heard I don't grudge telling you. For in fact it is perhaps particularly suitable for one who is on the point of travelling in that direction to examine narrowly and mythologize about the conception we have formed of the nature of the journey thither: for how could one better employ the interval between this and sunset?

Then what can be their reason, Socrates, for asserting that it is unlawful to kill oneself? For it is true that, as you just now asked me, I have heard Philolaus, as well as yourself, say, at the time when he was residing in our city, and others besides him ere now, that it was not right to do this: but I have never heard from any one anything distinct upon the subject.

Well you must keep up your spirits, he said, for perhaps you may now. Possibly however it will seem surprising to you, that this, contrary to the universal rule, should be true without exception, and that it should never happen to mankind, as in every thing else it does, that in certain cases and for certain people only it is better to die than to live. And again, in cases where death is preferable, you may be surprised that these men are not allowed to do themselves a service, but are bound to wait for an extraneous benefactor.

Aye, Heaven knows, said Cebes, with a quiet smile, and speaking in his native dialect.

In fact, said Socrates, when stated thus nakedly, it

contemplate  
suicide ✓



would seem unreasonable: still it cannot be denied that there may be some sense in it. At the same time the account that is given of it in the mystic system, that we men are kept in a kind of ward, and that accordingly one must not endeavour to deliver oneself or run away from it, seems to me to be somewhat deep, and not very easy to see one's way through. Not that I mean to deny, Cebes, the correctness of this opinion, as far as I can see, that Gods are our guardians, and that we men are part of the property of the Gods. You think so, don't you?

Oh yes, said Cebes.

Well, said he, and wouldn't *you*, if any of your chattels were to put itself to death without any indication from you that you wished it to die, be angry with it? and if you could find any means of punishment, wouldn't you have recourse to it?

I certainly should, he replied.

Perhaps then in this point of view it is not unreasonable to say that no one has a right to kill himself, until God has imposed upon him an absolute necessity of some kind, like that which now lies before me.

- 7 No doubt, said Cebes, this does seem likely. However, as to what you said just now, that all philosophers would be willing and glad to die, that sounds like a paradox, Socrates, if what we were just now saying is correct, that God is our guardian, and that we are his property. For that the wisest men should not be concerned to quit this service wherein they are under the superintendence of Gods, the best of all possible masters, is highly unreasonable. For I presume no one imagines that he can take better care of himself when he has obtained his freedom. A fool, no doubt, might perhaps think that it is good for him to fly from his master, and would not

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reflect that it is his interest not to fly from one that is good, but rather to use every effort to abide with him, and so might fly from him in his folly: but the man of sense would desire, I presume, to be attached for ever to one who is better than himself. And yet according to this view of the matter, Socrates, the contrary to what was said just now seems to be true; for it is the wise that should be reluctant to die, and the fools that should be glad.

On hearing all this Socrates seemed to me to be pleased with Cebes' pertinacity, and said with a glance <sup>63</sup> towards us, You see Cebes is always tracking some speculation or other, and is not at all inclined to be satisfied at once with anything that he may be told.

Here Simmias said, Well to be sure, Socrates, this time I myself am disposed to think that there is something in what Cebes alleges: for what motive could induce men who are really wise to fly from masters better than themselves and lightly quit their service? And, I imagine, it is at you that Cebes is aiming his argument, because you are so little affected at leaving us, as well as Gods whom you yourself own to be good rulers.

What you say is quite fair, he replied; that is, I suppose you mean that I am to defend myself against this charge as if I were in court.

By all means, said Simmias.

8 Come then, said he, let me try to make a more successful defence to you than I did to my judges. For did I not think, he continued, Simmias and Cebes, that I should go to dwell in the company not only of Gods wise and good, but next also of men that have died better than those here on earth, I should be wrong in not feeling sorry at my approaching death. But, as it is, be assured that I trust to join the society not only of good

men—and on this I would not so strongly insist—but that I shall go to abide with Gods, perfectly good masters, of all things of the kind, this, be assured, I would most confidently maintain. And so this is why I am not so much moved, but have a confident hope that the dead have some existence, and that existence, as indeed has been maintained ever so long ago, a far better one for the good than for the bad. ✓

What, Socrates! said Simmias: surely you don't mean to depart and keep this belief to yourself without letting us share it with you? For it seems to me that this is a benefit in which we also are entitled to participate; and at the same time it will serve for your defence, if you succeed in convincing us of the truth of what you say.

Well, I will do my best at all events, he said. But first let us enquire what it is that Crito there has been so long, apparently, anxious to tell me.

Why, Socrates, merely this, said Crito; that the man who is to administer the poison to you has been suggesting to me ever so long to tell you to talk as little as possible: for he says that those that talk get too much excited, and that no excitement of this sort should be allowed to interfere with the action of the poison; otherwise, those who act in this way are sometimes obliged to take two or three doses of it.

Let him alone, replied Socrates: he need only mind his own business, and be prepared to give me two, or even three doses, if necessary.

Nay, I knew well enough what answer you would make, said Crito: but he has been plaguing me ever so long.

Never mind him, he said. But to you, my judges, I will now render my account, how it is that it seems to

me reasonable that a man who has really spent his life in the pursuit of philosophy should be cheerful in the 64 near prospect of death, and have a sure hope after death of obtaining in another world the highest blessings. In what way then this may be true, Simmias and Cebes, I will endeavour to explain to you.

- 9 For it appears that all who apply themselves to the study of philosophy aright are, unknown to the rest of the world, as far as depends on themselves, engaged in nothing else than in studying the art of dying and death. If then this be true, it would surely be absurd of them to be striving eagerly all their lives after this alone, and then, when it has arrived, to feel vexed at what they had been so long eager for and studying.

Here Simmias laughed and said, Upon my word, Socrates, you have made me laugh, though I am just now in anything but a laughing humour. For I fancy, you see, that the vulgar, had they heard precisely what you have been saying, would think that it applies with perfect truth to the philosophers; and that the people here would be ready enough to agree that the philosophers have quite a passion for death, aye and that they, the people, know well enough that they deserve it.

Yes, and it would be quite true, Simmias; except, at least, when they say that they know well enough; for they do not know in what sense genuine philosophers have a passion for death, and in what sense they deserve it, and what kind of death they deserve. However, let us bid adieu to them, he continued, and discuss the matter amongst ourselves. Do we hold death to be anything?

Certainly we do, replied Simmias.

In fact, the separation of the soul from the body? so that the state of death is merely this, the separate

existence of the body by itself apart from the soul, and the separate existence of the soul by herself apart from the body? Do you take death to be any thing else but this?

No, merely this, he said.

Well then consider, my good friend, if perchance you and I agree in our opinions; for I think that from what I am going to say we shall be better able to form a judgment upon the subject of our investigation. Does it seem to you to belong to the character of a philosopher to be eager in the pursuit of what are called pleasures, such for example as the pleasures of eating and drinking?

Very far from it, Socrates, said Simmias.

Or again of the pleasures of sex?

By no means.

Or again the other services of the body—think you that such a person would hold them in esteem? For example, the possession of splendid cloaks and shoes and all other means of personal adornment—think you he would value or scorn them, except so far as it is absolutely necessary for him to meddle with them?

Scorn them, I should think, he said; at least the genuine philosopher.

Then you think, he said, that the studies of such a man are absolutely unconnected with the body, but keep aloof from it as far as possible, and are directed to the soul?

I do.

Then herein first, in such things as these, the philosopher beyond all other men manifests his anxiety to release the soul as much as possible from her connection with the body, doesn't he? 65

Plainly so.

And most people are of opinion, I fancy, Simmias, that to a man who derives no pleasure from such things,

and has no share in them, life is not worth having: but that one who cares nothing for the enjoyments of which the body is the vehicle, verges pretty closely upon the state of death.

Quite true.

IO Well and what about the acquisition of wisdom itself? Is the body an impediment or not, if a man take it with him as an associate in his search? To illustrate my meaning—do sight and hearing convey any certain truth to men? or rather, are not the very poets constantly harping to us upon this theme, that there is nothing accurate in what we either see or hear? However, if these two of our bodily senses are not accurate nor to be depended upon, it is hardly likely that the rest are; for they are all, I presume, inferior to these. You do think so, don't you?

Most certainly, said he.

Then when, said the other, does the soul attain to the truth? For whenever she attempts to pursue any investigation in company with the body, it is plain that then she is deluded by it.

Very true.

[ Is it not then in thinking, if at all, that any real truth becomes manifest to her?

Yes.

But she thinks, I should suppose, then best when there is none of these accessories to annoy her, neither hearing nor sight nor pain nor pleasure of any kind, but when she is as much as possible alone by herself and bids adieu to the body, and, as far as possible free from communication and contact with it, aspires to that which *is*.

It is so.

Here then it is that the philosopher's soul most

despises the body, and flies from it, and seeks to be alone by herself?

It appears so.

And what say you to this, Simmias? do we admit that there is such a thing as absolute justice or not?

We do indeed.

And absolute beauty and good?

To be sure.

[ Then did you ever yet see any of such things as these with your eyes?

No, never, replied he.

Well, did you ever arrive at the knowledge of them by any other of the senses which act through the body? And I mean to include every thing, for instance greatness, health, strength, and in a word, the reality of everything else, that is to say, what each thing really is. Is it by means of the body that their truest nature is contemplated? or does the case stand thus—that whoever amongst us has most completely and most exactly prepared himself to apprehend by thought each thing which may be the object of his investigation in its essence, he it is that will make the nearest approach to the knowledge of it?

Undoubtedly.

And would not this purity of thought be best attained by any one who strives to reach each thing as much as possible with his intellect alone, and neither takes as an accessory the sight in thinking, nor drags after him any other of his senses whatever to keep company with his reasoning faculty; but employs his intellect by itself in its purity in the attempt to catch each particular being by itself in its purity, freed as far as possible from eyes and ears, and so to speak from all the body together, because he thinks it only disturbs the soul and will not

let her obtain possession of truth and wisdom when it is in communication with her? Is not this he, Simmias, who, if any, will attain to the reality of things?

What you say is all admirably true, Socrates, said Simmias.

11 Well then, he continued, from all that I have said, some such notion as this cannot fail to present itself to the minds of all genuine philosophers, and lead them to use language like this to each other: It seems, to be sure, that it is only a sort of by-way that can bring us to the end of our journey in company with our reason in our inquiries; in so far that, as long as we have our body, and our soul is blended in a confused mass with a nuisance such as that, we never can fully attain to the object of our desires; by which we mean truth. For infinite are the businesses in which the body involves us from the necessity of providing for its support,—besides which, if ever we are attacked by diseases of any kind, these throw impediments in the way of our chase after what really exists—and it fills us with desires and passions and terrors and vain imaginations of all kinds and a host of frivolities, so that in very truth it never allows us even 'to think at all' of anything, as the phrase is. For in fact wars and seditions and battles are entailed upon us by nothing in the world but the body and its passions. For it is by the pursuit of wealth and power that all our wars are engendered, and this wealth and power we are forced to seek for the body's sake, because we are enslaved to its service: and so it comes to pass that we have no leisure for the pursuit of philosophy in consequence of all this. And last and worst of all, if ever we do obtain any leisure from its exactions and apply ourselves to any course of reflection, in the very midst of our researches again at every moment it interrupts us, creating tumult and dis-



turbance, and gives us such a shock that we are prevented by it from obtaining a clear view of the truth, but in fact it is made quite plain to us that, if we are ever to gain untroubled knowledge of anything, we must get rid of it, and with the soul by itself look at things in themselves; and then, as it seems, we shall have what we desire and profess a love for, viz. wisdom, after death, as our argument indicates, but not as long as we live. For if it is impossible to attain to pure knowledge while we are associated with the body, one of two things must follow; either we can nowhere at all acquire it, or only after death: for then the soul will be by herself separated from 67 the body, but not before. And during our lifetime we shall in this way, I think, make the nearest approach to knowledge, if we abstain as far as possible from intercourse and communication with the body—except so far as is absolutely necessary—and preserve ourselves from infection by its nature, keeping ourselves instead clear of it until God himself has set us free. And so, released unsullied from the vanity of the body, we shall dwell in all likelihood with beings like ourselves, and shall know by our own selves all that is pure; and this is, it is to be presumed, the truth. For that the impure ever attain to the pure is, I fear, unlawful. Such, I imagine, Simmias, must needs be the kind of language held amongst themselves and opinions entertained by all real lovers of learning. You agree with me, don't you? ✓

Most completely, Socrates.

12 Well then, my friend, continued Socrates, if this be true, there is abundant reason for hope that, on my arrival at the country for which I am now setting forth, I may there be able, if it be anywhere possible, fully to obtain possession of that to which the long study of my past life has been directed; so that the journey

which is now enforced upon me is made with a good cheer by me or by anyone else who thinks that his mind has been prepared as it were by a process of purification.

Undoubtedly, said Simmias.

And may we not consider purification to be, what has been long indicated in the course of our discussion, the most complete attainable separation of the soul from the body and habituation of it to collect and concentrate itself by itself from all quarters out of the body, and to dwell as far as possible both in the time now present and in the future alone by itself, released from the body as from a prison?

Certainly, he said.

This then is what is called death, a release and separation of soul from body?

Yes, unquestionably, said he.

And the true philosophers, as we say, and they alone, are ever most earnest to release it, and the study of philosophers is neither more nor less than this, the release and separation of soul from body, is it not?

It seems so.

Well then, as I said at first, it would be ridiculous for a man first to prepare himself during his life to live in a state bordering as closely as possible on death, and then when it has come upon him to complain, would it not?

Of course.

In fact then, Simmias, continued he, true philosophers do practise dying, and death is to them of all men least terrible. Consider the question from this point of view. Assuming that there is a complete rupture between them and their body, and that they do desire to have their soul all by itself, if when this actually happens they

were to be alarmed and indignant, would it not be most unreasonable not to be glad to go to the place where on their arrival they may hope to obtain what they were 68 in love with all through their life—which is, as we saw, wisdom—and to get entirely rid of the association of that which had become so odious to them? Or, whilst very many men upon the death of human loves and wives and children chose of their own free will to descend to the realms below, allured by this hope of beholding there those they longed for, and being in their company, is it likely that one who has a genuine love of wisdom and has taken a firm hold of this same expectation, that he will nowhere else meet with it in any degree worth mentioning than in the other world, should be vexed at dying, and not rather glad to go there? Surely he must think so, my friend, if at least he be indeed a philosopher—he will be strongly persuaded of this, that he will find pure wisdom nowhere but there. And if this be so, as I was just now saying, would it not be great folly for such a man to be afraid of death?

Great indeed, upon my word, said he.

- 13 Here then, he proceeded, you have a sufficient token of any one that you ever see afflicted at the approach of death, that he was not after all a lover of wisdom but a mere lover of his body. And this very same man is most likely a lover of wealth or a lover of honour, either one of them, or even both.

Yes, it is exactly as you say, he replied.

Then, Simmias, he went on, is not what is called fortitude also natural to men of this temper more than to any others?

Quite so.

Well and temperance again,—that which even the

vulgar call temperance, not to be thrown into a flutter by the passions, but to preserve an indifferent and sober demeanour,—is it not natural to those alone who are most scornfully indifferent to the body and pass their lives in philosophy?

It must be, he said.

Yes, for if you will notice, said he, the fortitude and temperance of all others, you will think them very odd.

How so, Socrates?

You know, said he, that all the rest of mankind reckon death to be one of the great evils of our condition?

Certainly, I do.

And so it is from fear of greater evils that the brave amongst them support death, when they do support it?

It is so.

It follows then that all but philosophers are courageous only because they are afraid and from fear? Yet it is an odd thing for a man to be brave out of fear and cowardice?

It is, no doubt.

Again, is not the case exactly the same with their sober characters? Are they not temperate from a sort of intemperance? And yet, though we should be disposed to say that it is impossible, still their case in respect of this foolish kind of temperance does come to bear a close resemblance to this: for from mere fear of being deprived of one kind of pleasures and from desire of them, they abstain from some whilst they are under the dominion of others. However, to be under the empire of pleasures people call intemperance, and yet 69 at the same time they succeed in mastering some pleasures just because they are mastered by others: and this

is like what was said just now, that in a sort of way they are made temperate by intemperance.

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It certainly seems so.

My dear friend, I fear this is not the true exchange towards the acquisition of virtue, to change pleasures against pleasures, and pains against pains, and fear against fear, and greater against less, like so many coins: but I am rather inclined to think that this alone is the true coin for which we must exchange all these things, viz. wisdom, and that all that is bought and sold for this and with this—that and that alone *is* in reality, whether it be fortitude or temperance or justice; and in a word that true virtue only exists when accompanied by wisdom, whether pleasures and fears and all the rest of such things be thrown in or withdrawn: whereas, separated from wisdom and exchanged one against another, such virtue as this, I am afraid, is a mere rough sketch and really servile, with no soundness nor genuineness about it; whilst the reality of it is in fact a sort of cleansing from all such things, and true temperance and justice and fortitude and wisdom itself is a kind of purificatory rite. And indeed those famous men who established the mysteries amongst us seem to have been no mean thinkers, but in reality to have been from the earliest times darkly hinting to us that whosoever reaches the world below uninitiated and unsanctified shall lie wallowing in mire, whilst he that has been purified and sanctified shall on his arrival there dwell with Gods. For there are, you know, say the ministers of the mysteries, 'many that bear the thyrsus, but few bacchanals': and these last are according to my views no other than the true votaries of philosophy. And to become one of them I too during my life spared no effort, but used all diligence in every way: but whether I was right in so doing, and whether I have in any

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measure succeeded, we shall know for certain by and by, when we have arrived at our journey's end, if it be God's will, as I think. Such then, he concluded, Simmias and Cebes, is the defence I set up to show you that it is with reason that I feel no grief nor indignation at quitting you and my earthly masters, thinking as I do that there also no less than here on earth I shall find good masters and friends; though the vulgar are incredulous. So if I have succeeded better in convincing you by my defence than my Athenian judges, it is well.

14 So when Socrates had ended, Cebes took up the discourse and said: Socrates, all the rest of what you have said is in my judgment admirable, but as to the soul mankind are apt to feel a deep distrust that after its departure from the body it may no longer exist anywhere, but be destroyed and perish on the very day of a man's death,—lest, I say, at the very instant of its being released from and quitting the body it may be dispersed, be dissolved, and vanish, like a breath or smoke, and be nowhere any more: for, were it to exist anywhere collected by itself and set free from all those ills which you just now enumerated, there would be indeed a strong and fair hope, Socrates, that all that you say is true. But it is precisely this that requires, I am inclined to think, no slight persuasion and assurance, that the soul does exist after the man is dead, and preserves any of its faculties or its reason.

True, Cebes, said Socrates: but what then are we to do? Would you have us enter upon a detailed discussion of this obscure question itself, whether it is probable that it is so or not?

Certainly, speaking for myself, said Cebes, I should be very glad to hear your opinion upon it.

Well, said Socrates, I don't think anyone would say

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now if he heard me, not even if he were a comic poet, that I am chattering and conversing on things which don't concern us. So, if you please, we'll go through the enquiry.

15 And let us pursue it in some such way as the following, the enquiry, that is to say, whether the souls of men after their death exist in the world below, or not. Now there is an old tradition which I remember to this effect, that after their departure from this world they are in the other, and then return to this earth and arise from the dead. And if this be so, that the living rise again from the dead, must not our souls necessarily exist there below? for surely they never could have returned to life if they had no existence; and this would be a sufficient proof of its being as we say, if it were really to be made evident that the living derive their origin from no other source than from the dead. But if this is not so, the doctrine will require some other evidence.

No doubt, said Simmias. *Walter*

① Then, said he, if you want to take the easiest method of gaining a knowledge of it, don't confine your attention to the human race, but, taking in the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms, and, in a word, everything which is subject to the condition of birth, let us consider whether everything is thus generated, that is from no other origin than opposites from their opposites—all those, I mean, that have anything of the sort; as for example the fair is opposite, I suppose, to the foul, and just to unjust, and so on through an infinity of other cases. Let this then be the subject of our enquiry, whether it be necessary that everything that has any opposite derive its origin from nothing else than from that which is opposite to it. For instance, whenever anything

becomes greater, I suppose that it must first have been less, and then out of that become greater?

Yes.

Well and if it become less, it must be greater first, and thence afterwards become less? 71

As you say, replied he.

And further, from stronger the weaker must be generated, and from slower the faster?

Yes, certainly.

And again, if a thing becomes worse, is it not from better, and if juster, from more unjust?

Of course it is.

Are we then quite satisfied of this, said he, that all things are produced in this way, viz. from opposites the opposite things?

Yes, quite.

And again, is there in them also something like a pair of generations between both members of each pair of opposites, from the one to the other, and back again from the latter to the former? is there not, that is to say, between a greater thing and a less, growth and decline, and don't we give them these names, growing to the one, and declining to the other?

Yes, he said.

Well and separation and composition, and cold and hot, and so on for all the rest—even if we do not employ the names sometimes, still in reality at any rate it must be so in every case, that they take their origin one from the other, and that there is a generation from each of the two into the other reciprocally?

Precisely so, said he.

16 Well, continued he, has living any opposite, as the state of sleeping is to that of waking?

No doubt of it, he replied.



What?

Death, said the other.

Well, are these born one from the other, since they are opposites, and are the generations between them two like themselves?

Of course they must be.

Then the one pair of those which I just now mentioned, I will name to you, said Socrates, itself and its generations; and do you tell me the other. The one which I mean is sleeping and being awake, and I maintain that from sleep the state of being awake is generated, and from being awake the state of sleep, and that their generations are in the one case going to sleep, and in the other awaking. Are you satisfied with my explanation or not?

Quite.

Then tell me in your turn, he said, in the same way about life and death. Don't you say that death is opposite to life?

Certainly I do.

And that they are generated one from the other?

Yes.

What then is that which is generated from the living?

The dead, he replied.

And again, said he, what from the dead?

The living, it must be admitted, he said.

Then it is from the dead, Cebes, that the living, persons as well as things, are generated?

It appears so, he said.

Then, said the other, our souls exist in the lower world.

So it seems.

Well and of the two generations that belong to these the one is plain enough: for death is a tolerably certain fact, isn't it?

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opposite of soul?

No doubt of it, he said.

What shall we do then? said he. Shall we refuse to assign the opposite generation to correspond, and suppose nature to remain mutilated on this side? Are we not rather obliged to balance dying by some opposite generation?

Absolutely, I should say, said he.

What is that?

Coming back to life.

Well then, said he, if there be such a thing as coming back to life, it must be a generation from the dead into the living, this same coming back to life?

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Just so.

Then we are brought by this process of reasoning again to the conclusion that the living are generated from the dead just as much as the dead from the living: and if this be so, we thought it, I believe, sufficient evidence of the necessary existence of the souls of the dead in some place or other from which they might be born back into life?

I suppose, Socrates, he replied, that this is a necessary consequence of our former conclusions.

17 Then, said he, Cebes, let the following considerations convince you that we have not arrived at those conclusions in any unfair way, as it seems to me. For if there were not a perpetual correspondence between the two in generation, just as if they revolved in a circle, but the generation were forwards in a straight line as it were, only from the one to its opposite, and did not bend back its course to the other nor make a return, you know that all things at last would be reduced to the same form, and find themselves in the same condition, and cease to be born altogether.

How do you mean? he said.

There is no difficulty, said he, in understanding what I say; but to take an instance, if there were such a thing as going to sleep without any corresponding waking again generated from that which is asleep, you know that at last universal nature would make the famous Endymion a mere farce, and he would be quite eclipsed, because everything else would be in the same state as himself, asleep. And if all things were to be mixed together and never separated, the saying of Anaxagoras would soon be brought about, 'all things together.' And so also in the same way, my dear Cebes, if everything were to die which was endowed with life, and after their death the dead things were to remain in this shape and never come back to life, isn't it absolutely necessary that everything should be at last dead, and nothing alive? For if all living things were to be generated out of all the rest, and the living were to die, what remedy could possibly be found to prevent everything being swallowed up in death?

None whatever, I believe, Socrates, replied Cebes; on the contrary what you say seems to me infallibly true.

Yes, Cebes, said he, and so it is in my judgment most surely as I say; and we have not been cheated into these particular<sup>1</sup> admissions; but the return to life is a real fact, and so it is that the living are born from the dead, and that the souls of the dead do exist, and that there is a better fate in store for those that are good and for the bad a worse.

18 And besides, said Cebes taking up the argument, according to that doctrine too, Socrates, if it be true, which you are so often accustomed to lay down, that our learning is nothing but recollection, it would follow,

<sup>1</sup> *αὐτὰ ταῦτα*. Heindorf would prefer *αὐ ταῦτα*, and so should I.

I should suppose, necessarily from that too, that we have learnt at some earlier time what we now recollect; but that is impossible, unless our soul was existing somewhere before it was enclosed in this human form: so 73 that thus too the soul seems to be an immortal thing.

But, Cebes, said Simmias here breaking in, what are the proofs of this? Refresh my memory; for I have no very accurate remembrance of them just at present.

One argument, replied Cebes, the strongest of all, is that men, when questions are put to them, provided they are put adroitly, give of themselves an accurate account of anything, whereas if they had not within them a scientific knowledge and true theory, they would never be able to do it: and then<sup>1</sup> if anyone be set before geometrical figures or anything else of that sort, he there-upon most clearly shews the truth of this.

But if you are not convinced in this way, Simmias, said Socrates, see if you may be brought to agree by considerations of the following kind: for your doubt, I suppose, is as to how what is called learning can be recollection?

No, said Simmias, I don't doubt it at all; but I want to be brought into precisely the state which is the subject of our discourse, viz. recollection: indeed from the explanation that Cebes undertook to give I am already pretty well reminded and convinced: however I should not be at all less glad to hear from you now in what way you undertook to represent it.

In this way, I, said he. We are ready to admit, no doubt, that, if anyone is to recollect anything, he must have known it before at some time or other.

<sup>1</sup> *ἐπειτα*. See Stallbaum: but is not Heindorf's *ἐπεὶ τοι* ('for to be sure') preferable?

Yes, certainly, he said.

Well, do we allow this too, that, whenever knowledge presents itself in a manner such as I am about to describe, it is recollection? I mean in some such manner as the following. Suppose a person, after having seen or heard something first or perceived it by any other sense, not only to know that, but also to have an impression in his mind of something else, the knowledge of which is not the same but different, may we not fairly say that he recollected that of which he received the mental impression?

How do you mean?

For example, such cases as the following: the knowledge of a man and the knowledge of a lyre are distinct, I presume?

Of course.

Well, you know that lovers, whenever they catch sight of a lyre or a cloak or anything else which their favorites are in the habit of using, experience this: they recognise the lyre and at the same time receive in their minds the image of the youth to whom the lyre belonged; which is recollection: just as a man by seeing Simmias is often reminded of Cebes, and so on doubtless in an infinite number of other cases of the same kind.

Infinite indeed, by Zeus, replied Simmias.

Well, said he, is not such a case as that a kind of recollection? especially however when this happens to a person in the case of such things as had been already effaced from his memory by time and want of attention?

Undoubtedly, he said.

Again, said he, is it possible for any one to recall to mind a man by seeing a picture of a horse or a picture of a lyre? or by seeing a portrait of Simmias to remember Cebes?

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Certainly it is.

Or again, by seeing a portrait of Simmias to call Simmias himself to mind?

It is, no doubt, he said.

19 Does it not then happen in all these cases that recollection is derived at one time from similar and at another from dissimilar things? 74

It does.

But whenever any particular recollection is suggested to any one by similar objects, must not this further phenomenon present itself, the perception, namely, whether or not this in any respect falls short, in point of resemblance, of the thing which he remembers?

It must, he said.

Consider then, said he, whether this be so. We allow, I believe, that there is such a thing as 'equal'. I don't mean stick to stick, or stone to stone, or anything else of that kind, but beyond all these something else, absolute equality: are we to admit that it is anything or nothing?

'Faith, said Simmias, let us admit it by all means, most emphatically.

Do we also know it absolutely?

Yes, certainly, said he.

And where did we get our knowledge of it? Wasn't it from the things we were mentioning just now, from the sight of sticks or stones or any other equal things — was it not from them that we obtained the other conception, distinct as it is from them? You think it is distinct, don't you? Look at it again in this way. Does it not sometimes happen that equal stones and sticks, though they remain the same, appear at one time equal, and at another the contrary?

Unquestionably it does.

Well, did the absolute equals<sup>1</sup> ever appear to you unequal? or equality inequality?

No, never, Socrates.

Then, said he, those equal things which we spoke of just now are not the same as equality itself.

Not at all, according to my view, Socrates.

✓ But still from those equals, he said, distinct as they are from the other equal, you nevertheless have conceived and obtained the knowledge of it?

Most true, he replied.

And that, whether it resemble them or the reverse?

Quite so.

✓ And that makes no difference, said he. Whenever<sup>2</sup> by seeing one thing you obtain from this sight the conception of another, whether like or unlike, it must of necessity have been, he said, an act of recollection.

No doubt of it.

What say you to this then? said he. Have we any such feeling as this about the equalities in bits of wood and those equal things that we were just now speaking of? Do they seem to us to be equal in the same sense as the very, absolute equal, or do they at all fall short of that, in that they are not of the same nature<sup>3</sup> as the equal, or not?

Indeed, he said, they do fall very far short of it.

So then, whenever a person in seeing a thing per-

<sup>1</sup> *αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα*. The idea of equality as it appears manifested in all equal objects.

<sup>2</sup> *ἕως ἄν*. So several of the best MSS. See Stallbaum. The Zurich editors read *ἕως γὰρ ἄν*.

<sup>3</sup> *τῷ μὴ τοιοῦτον εἶναι, κ.τ.λ.* Cf. Heindorf, who thinks the phrase an intolerable tautology. If this be so, read simply *τοῦ* for *τῷ*, retaining *μὴ* as a redundant negative after *ἐνδεῖ*. These words will then be an epexegetis of *ἐνδεῖ τι ἐκείνου*.

ceives that this, for instance, which I now have before my eyes means to be like something else existing, but falls short of it, and cannot attain to the nature of the other, but is inferior, we must admit, I think, that the person who perceives this must necessarily have had some previous knowledge of that which he says it resembles though it does not come up to it?

We must.

Well then, is this the case also with ourselves, or not, in respect of equals and absolute equality?

Certainly.

It follows then that we must have had a previous knowledge of the equal, before that time when we first saw equal things and perceived that all of them aspire to be of the same nature as the equal but cannot reach it. 75

It is so.

And further we acknowledge this also, that we have not obtained, and it was not possible for us to obtain, the conception of it from any other source except from the sight or touch or some other of the senses; for I say the same of all of them.

Why, the cases are the same, Socrates, as far as regards that which our argument would show.

But, be that as it may, it is from the senses that we must obtain the conception that every thing in the domain of sense strives after that absolute equality, though it falls short of it. Or, if not, what is our view of the question?

As you say.

Consequently, before we began to use our sight and hearing and the rest of our senses we must have obtained somewhere a knowledge of the nature of the absolutely equal to enable us, in referring the equals which we



gather from our senses to it, to see that they are all eager to be such as the other, but yet are inferior to it.

It follows necessarily from our previous statements, Socrates.

Well, were we from the very moment of our birth in possession of sight and hearing and all the rest of our senses?

Yes, certainly.

And yet we say that we must have obtained the knowledge of the equal antecedently?

We do.

Then, as it appears, we must have obtained it before we were born?

It seems so.

- 20 So then if we obtained this knowledge before our birth and so were born with it in our possession, we had also before we were born and from the moment of our birth the knowledge not only of the equal and the greater and the less, but of the whole number of things of that kind? for our argument now does not turn upon the equal any more than upon the absolutely beautiful and the absolutely good and just and holy, and, as I say, upon every thing which we stamp with this impression, reality, in our questions when we question, and in our answers when we answer. So that we must needs have gained the knowledge of each of them previous to our birth.

It is so.

And had we not each in his own case forgotten what we had gained, we should have been constantly born with this knowledge and have constantly preserved it throughout our life: for to know is this, first to obtain the knowledge of a thing and then to keep it without having lost it. This is what we call forgetfulness, isn't it, Simmias, the loss of knowledge?

To be sure it is, precisely, Socrates, said he.

Yes, and if it be true, I should think, that, having obtained it before we were born, we lost it at our birth, and that we then afterwards, by employing our senses upon such things as those<sup>1</sup>, recover that knowledge which we once had in a former state, would not what we call learning be the recovery of our own knowledge? and should we not in calling this recollection give it its right name?

Yes, certainly.

For this, you know, we found to be possible, for a 76 man, after he has received an impression of something either by sight or by hearing or by any other of his senses, to derive from this a conception of something different that he had forgotten, with which this was associated, whether unlike or like. Wherefore, as I say, one of two things, either we are born with the knowledge of them and all retain that knowledge through our life, or subsequently to birth, those who learn, as we call it,—they do nothing but recall to mind, and so learning would be recollection.

It must be so, beyond all doubt, Socrates.

21. Then which of the two do you choose, Simmias? that we are born with the knowledge, or that we recall to mind afterwards that of which we had gained the knowledge before?

I can't tell which to choose yet, Socrates.

Well then, can you make choice in this case, or what is your opinion about it—can a man that has knowledge give a rational account of the subjects in which his knowledge lies, or not?

Of course he can, Socrates, he said.

<sup>1</sup> Socrates points to the objects before him.

Do you think also that every body is able to give an explanation of these things of which we were just now speaking?

Indeed I wish they could, said Simmias: but on the contrary I am much more disposed to fear that to-morrow at this time there will be no longer any man alive capable of doing it as it ought to be done.

So then, said he, it is not your opinion, Simmias, that all men have the knowledge of them?

Assuredly not.

Then they recollect what they learnt at some time or other?

It must be so.

And when did our souls acquire the knowledge of them? For it certainly is not since we were born men.

No, indeed.

Then it was at some former time?

Yes.

Then our souls were existing likewise, Simmias, at an earlier time, ere they were enclosed in a human form, apart from their bodies, and were endowed with thought?

Unless perchance, Socrates, we acquire this knowledge at the very moment of our birth: for this period is still left.

Be it so, my friend: but at what other time do we lose it? For surely we are not born in possession of it, as we just now admitted. Or do we lose it at the very time at which we also acquire it? Or can you name any other time?

None whatever, Socrates; but I didn't perceive that I was talking nonsense.

(3) 22 Then, said he, is it thus with us, Simmias? If the things really exist which we have constantly in our mouths, beautiful, and good, and all reality of this kind,

and if we refer all the impressions of our senses to this latter, as a thing that had been once ours and which we rediscover to be in our possession, and bring them into comparison with it, it follows of necessity that in the same way in which these things exist, so also does our soul exist even before we are born: but if these things have no real existence, this argument of ours would have been thrown away? Is it indeed so, and is it just as certain that our souls exist as that these things exist, even before we were born, and if not the one, then not the other either?

It seems to me beyond all question, Socrates, said Simmias, that there is the same certainty, and it is well that our discussion has run for shelter to so safe a harbour as this equal assurance of the existence of our soul 77 previous to our birth and of the existence of the absolute being which you even now refer to. For for my own part I could not name any thing which is so evident to me as this, that all such things exist in the highest sense of the word, viz. beautiful and good and all the rest which you mentioned just now: and for me the demonstration which has been given is sufficient.

But how is it then with Cebes? said Socrates. For Cebes too must be convinced.

It must be sufficient for him, I should think, said Simmias: although of all mankind he is the most pertinacious sceptic as to arguments. Nevertheless I think he must be by this time sufficiently convinced of this, that our soul was in existence before we were born.

23 However, I don't think myself, Socrates, he continued, that it has been shown whether it will have a continued existence also after our death, but there is still an objection derived from that apprehension of the vulgar which Cebes just now alluded to, that the soul

at the very instant of the man's death is scattered to the winds, and that this is an end of its existence. For admitting that it derives its origin and its composition from some other source and has existence before it reached a human body, what is to prevent it, when after having arrived there it takes its departure from it, coming to an end itself at the same time and being destroyed?

Well said, Simmias, added Cebes: for it does seem that only half, as one may say, of the demonstration which we require has been given, that, namely, our soul was in existence previous to our birth: but we want to prove besides that it will exist after our death no less than before our birth, if our demonstration is to be complete.

You will find, Simmias and Cebes, replied Socrates, that it has been proved already, if you will combine this argument with our previous conclusion, that every thing living derives its origin from the dead. For if our soul does exist in a previous state, whilst on entering into life and being born it can be generated only out of death and the state of the dead, how can it possibly fail to exist after death too, since it has to be born again? Nay, the thing you speak of has been proved already.

24 But still I fancy that you and Simmias would be glad to push this discussion too still further, and that you are haunted with that childish apprehension that the wind will literally blow it to pieces and disperse it as it issues from the body, especially whenever it happens that a man dies not in a calm, but in a high wind.

To which Cebes replied, laughing at the conceit, Suppose that we are, Socrates, and try to convince us: or rather you need not suppose that we are frightened ourselves, but there is perhaps a kind of child within

us that is subject to such apprehensions. Him then let us try to persuade not to be frightened at death as at those frightful masks.

Well, said Socrates, you must apply a charm to it every day until you have succeeded in charming it.

But where, said he, shall we find a charmer skilful 78 enough for our purpose, Socrates, now that you are leaving us?

Greece is wide, said he, Cebes, wherein doubtless good men are to be found, and many also are the tribes of the barbarians, all of whom it is your duty to search through in quest of such a charmer, and to spare neither money nor toil, for there is nothing on which you can lay out money to better purpose. And you must seek also yourselves in discussion with one another: for I dare say it may not be easy either to find persons better qualified for the task than you are.

Nay, this shall certainly be done, said Cebes: but now let us return to the point where we left off, if you have no objection.

Oh certainly, I have no objection. Why should I have any?

Thank you, replied he.

25 Well then, said Socrates, the question we must ask ourselves is something of this kind: what sort of thing that is whose nature it is to be subject to this accident, viz. dispersion; and what sort of thing that is for which we need feel any fear of its being subject to it, and the reverse? And after this again we must review the question to which of the two classes soul is to be referred, and thence derive either confidence or apprehension about our own soul.

True, said he.

Then is it not the compounded and that which has

✓ a composite nature that is liable to this accident, to be dissolved, that is, in the same way in which it was put together: but if there be any thing uncompounded, does it not belong to this alone of all possible things to be exempt from such an accident?

I should think it must be so, said Cebes.

Well, the things that are always in the same state and wear the same aspect,—is it not most likely that these are the uncompounded? and those that are different at different times and never in the same state,—that these, I say, are the composite?

I should think so.

Then let us pass, he proceeded, to those same things with which we were engaged in the former part of our argument. The Being in itself which in our questions and answers we characterise as real existence,—is that always in the same state and with the same aspect, or different at different times? Absolute equality, absolute beauty, absolute every thing which is,—do these ever admit change of any kind whatever? or does each of them of which we predicate real existence, uniform in its pure simplicity, constantly preserve the same aspect and condition and never in any way on any occasion whatever admit any variation?

They must needs be constant and permanent in their nature, Socrates, said Cebes.

But what of the many beautiful things, men for instance, or horses, or clothes, or any other whatever of the same kind, whether equal, or beautiful, or all that bear the same name with the ideas? Are they permanent in their condition? or, just the reverse of the others, do they never, as one may say, at all preserve any constancy, either in themselves or in their relations to one another?

You are right again, said Cebes: they are never the same.

Well, these latter you may touch, or see, or apprehend 79 by, the rest of your senses, may you not? whilst the permanent and immutable you can never lay hold of by any other instrument than the reasoning of the intellect; but all such things are invisible and beyond the reach of sight?

What you say is exactly true, said he.

26 Then let us assume, if you please, continued the other, two kinds of existing things, one visible and the other invisible.

Very well, said he.

And the invisible constant and immutable, but the visible subject to perpetual change.

This again let us assume.

Come then, said he, as to ourselves, are we not made up of body and soul?

There is nothing else, he replied.

Then to which of the two kinds should we say that the body bears the greater resemblance and is the more nearly akin?

Oh that must be quite obvious to every one, he replied; to the visible.

And the soul again—is it visible or invisible?

Not visible to the eyes of men at least, Socrates, he said.

But of course when we said visible and the contrary, we meant to the human constitution? You don't suppose it was to any other, do you?

No, to that of men.

Then what do we say about soul, that it is visible or not visible?

Not visible.



Then it is invisible?

Yes.

Consequently soul bears a nearer resemblance than body to the invisible, but the latter to the visible.

Quite necessary, Socrates.

- 27 Well, and were we not saying ever so long ago that the soul, whenever it employs the body as an assistant in the investigation of any subject through the medium either of the sight or of the hearing or of any other sense—for that is what we mean by through the medium of the body, to employ the senses in the investigation of a thing—that then she is dragged by the body into the sphere of the ever-changing, and goes astray herself, and becomes confused and dizzy as if she were intoxicated, inasmuch as she is trying to lay hold of things of the same kind?

We certainly were saying so.

But whenever she contemplates anything by herself, she is gone at once into that region, to the pure and eternal and deathless and unchangeable, and from the affinity of her nature converses ever with that, whenever, that is, she can isolate herself and thus has the power of doing so, and then she rests from her wanderings, and in association with it is herself ever constant and unchangeable, seeing that she is laying hold upon things of a like sort; and is not this state of hers called thought?

Most nobly and truly spoken, Socrates, said he.

Then to which of the two kinds, let me ask you again, taking into consideration our former conclusions as well as our present ones, do you think the soul bears a greater resemblance, and to which is it nearer akin?

I suppose, Socrates, said he, any one, even the most

stupid, would be forced by the method of demonstration that you have pursued to admit that wholly and entirely soul is more like that which is ever the same than that which is not.

And the body again?

More like the other.

28 And now look at the thing again in this point of view, that, namely, so long as soul and body are together, nature dictates to the one servitude and subjection, and to the other dominion and mastery: and in this respect again, which of the two appears to you to resemble the divine, and which the mortal? You think, don't you, that the divine is endowed with a nature formed for dominion and authority, and the mortal for subjection and servitude? 80

Oh yes, I do.

Which of the two then does the soul resemble?

It is quite plain, Socrates, that the soul resembles the divine, and the body the mortal.

Then consider, Cebes, said he, whether from all that has been said we obtain this result, that soul is most like the divine and immortal and intelligible<sup>1</sup> and uniform and indissoluble and that which is ever invariably consistent with itself, and that body again most resembles what is human and mortal and unintelligible and multi-form and dissoluble and never consistent with itself. Have we any thing else to say on the other side, my dear Cebes, in contradiction of it?

<sup>1</sup> νοητῶ. Schleiermacher (after Olympiodorus) translates 'vernünftig.' I think with Ast that this is wrong. The opposition of ὄρατόν, which is applied throughout to the body, shows that νοητόν is to be understood in its usual sense. Hence ἀνόητος (infra) either is employed unusually as the direct opposite of νοητός, or bears the double meaning of 'unintelligible' and 'unintelligent.'

Nothing whatever.

- 29 Well then, if this be so, is it not the nature of body to be quickly dissolved, but of soul on the contrary to be altogether indissoluble or nearly so?

No doubt it is.

And you observe, he continued, that after the man is dead, his body, the visible part of him, placed in the sphere of the visible—which, you know, we call a corpse—whose nature it is to be dissolved and to fall in pieces and to be dispersed in air, does not at once undergo any of these things, but is preserved a tolerably long time; if a man die with his body in a vigorous state and at a vigorous period of his life, a very considerable time indeed. For the body, when it has settled and been embalmed like those Egyptian mummies, remains nearly whole an incredible length of time. Nay, some parts of the body, even after it has rotted away, bones and sinews and all such parts, are nevertheless, so to speak, immortal: is it not so?

Yes.

But must the soul then, the invisible which flies at once to a place like itself, noble and pure and invisible, Hades in very truth so called, to dwell with the good and wise God, whither if it be God's will my own soul must shortly go,—must she, I say, being such as she is and so endowed by nature, on her departure from the body be at once scattered to the winds and perish, as the vulgar tell us? No, far from it, my dear Cebes and Simmias, but rather, far rather is the case thus: if she leave the body pure, dragging nought of it after her, as indeed during her lifetime she never with her goodwill had any communication with it, but avoided it and concentrated herself in herself, inasmuch, I say, as she was constantly practising this—and this is exactly what

a truly philosophic soul is, and one that really studies the art of taking death easily—this is the practice of 81 death, isn't it?

Yes, quite so.

Well, as I say, if she be in this condition, she departs to what is like herself, the invisible, the divine and deathless and wise; and arrived there she enjoys a happy lot, released from error and folly and fears and wild passions and all the rest of human ills; and, as is said of the initiated, passes in reality the rest of her existence with the gods. Is this to be our opinion, Cebes, or otherwise?

30 This, assuredly, said Cebes.

But, I suppose, if she take her departure from the body polluted and impure, which is likely, because she has been so constantly connected with it, and has waited on it and loved it, and has been so bewitched by it, I mean by its passions and its pleasures, that nothing seemed true to her but the corporeal, that is, what one may touch and see and drink and eat and use for one's lusts; whilst that which is to the eyes indeed dark and invisible, but by reason intelligible and by philosophy to be apprehended, this she has been accustomed to hate and shudder at and avoid,—think you that a soul in this state will quit the body pure, without admixture?

By no possibility, he replied.

But on the contrary distracted, I presume, by the corporeal, which the intercourse and union with the body from her constant association with it and her continual occupation about it has made a part of her very nature.

Exactly so.

But this, my friend, we must conceive to be pon-

derous and heavy and earthy and visible: and it is in fact by its union with this that the soul such as we have described it is weighed down and dragged back into the region of the visible, through fear of the invisible and of Hades haunting, as men tell us, the tombs and graves, about which in fact certain shadowy phantoms of souls are sometimes seen—just such shapes as those souls are likely to exhibit which have been set free in a state not pure, but with the visible still clinging to them, which is in fact why they are seen.

Yes, that is likely, Socrates.

It is indeed, Cebes; and that these are in no respect the souls of the good, but those of the bad, which are compelled to wander about such like places, paying the penalty of their former education, because it was evil. And so long they continue thus to wander, until from the craving of the corporeal nature that attends them they are again confined in a body.

31 And they are confined, as is probable, in characters of the same kind as those which they have practised during their past life.

What sort of characters do you mean, Socrates?

For example, those who have cultivated habits of gluttony and wantonness and drunkenness, and have not exercised thorough discretion in their conduct, enter, it is likely, into the race of asses and such like beasts. Don't you think so?

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What you say is extremely likely.

And those that have had a propensity to injustice and tyranny and rapine, into the race of wolves and hawks and kites. Or, if not, where else should we say that such souls go?

To be sure they do, said Cebes, into animals of that kind.

Well then, said he, is it quite clear for all the rest into what bodies each will pass according to the resemblance of their practice?

Quite so, he replied, of course.

Well then, he proceeded, of these again, those are happiest and pass into the happiest place who have exercised that popular and social virtue which men, you know, call temperance and justice, springing from habit and practice without philosophy and reason?

In what sense do you mean that they are happiest?

Because it is probable that they may be restored to a gregarious and civilized race, either bees perhaps or wasps or ants, or even back again into the same human race as before, and that respectable men may be made of them.

Like enough.

32 But the race of gods none may reach without having spent his life in the pursuit of wisdom and quitted it perfectly pure,—none but<sup>1</sup> the lover of learning. And this is the reason, my friends Simmias and Cebes, why true philosophers abstain from the indulgence of all their bodily passions, and remain firm, and do not surrender themselves to them; not at all because they fear ruin and poverty like the vulgar and money-lovers: nor again, because they fear disgrace and the reproach of depravity like the lovers of power and of honour, is this the reason why they abstain from them.

Why, to be sure, said Cebes, it would ill become them.

Assuredly it would, said he. Therefore, Cebes, he continued, those who have any concern for their own

<sup>1</sup> ἀλλ' ἢ. This is the old reading. The Zurich editors give ἀλλ' ἦ, after the best MSS.

soul, instead of living merely to get fat and enjoy themselves, bid adieu to all such as these, and walk not in the same path, being assured that they know not where they are going: but they themselves, persuaded that they ought not to run counter to philosophy and to its liberating and purifying operations, take that direction, following her whithersoever she leads the way.

33 How so, Socrates?

I will tell you, he replied. For, said he, the lovers of learning know that philosophy, receiving under its care their soul quite a close prisoner in the body and glued fast to it and forced to take its view of real things through it as it were through the walls of a dungeon, instead of alone by herself, and wallowing in every kind of ignorance, and clearly discerning that the fearfulness of the dungeon consists in her eager desire<sup>1</sup> to make as much as possible the captive himself an accomplice in his own confinement,—well, I say, the lovers 83 of learning know that philosophy, having taken their soul under its care in this condition, quietly talks her over and endeavours to set her free, by showing her that all observation by the eyes is full of illusion, and equally so that by the ears and the rest of the senses, and by persuading her to withdraw from them, except just so far as she is absolutely obliged to employ them, and by exhorting her to collect and concentrate herself into herself, and to put no faith in any thing but herself, that is, in that portion of real existence in and by itself which she can apprehend in and by herself, but whatsoever she contemplates by different organs varying in various

<sup>1</sup> I understand ἡ ψυχὴ as the nominative to ἐστίν. The soul in her degraded state eagerly desires to make the whole man, by the indulgence of his passions, instrumental to his own confinement in the body and an obstacle to her emancipation.

things,—to hold none of that to be true, but that all such things belong to the realm of sense and of the visible, whereas what she sees herself belongs to the intelligible and invisible. Thinking then that she ought not to oppose herself to this process of liberation, the soul of the true philosopher holds herself aloof accordingly from pleasures and passions and pains and fears so far as she can, reflecting that, whenever any one is violently moved by pleasure or fear or pain or desire, the evil that he contracts from them is not of that slight magnitude that one might think—a fit of sickness for instance or some loss incurred by the indulgence of his passions—but he suffers that which is the greatest and extremest of all ills, though he never takes it into account.

What is that, Socrates? said Cebes.

That every man's soul in the very act of feeling violent pleasure or pain at any thing is forced into the belief that every thing which most excites this feeling is the most real and the most true, though it is not so. And these are, most of all, the visible things. Aren't they?

Yes, no doubt.

Well, is it not in this feeling that soul is most completely chained down by body?

How so?

Because every pleasure and pain has, as one may say, a nail, with which it nails and buckles her to the body and gives her a bodily shape, fancying anything to be true which the body on its part asserts to be so. For from participation in the fancies of the body and taking pleasure in the same things she is forced, I conceive, to become like it also in its habits and its alimentation, and of such a nature that she never can reach the



world below in a pure state, but must ever take her departure from the body corrupted by it, so that she soon falls back into another body and takes root in it as if she were planted there, and hence loses all part in the intercourse with what is divine and pure and simple in its nature.

Most true, Socrates, said Cebes.

- 34 It is for this reason then, Cebes, that those that may be fairly called the true lovers of learning are regular and manly; and not for those which the vulgar assign—you don't think so, do you?

Not I, you may be sure.

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Why no. But a philosopher's soul would reason thus, and would not think that, whilst it was the business of philosophy to set her free, she might still, while it was employed in doing it, abandon herself to her habitual pleasures and pains so as to be again made close prisoner in them, and so undo all the work again, plying<sup>1</sup> a sort of Penelope's loom, only in the opposite sense; on the contrary, providing for herself a calm repose from all of them, following her reason and in it ever abiding, contemplating what is true and divine and beyond the sphere of mere opinion, and nourished by it, she deems that she must thus pass her life as long as it lasts, and after her death is to make her way to that which is akin and congenial to herself and so be delivered from all human ills. With such a nurture as

<sup>1</sup> μεταχειριζομένην. Philosophy is labouring to undo (λυούσης) the web of passion which the soul weaves: the soul is as it were weaving again in the night that which philosophy is employed in undoing during the working day. The same sense may be obtained with the reading μεταχειριζομένης, if we take the participle as a genitive absolute in agreement with Πηνελόπης, 'like a Penelope, &c.'

this there is no fear of her being alarmed, after such a preparation, Simmias and Cebes, at the idea of being torn asunder on her departure from the body, and being blown in pieces and scattered by the winds, and so that she vanish and have no more any existence anywhere.

35 So after Socrates had said this a silence ensued for a long time, Socrates himself being intent upon the preceding discussion, as his appearance plainly showed; and so indeed were most of us. But Cebes and Simmias were talking a little to one another. And Socrates, when he observed them, asked, Tell me, said he, what was the subject of your conversation<sup>1</sup>? You think, I dare say, that the question has not been thoroughly discussed? for, to be sure, it still leaves room for a multitude of doubts and objections, if, that is to say, the question is to be thoroughly gone into. However, if you are pursuing any other enquiry, I have nothing to say: but if you have any difficulty about this one, don't hesitate for a moment, either to speak yourselves and explain your views if it seems to you that it has been treated in any better way, or again to call me in to your assistance if you think that with my aid you are at all more likely to be successful.

7 Whereupon Simmias replied, Very well, Socrates, I will tell you the truth. We have been puzzled, and each of us has been for some time past pushing the other on and urging him to ask a question, because we were anxious to hear what you have to say, and yet were reluctant to trouble you for fear it may be disagreeable to you in consequence of your present misfortune.

And he, when he heard this, smiled quietly, and said,

<sup>1</sup> Or, with Stallbaum's present reading,—τί; ἔφη· ὑμῶν τὰ λεχθέντα μὴ δοκεῖ ἐνδεῶς λελέχθαι;—'What? said he, you seem to think that the arguments already used are insufficient?'

Bless me! Simmias; truly it must be difficult for me to persuade the rest of the world that I do not look upon my present case as a misfortune, when I can't convince even you, but you are afraid that I may be in a worse humour now than I used to be in old times. And you take me, it seems, to be inferior in the gift of foresight to the swans; which, as soon as they feel that they must die, sing then louder and better than they have ever sung in all their past lives, for joy that they are about to 85 depart into the presence of the God whose servants they are. But men from their own dread of death belie the swans too, and say that the song they pour forth is a dirge for their death out of grief, not reflecting that no bird sings when it is hungry or cold or suffering from any other pain, not even the nightingale herself nor the swallow nor the hoopoe, whose song they say is a dirge for grief: but neither these nor the swans seem to me to be in pain when they sing. But, I believe, as they belong to the service of Apollo, they are endowed with foresight, and, having foreknowledge of the good things in the world below, they sing and show their delight all through that day far more than in all their lives before. And I think myself too a fellow-slave of the swans and consecrated to the service of the same God, and that I have received the faculty of foresight from my master in no inferior measure to them, and that I am not more despondent than they are at the thought of departing from life. On the contrary, as far as any such feeling as this is concerned, you may say anything or ask me any question you please, as long as the eleven good men of Athens will allow.

You are very good, said Simmias: and so I will tell you my difficulty, and Cebes in his turn, to what extent it is that he cannot assent to what has been said. For

to me it seems, Socrates, as I dare say it does to you, that to know what is certain of such subjects as this is in the present life either impossible or extremely difficult; yet on the other hand to refuse to test in every way the received opinions about them, and not to persevere until his powers have failed him in the examination of them from every point of view—this I take to be a sign of a very feeble character. For it is our duty in respect of them to effect one at least of these things, either to learn from others or discover for oneself the true account of them, or else, if this is a thing impossible, to take at any rate the best and most irrefragable of human doctrines, and conveyed upon it as it were upon a raft to hazard the voyage through life, unless indeed one could find a surer conveyance, that is, a divine doctrine, whereon to make the passage more safely and with less risk. And so now for myself at any rate, I shall not be deterred by any feeling of shame from putting my question—especially as you say what you have said—nor will I expose myself to my own reproaches at a future time for not having expressed my opinion now. For I do think, Socrates, when I look to myself as well as to him, that the subject has not been quite sufficiently discussed.

36 Why, my friend, said Socrates, I dare say you are right: but tell me how you think it insufficient.

In this way *I* find it so, said he, as, you know, one might apply the same explanation to a harmony and a lyre and its strings, and say that the harmony is a thing invisible and incorporeal and eminently beautiful and divine in the tuned lyre, and yet the lyre itself and its strings 86 are bodies and corporeal and composite and earthy and akin to what is mortal. And so whenever any one breaks the lyre, or cuts it in pieces, or even bursts its strings,

supposing any one were to insist, by the same argument as yourself, that that harmony must needs be still in existence and cannot have perished,—for, he might argue, it would be absolutely impossible for the lyre with its strings burst, and its strings, of mortal-mould as they are, to be still in existence and yet that the harmony should have perished, which is of like nature and near akin to the divine and immortal, and should have perished before the mortal—but were to say that the harmony itself must be still somewhere extant, and that the wood and strings would decay before anything happened to it,—for in fact now, Socrates, *I* should imagine this must often have occurred to you yourself, that the popular notion amongst us of the nature of the soul is something like this, that, our body being as it were raised to a certain pitch or held together by hot and cold, and dry and moist, and such like things, our soul is a mixture and harmony of just these things, the result of their being well and duly blended one with another:—supposing therefore that our soul is a harmony, it is plain that, whenever our body is relaxed or strung up out of due proportion by diseases and other ills, the soul must of necessity perish instantly, most divine as it is, like all other harmonies, whether they be in sounds or in any other works of craftsmen, whilst the relics of each body last for a long time, until they are consumed either by fire or by decay;—see then what reply we shall have to make to this hypothesis, should any one think fit to maintain that the soul, being a mixture of the component parts of the body, perishes first in what is called death.

- 37 Whereupon Socrates, looking fixedly as was his constant custom and smiling, replied, That is quite fair, what Simmias says: so if any of you has a readier wit

than myself, he ought to answer at once. For indeed he looks quite a formidable assailant of my argument. At the same time, before I make my answer, I think we had better first hear Cebes also, what fault he on his part has to find with our argument, in order that we may gain time during the interval to deliberate upon our reply; and so, when we have heard him, we must either give way to them if they seem to be concordant, or, if not, then finally take up the defence of our theory. Come then, Cebes, he continued, tell me, what is it that disturbed you on your side and made you incredulous?

Then I'll tell you, returned Cebes. It seems to me, that is, that our argument is still just where it was, and liable to the same objection as we urged in the former case. For that it has been cleverly enough, and indeed, 87 if it is not presumptuous to say so, quite satisfactorily demonstrated that our soul was in existence also before it entered into this frame of ours,—that admission I am not disposed to retract: but that after our death it has<sup>1</sup> any longer a local existence,—of that I am not convinced. Not that I agree with Simmias' objection that soul is not stronger nor more durable than body: for in all these points I hold it very far superior. Then why, the argument might say, do you still refuse to believe me? when you see that after the man's death the weaker part still remains in existence, don't you think<sup>2</sup> it is a necessary consequence that the more durable part should continue safe at that time? To meet this objection then, see if the answer I am about to make has any weight: for I

<sup>1</sup> ἔστιν. The Zurich editors read ἔσται.

<sup>2</sup> ἐπειδὴ γε ὀραῖς . . . τὸ δὲ πολυχρονιώτερον, κ.τ.λ. The sentence is constructed as if it were τὸ μὲν ἀσθενέστερον ὀραῖς . . . τὸ δὲ πολυχρονιώτερον, κ.τ.λ.

too, it seems, like Simmias, require an illustration to express my meaning. For the argument we have employed seems to me to be much as if any one were to apply the same theory to a weaver who had died old, that the man has not perished but is probably somewhere in existence, and were to produce in evidence that the cloak which he had woven for his own wearing still exists entire and has not perished, and, in case of any one refusing his assent, were to ask him which is the more durable kind, that of a man or that of a cloak when it is in constant use and wearing, and receiving for answer, that of a man by far, were to suppose it to have been demonstrated that then consequently beyond all manner of doubt the man must be safe and sound, seeing that the less durable object has not perished. Whereas, I believe, Simmias, the truth is otherwise;—for I wish you too to pay attention to what I say—every one would be of opinion that this is the language of a simpleton. For this weaver of ours has worn out and woven for himself again many a similar cloak, and outlived it is true all those many, but died, I presume, before the last, and yet a man is not a bit the more on that account inferior to or weaker than a cloak. And the very same image, I suppose, may be applied to the relation of soul and body, and I should think that, if any one were to apply just what we are saying to their case, he would be quite reasonable in maintaining that the soul no doubt is durable, and the body weaker and less durable; yet still, he might say, each of our souls does wear out many bodies, especially if we suppose her to live many years: for supposing the body to be in a state of flux and perishing while the man still lives, but the soul meanwhile to be constantly re-weaving her garment as it wears out, it must certainly follow of necessity that whenever the soul does

die she must be wearing her last dress, and that she must be outlasted by this alone: but after the soul has perished, the body would then finally exhibit its natural weakness and speedily decay and be gone out of sight. So that one is not yet entitled to put so much faith in this argument as to feel any confidence that after death our soul still enjoys existence anywhere. For if one 88 were even to concede to the arguer still more than you, Simmias, allow, granting to him not only that our soul was in existence in the time preceding our birth, but even that after our death there is nothing to prevent the souls of some of us still existing and having future existence and being born many times over and dying again,—for soul is by its nature so strong as to hold out through many different births<sup>1</sup>—but after granting all this were to stop short in his concessions and refuse to allow that she suffers no harm in the course of her many births and does not in fact at last in one of her various deaths perish outright, but this particular death and this dissolution of the body which brings destruction to the soul, he were to say, no one can determine, for it is impossible for any one of us to perceive it—if, I say, all this be so, no confidence that a man can feel about death can be otherwise than an irrational confidence, unless he can undertake to prove that soul is absolutely immortal and imperishable: otherwise, he who is about to die must ever feel apprehension for his soul, lest in the present separation from his body she should perish utterly.

38 So when we heard this we were all, as we afterwards

<sup>1</sup> ψυχῆν (Stallbaum, τὴν ψυχῆν) is probably a gloss on αὐτό. γεγενημένην being either a corruption of γιγνόμενον or a σχῆμα πρὸς τὸ σημαινόμενον.



owned to one another, affected with an uncomfortable feeling, in that, after we had been so fully convinced by the preceding argument, they now seemed to unsettle our minds again, and not merely to throw us into doubt of the validity of the foregoing results, but also as to any arguments that might follow to inspire us with the fear of our being possibly incompetent judges or even of the things themselves admitting in fact of no certainty.

ECH. Yes, by heaven, Phædo, I can excuse you. For in fact, as I was listening to you just now myself, a thought struck me, and I said to myself something of this sort: Then what reasoning can we trust in future? for how extremely plausible that argument of Socrates' was, which has now quite sunk into discredit. For that theory, that our soul is a kind of harmony, has now, as it has always had, a wonderful hold upon me, and, when it was stated, suggested to my memory, as it were, that it had been my own opinion previously. And again I am as completely at fault as at starting for some other reason to persuade me that the soul of the dead man does not die with him. Tell me then, in God's name, how did Socrates pursue the discussion? And whether he too, as you say that you did, betrayed any symptoms of vexation, or no, but on the contrary advanced quietly to the rescue of his argument; and whether he defended it satisfactorily or inadequately: tell me the whole story as exactly as you can.

PH. In good truth, Echecrates, often as I have wondered at Socrates, I never yet felt so much admiration of him as at that interview. Now for a man 89 like him to be able to find an answer is perhaps nothing remarkable: but what *I* was most struck with in him was, first of all this, that he listened so sweetly and

kindly and admiringly to the young men's objections; next, that he so quickly perceived the effect they had produced upon us; and finally, that he so skilfully applied a remedy, and rallied us, as it were, from our rout and defeat, and encouraged us to advance by his side and join him in considering the argument.

ECH. How, pray?

PH. I will tell you. I chanced to be sitting on his right by the bedside on a low stool, whilst his seat was a good deal higher than mine. So stroking down my head and pressing together the hair upon my neck—for it was a habit of his ever and anon to play with my hair—So, Phædo, said he, to-morrow, I dare say, you will have all these beautiful locks cut off.

I suppose so, Socrates, said I.

Not if you take my advice.

Why not? said I.

We ought to do it to-day, he said, I mine and you these, if our argument be really dead and we are unable to bring it to life again. Indeed, for my own part, if I were you and the argument had slipt through my fingers, I would make a vow, like the Argives, never to let my hair grow until I had renewed the struggle and defeated Simmias' and Cebes' reasoning.

Nay, said I, Hercules himself, says the proverb, is not a match for two.

Well then, said he, call me in, your Iolaus, to your aid whilst it is still light.

I summon you then to my aid, said I, not in the character of Hercules, but in that of Iolaus summoning Hercules.

It won't matter, replied he.

39 But first of all let us be on our guard against falling into a certain error.

What is that? said I.

Against becoming speculation-haters, said he, as people become man-haters: for there is no greater evil, he continued, that can befall a man than this, that he have come to hate speculation. And speculation-hating arises from the same cause as man-hating. For the latter enters our minds from an excess of confidence artlessly placed in a person, and from an opinion conceived that the man is in all respects true and sincere and trustworthy, and then shortly afterwards finding him to be a villain and untrustworthy, and so again another: and when a man has often been treated thus, and particularly by any of those whom he would be inclined to esteem his nearest and dearest friends, so at last by frequent collisions of this kind he comes to hate everybody and to think that there is nothing at all sound and sincere in any one. You have observed, haven't you, that this is the kind of way in which this feeling originates?

Yes, certainly, said I.

Well, isn't it shameful, said he, and plain that such a person is venturing to hold intercourse with men without a knowledge of mankind? For, I presume, if he had conducted his dealings on principles of art, he would in that case have believed, as is really the case, that the excessively good and bad are each of them rare, 90 but that the intermediate sort are most numerous.

How do you mean? said I.

Just as is the case, replied he, with the excessively big and little: do you think there is any thing rarer than to meet with a man either extremely big or extremely little, or a dog, or any thing else you please? or again swift or slow, or ugly or handsome, or white or black? or have you not observed that in all such things the

very extremes are rare and few in number, but the means abundant and numerous?

No doubt, said I.

Don't you think then, he said, that, if a contest of rascality were to be proposed, the most distinguished would show themselves as scarce there as elsewhere?

Like enough, said I.

Why, so it is, he retorted: however, this is not the way in which speculations resemble men, [viz. that the extremes are rare]—I merely followed your lead just now—but this, in that, when a man has believed a theory to be true independently of the art of reasoning, and then soon after it seems to him false, sometimes really being so and sometimes not, and again assumes different aspects in succession,—and most especially those who devote themselves to the practice of disputation end, you know, by thinking that they have become the cleverest fellows in the world, and are the only people that have discovered that neither in things nor in speculations is there any thing sound or sure, but that all existing objects are in a constant flux and reflux, exactly as in the Euripus, and never abide an instant in any position.

That is quite true, returned I.

It would indeed, Phædo, said he, be a lamentable case, if there be any true and certain doctrine attainable by our understanding, that a man, from lending his ear to speculations of such a nature that they seem, though the same, to be sometimes true and sometimes false, instead of accusing himself and his own want of skill, should at last out of mere vexation be glad to shift the blame from his own shoulders upon the speculations, and spend the rest of his life thenceforward in hating and abusing these speculations, and remain a stranger to the truth and knowledge of things.

Upon my word, said I, lamentable indeed.

40 First of all then, he said, let us be on our guard against this, and let us not admit into our soul the fancy that there is nothing sound in philosophy; on the contrary we are much more bound to suppose that we ourselves are not yet in a sound state, but that we must strive manfully and earnestly to be so—you and the rest for the sake of your future life as well, and I as a preparation for death itself: for, for myself, I am 91 afraid that on this very subject just at present I am not in a philosophical mood, but rather, like those very vulgar disputants, in a contentious humour. For they in fact, whenever they dispute on a point, are utterly regardless of the real truth of the question under examination, but direct all their efforts to making their own positions appear true to their audience: and I think in the present case that the difference between me and them will be merely this, that I shall not be anxious to convince my audience of the truth of my opinion, unless it were as a merely subordinate object, but to convince myself, as far as I possibly can, of the truth of what I say. For I make this calculation, my dear friend,—and mark in what a selfish spirit—if what I say should be really true, it is well indeed to be persuaded of it; but if there is nothing at all after our decease, yet at any rate for the mere interval that is to elapse before my death I shall be less likely to give offence by my complaints to my friends present. Besides, this ignorance of mine won't accompany me after death,—for that would have been a misery,—but will soon be gone. Thus armed, he continued, Simmias and Cebes, I advance to the encounter of the theory. You however, if you take my advice, will care little for Socrates, but much more for the truth: and so if I seem to you to say any-

thing that is true, give me your assent; but if otherwise, oppose with every argument within your reach, and take care that I do not out of my zeal and earnestness cheat both myself and you, and so be gone like a bee with my sting left in the wound.

- 41 Come, let us on, he proceeded. First of all recall to my mind what you were saying, in case my memory be found at fault. For Simmias, I believe, is doubtful and alarmed lest the soul, more divine and more noble though it be than the body, should perish before it, being of the nature of a harmony: but Cebes, if I am not mistaken, granted me this, that soul is more lasting than body, but thought that nobody could feel sure that the soul, after having many times over worn out ever so many bodies, does not at last perish herself this time when she leaves it, and whether death be not precisely this, viz. soul's destruction; for as to body, that knows no pause in its constant course of decay. Is there any thing besides these two, Simmias and Cebes, which we are required to review?

They both agreed that these were the points.

Then do you reject, he said, all our previous conclusions; or only some of them, and accept the others?

Only some of them, they replied.

What then say you, said he, to that argument in which we maintained that learning is recollection, and if this be so, that it follows of necessity that our souls were in existence somewhere else before they were confined in the body?

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For my part, said Cebes, I was then wonderfully impressed by it, and I still adhere to it more firmly than to any other.

And I too, said Simmias, am myself of the same

mind; and I should be quite surprised, if, on this point at least, I ever altered my opinion.

Aye, but you must alter it, my Theban friend, said Socrates, if this notion of yours is to stand, that a harmony is a composite thing, and that soul is a kind of harmony composed of the elements of the body strung to the proper pitch. For you never will allow yourself to say that a harmony was in being and composed before those things were in existence of which it was to be composed. Will you?

Certainly not, Socrates, he replied.

Do you perceive then, said he, that this is what you assert when you say that the soul existed before ever it entered into a human form and body, and was in being, composed of elements not yet in existence? For surely your harmony is not like what you compare it to; but the lyre and its strings and sounds are first called into being still untuned, and the harmony is composed last of all and is the first to perish. How then will this doctrine of yours harmonize with the other?

Not at all, said Simmias.

And yet, said he, of all arguments in the world, that on the subject of harmony should be harmonious.

It should, no doubt, replied Simmias.

However this theory of yours is not: so you must consider which of the two doctrines you choose, that learning is recollection, or that soul is a harmony. >

I much prefer the former, Socrates. For the other has become mine without demonstration, resting merely on certain probable and plausible grounds, sources from which the vulgar usually derive their opinions; but I am conscious that doctrines which build their proofs upon mere probability are impostors, and if one be not on one's guard against them they thoroughly

delude one, whether it be in geometry or in any thing else: whereas the doctrine of recollection and learning has been delivered upon a basis of proof sufficient to warrant our acceptance of it. For it was stated, I believe, that our soul was in being before ever it entered the body on the ground that to it appertains the absolute existence to which we give the name of 'that which is.' But the truth of this absolute essence I have accepted, I flatter myself, on right and satisfactory grounds. For this reason therefore I am forced, as it seems, to listen to no assertion either from myself or from any one else that soul is a harmony.

42 And again, Simmias, said he, looking at it in this point of view, what say you? Think you that it is the nature of a harmony or of any other composition to be in any different state to its own component elements? 93

Certainly not.

Nor, again, to do any thing, I suppose, nor to suffer any thing beyond what those elements do or suffer?

He assented.

Then consequently it is not the nature of a harmony to take the lead of its own component parts, but to follow them?

He agreed to that.

Far less then can it have a contrary motion or sound, or act in any other way in opposition to its own parts?

Far indeed, he said.

But again. Is not every harmony naturally a harmony in proportion to the adaptation of the elements?

I don't understand.

Would it not, said he, if it be better tuned and to a higher degree—supposing this possible—be more a harmony and in a higher degree? but if less and to a lower degree, less so and in a lower?



Yes, certainly.

Well, is this possible in respect of soul, that one soul in the very smallest degree<sup>1</sup> can be to a greater extent and more, or to a smaller extent and less, than another, just what it is, viz. soul?

In no way whatever, replied he.

Come then, said he, in heaven's name, is not one soul said to contain wisdom and virtue, and to be good; and another, folly and vice, and to be bad? and are not these phrases true?

True, indeed.

What then will any of those that hold the view that soul is a harmony say that these things, virtue and vice, are in our souls? that they are again a different harmony and discord? and that the one is in tune, the good one, and in itself, a harmony, contains a second harmony; but that the other is out of tune itself, and contains no other within itself?

I'm sure I can't tell you, said Simmias: but it is plain that any one who adopts that hypothesis must maintain something of that sort.

But it has been admitted before, he said, that one soul is not a whit more or less so than another. And that admission is as much as to say that one harmony is not a whit more or in a higher degree such, nor less so or in a lower degree, than another. Isn't it so?

Undoubtedly.

<sup>1</sup> Omit μάλλον after κατὰ τὸ μικρότατον and insert ψυχὴν before ψυχῆς. So Van Heusde and the Zurich editors. If μάλλον is retained, translate: 'Well, is it possible for one single soul more than another in the very least to have a higher and greater degree or a lower and less degree of the essence soul [as compared with itself in its normal state]?'

Yes, and that that which is no more nor less a harmony is neither more nor less tuned. Is it so?

It is.

And that which is neither more nor less in tune—has it a greater or less share of harmony, or the same?

The same.

Well then, soul, seeing that one is in no degree more or less than another just what it is, viz. soul,—neither, consequently, is it more or less tuned?

Just so.

But if it be thus affected, it can have no greater share of discord or harmony?

No, certainly not.

And if this be true of it, can one have at all a larger share of vice or virtue than another, supposing vice to be a discord and virtue a harmony?

Not at all.

Or rather, I should imagine, Simmias, to be quite accurate, no soul at all will be infected with vice, if it is 94 a harmony. For a harmony surely, if it be completely neither more nor less than this, a harmony, never can admit discord.

No, indeed.

Nor again soul, I presume, if it be perfectly soul, vice.

No: how could it according to our previous reasoning?

It will follow then from this theory that all souls of all living creatures are equally good, if it belongs to the nature of all souls alike to be neither more nor less than this, viz. soul.

I should think so, Socrates, returned he.

Do you think also, said he, that this is well said, and that this must be the fate of our argument, if the supposition was correct that soul is a harmony?

No, nor any thing like well said, he replied.

43 But again, said he, of all that is in man, think you that there is any thing else that has the command but soul, especially if it be a wise one?

Nothing, I should think.

And does it always fall in with the affections of the body, or sometimes oppose them? I mean, for instance, when there is heat and thirst in the body, that it drags it the contrary way to abstain from drinking, or, when hungry, to abstain from eating: and in an infinity of other cases we see the soul setting itself in opposition to the affections of the body, don't we?

To be sure we do.

At the same time, on the other hand, we came to the conclusion in our preceding discussion that, if it be a harmony, it never could produce notes contrary to the tension or relaxation or vibration or any other affection whatever of the elements of which it is made up, but must always follow them, and can never take the lead?

We did, he said, of course.

Well, but are we not now supposing it to be doing the precise opposite, taking the lead, namely, of all those parts of which it may be said to be constituted, and setting itself in opposition in nearly every circumstance during its whole life, and exercising the mastery over them in every possible way, disciplining them, sometimes more severely and with pain in the way of bodily exercises and medicine, and again in a milder form, and now threatening, now admonishing its appetites and passions and terrors, like one distinct being holding converse with something else, just as Homer has represented in the Odyssey, where he says of Ulysses—

“ And he smote his breast, and chiding bespake his heart :

‘ Be patient still, O my heart: thou hast borne ere now even worse.’ ”

Think you that, when he wrote this, he considered it as a harmony and of a nature to be influenced by the affections of the body, instead of, as it really is, capable of leading them all, and lording it over them, and itself far too divine a thing to be compared with a harmony?

No, upon my word, I should think not, Socrates.

Then, my excellent friend, it can in no sense be right for us to say that soul is a kind of harmony: for it seems, if we did, we should agree neither with that divine poet 95 Homer nor with ourselves.

It is so, he replied.

44 Very good, said Socrates, we have succeeded tolerably well, it seems, in propitiating the Theban Harmony: but how about Cadmus, Cebes, continued he, how shall we appease him and by what words?

I dare say, said Cebes, you'll find a way: at all events your late argument against the harmony has had for me a singularly unexpected result. For whilst Simmias was speaking, when he expressed his doubts, I marvelled much if any way could be found of dealing with his theory; and accordingly I thought it very odd that it instantly gave way at the very first onset of your argument. So I shouldn't be surprised if Cadmus' theory shared the same fate.

My worthy friend, said Socrates, don't talk big, for fear some evil eye bring discomfiture upon the argument upon which we are about to enter. However heaven will take care of all that; but let us, like Homer's heroes, 'advance near,' and try if there is anything in what you say. The sum of your enquiry is, I believe, this: you require it to be demonstrated that our soul is indestruc-

tible and immortal, in order that, if a philosopher at the point of death feel confident and believe that after death, in the world beyond, he will enjoy a lot beyond comparison better than if he had died after a life passed in any other manner, that confidence which he feels may not be senseless and idle. But as to proving that the soul is something strong and godlike, and that it was in existence even before we men were born,—there is no reason, say you, why all that should not indicate, not indeed its immortality, but that soul is durable and probably existed in a previous state an immensely long time and knew and did a number of things; and yet, for all that, it was not a bit the more immortal, but the very entrance into man's body was the commencement of its destruction, like a disease: and so, you say, it passes all this its life in trouble and distress, and at last in what is called death perishes. And, to be sure, say you, it makes no difference, in respect at least of the alarm which each one of us may feel, whether it enters a body once or several times: for it is natural for any one to feel alarm, unless he were insensible, who does not know nor can prove that it is immortal. That, I think, Cebes, is a tolerably exact account of your objection; and I purposely repeat it often, in order that nothing may escape us, and that you may make any addition or withdraw anything you please.

To which Cebes replied: Nay, I have no occasion at present either to take away or to add anything: that is in fact just what I mean.

- 45 Upon this, Socrates made a long pause, and after reflecting with himself said at length: It is no trifling question, Cebes, that you raise: for we must enter into a full discussion of the whole subject of the cause of generation and corruption. I will therefore, if you like, 96

describe to you my own experience on the subject: and then, if any of my statements appear to you likely to be of service, you will make use of it for your conviction in the matter you speak of.

Oh, certainly, said Cebes, I should like to do so.

Then listen to what I am going to say. In my youth, Cebes, he continued, I was singularly fond of this kind of science which they call physics. For it seemed to me a magnificent sort of science, to know the causes of everything, why it comes into being, and why it perishes, and why it exists: and I often drifted backwards and forwards in the examination, first of all, of questions like these, whether it was in consequence of a sort of fermentation engendered by heat and cold, as some once maintained, that living creatures grow into a consistent shape, and whether it is the blood which is the vehicle of thought, or the air, or fire, or none of all these, but the brain that furnishes the senses of hearing and sight and smell, and from these arise memory and opinion, and from memory and opinion, when they have attained a state of quiescence, in this way springs knowledge. And again I investigated the manner of destruction of all these things, and the various phenomena of the heavens and the earth, until at last I arrived at the conclusion that nothing in the world could be more stupid in such studies than myself. I will give you a satisfactory proof of it: for what I knew well enough before, in my own opinion and in that of the rest of the world—I was then so completely blinded by these studies that I unlearned even what I thought I knew previously on a vast number of points, and amongst them, why it is that a man grows. For I formerly thought that it was quite plain to every one that it is caused by eating and drinking: when, namely, from his food flesh has grown on to

his flesh, and bone to his bones, and so by the same rule to all the rest the elements that are related to them, each to each,—that then it was that the small bulk becomes in process of time large, and so the little man grows into a big one. So I then thought: don't you think it was with reason?

Yes, I do, said Cebes.

Well then, here is another point for your consideration. I thought I was tolerably sure whenever a man appeared tall standing by a short one, that he was taller by the head itself for instance, and similarly horse larger than horse: or again, what was still plainer, ten seemed to me more than eight because two were added to it, and a thing two cubits long longer than one of one cubit because it exceeded it by half its length.

Well but what is your opinion of it now? said Cebes.

Why, 'faith, that I am far enough from thinking, said he, that I am acquainted with the cause of any one of them: for I can't accept my own assurance even, when one is added to one, either that that to which the one is added has become two, or that the one added and that to which it is added have become two by the addition of the one to the other: for I am surprised that, whereas, whilst each of them was separate the one from the other, each was one, and they were not then two, when they were brought together it should then follow that this was the cause of their becoming two, viz. the combination caused by their being placed near one another. No, nor can I any longer persuade myself, if one be divided into two, that this again, viz. the division, has been the cause of its becoming two: for here we find a cause of a thing becoming two, the exact opposite of that in the former case: for in the former instance it was because they were brought together near to one

another and added one to another, but now it is because they are carried away and separated one from another. No, nor can I any longer bring myself to believe that I know why a thing becomes one, nor, in a word, why anything else whatever comes into being, or perishes, or exists, that is to say, according to this method of investigation; but I follow another disorderly, confused kind of method of my own, but this one I can by no means admit.

46 But I happened once upon a time to hear some one reading out of a book, as he said, of Anaxagoras, and saying, that it is Mind that sets ail in order and is the cause of all. I was at once delighted with this cause, and it seemed to me right in a manner that the supreme Mind should be the cause of all things, and I thought, if this be so, that the Mind in its ordering must order and arrange everything, each in that way in which it is best that it should be: should therefore any one want to find the cause of each individual thing, how it comes into being, or perishes, or exists, he must first ascertain this in respect of it, how, namely, it is best for it either to be, or to do or suffer anything else: and so according to this theory a man was bound to enquire after nothing, in his own case and in that of everything else, but what is best and most perfect: and it would follow of necessity that the same person would also become acquainted with the worse, because the science that belongs to them is the same. Reflecting then upon all this, I was glad to think I had discovered a teacher of the cause of existing things after my own heart, Anaxagoras namely, and that he would tell me first of all whether the earth is flat or round, and after he had told me, would add a complete explanation of the reason and the necessity, stating what is better, and then showing that it is better



for it to be of that shape: and if he maintained that it is in the centre of the universe, that he would explain into the bargain that it is better for it to be in the centre: and if he made all this clear to me, I had made up my mind to require no other kind of cause beyond that. And so again with respect to the sun and the moon and the rest of the stars, I had determined similarly to carry on my enquiry in the same way, about their relative speed and their revolutions and the rest of their affections, how, that is, it may be better for them each to act and be acted on as they are. For I never should have thought that, whilst he asserted that they were ordered by Mind, he would afterwards apply to them any other cause besides than that it is best for them so to be as they are: and so I supposed that, in assigning its cause to each in particular and to all generally, he would describe in addition what was best for each and what was the common good of all. And I would not have bartered my expectations for a great deal, but I seized the book with the greatest avidity, and read it as fast as ever I could, in order to become acquainted as soon as possible with the best and the worse.

- 47 Glorious then was the hope, my friend, from which I was hurled down, when, as I went on in my reading, I saw a man making no use of his Mind, nor alleging any causes with reference to the ordering of things, but assigning as causes a parcel of airs and skies and waters and a hundred other things equally absurd. And the case with him seemed to me to be exactly similar to that of one who were to maintain that Socrates does all that he does in virtue of Mind, and then in the attempt to state the individual causes of each of my actions were to say first of all that the reason of my sitting

here now is because my body is composed of bones and muscles, and the bones are solid and separated by joints from one another, and the muscles are capable of contraction and relaxation, surrounding the bones together with the flesh and the skin which keeps them together; accordingly, as the bones turn in their sockets, the muscles, expanding and contracting, give me the power now, we may suppose, of bending my limbs, and that is the reason why I am sitting here with my knees bent: and again with regard to the conversation I am holding with you, were to bring forward some other causes like these, a set of sounds namely and airs and hearings and an infinity of other things of the same kind, and forget to mention the real causes, viz. that, whereas it seemed better to the Athenians to condemn me to death, for that reason I too have thought it better in my turn to remain sitting here, and more right to stay and undergo my sentence, whatever it may be that they have ordered: for, by the dog, as I think, these muscles and bones 99 would have been long ago in the region of Megara or Bœotia, put in motion by the 'opinion of what is best,' had I not thought it more right and honorable, rather than fly and run away, to undergo any penalty that the city chooses to impose upon me. However, to call such things as these causes is excessively absurd: if any one were to say indeed that without all such things, bones and muscles and everything else that I have, I should never have been able to put my resolutions into execution, it would be quite true; but to say that this is the reason of my doing any thing that I do, or that this is the meaning of acting by Mind, and not rather the choice of what is best, would be a very extraordinarily careless way of speaking. For to be unable to distinguish the essential difference between the real cause

of a thing, and that without which the cause never could be a cause—which, in fact, is what the generality of thinkers seem to be groping after, as it were in the dark, and to apply a name quite foreign to it when they speak of it as if it were a cause. And so it is that one makes the earth to be kept steady, forsooth, by the heavens, by surrounding it with a vortex; another represents it as a flat kneading-trough supported by the air beneath as a basis for it to rest upon: but the meaning of their being disposed according to the best possible arrangement for them,—this they neither search after, nor deem it to possess any divine force, but suppose they might some time or other discover an Atlas stronger and more immortal than this, and more capable of holding the universe together, and conceive that ‘the good and *binding*’ does, in fact, bind and hold together nothing whatever. Now to learn the true nature of such a cause as this, I for my own part would most gladly have put myself to school under any one in the world: but when I found myself cheated of it, and unable either to discover it myself or to obtain the knowledge of it from any one else,—would you like me, Cebes, to give you a description of the way in which I have proceeded, as the second best course, in my search after the cause?

Oh, I should like it monstrously, he replied.

48 Well then I thought to myself, said he, that next, after I had<sup>1</sup> exhausted myself in my enquiries after the nature of things, I must take good care to avoid the fate of those who are looking at and examining an eclipse of the sun: for some of them, I rather think, lose their eyes, unless they look at the reflection of him in water or some such thing. Such was my own notion; and I was afraid of having my soul quite blinded, if

<sup>1</sup> Read ἀπερρήκη.

I looked at things with my eyes, or attempted to reach them with any of my senses. Accordingly it occurred to me that I must have recourse to words<sup>1</sup>, and in them carry on the investigation of the true nature of things. Now perhaps the illustration that I employ to a certain degree does not correspond with the reality: for I do 100 not altogether<sup>2</sup> admit that any one who pursues his researches after things in words regards them in mere reflections any more than one who goes straight to the real objects: but be that as it may, this is the way in which I started; and having laid down any conception which I judge to be most incontestable in each case, I assume as true whatever seems to me to be in accordance with it, whether it be in the case of cause or in that of any thing else, and whatever is not, as false. But I will explain to you more clearly my meaning; for I think that at present you don't understand.

No, upon my honour, Socrates, said Cebes, not particularly well.

49 Well, said he, this is what I mean; no novelty, but what I have never ceased to say constantly on all other occasions as well as in our past discussion. For I am in fact about to make the attempt to exhibit to you the kind of cause which has been the object of my studies, and to return to the old burden of my song, and to begin with it; with the assumption, that is, that there is such a thing as what is beautiful in itself independently, and good, and great, and so forth: and if you grant me this and admit the existence of such, I hope to be able from this to show you what the cause is, and to discover that the soul is immortal.

<sup>1</sup> These λόγους or 'words' are the general terms or conceptions which, as Plato would have said, represent to our minds the ideas.

<sup>2</sup> On the phrase οὐ πᾶν, see Appendix to the Gorgias, Note C.

Nay, said Cebes, you may assume that I grant this, and so draw your conclusion as soon as you please.

Then consider, he proceeded, whether you agree with me in what follows. For it appears to me that, if any thing else is beautiful except the absolutely beautiful, the only possible cause of its beauty is that it participates in the nature of that absolute beauty: and so on for all the rest. Do you admit this kind of cause?

Oh, yes, he replied.

That being the case, said he, I can no longer understand nor recognise all those other ingenious causes: but if any one assign to me as a reason for the beauty of any object, either that it has a blooming colour, or a fine figure, or any other such reason as these, to all the rest I pay no sort of attention, for I am merely confused by them, but to this one thing I hold simply and artlessly and perhaps foolishly, that it is nothing else that makes it beautiful but that ideal beauty—whether we are to call it presence or communication, or in whatever way or by whatever means the connection is brought about<sup>1</sup>—for on this latter point I can no longer pronounce any strong affirmation, but only to the extent that it is by the absolute beauty that all beautiful things are made beautiful. For this seems to me the safest answer to return either to myself or to any one else, and as long as I hold fast to this I think I can never fall, but that this is a safe reply to make to myself and to any one else whatever, that it is by the absolute beauty

<sup>1</sup> εἴτε ὄψη δὴ καὶ ὄπως προσαγορευομένη. So Wytttenbach corrects. With προσγενομένη, the reading of the MSS., translate: 'it is nothing else that makes it beautiful but the presence, or participation, or whatever else the connection may be, of that ideal beauty': but this involves an inaccuracy of expression, as προσγενομένη by a kind of attraction agrees grammatically with the wrong word.

that beautiful things are made beautiful. Don't you agree with me?

Certainly I do.

And consequently, that it is by greatness that great things become great, and greater things greater, and by smallness that the less become less?

Yes.

Then neither would you assent, if any one were to maintain that a man is taller than another 'by the head,' and that one who is shorter is shorter by precisely the same thing: but you would protest that you have nothing else to say about the matter than that every thing that is greater, one than another, is greater by nothing else than by greatness, and that the cause of its being greater is its greatness; and that the less is less by nothing else than smallness, and that the cause of its being less is its smallness; dreading no doubt the encounter of some adverse argument, if you assert that a person is taller or shorter by the head, first, that it is by the very same thing that the greater is greater and the less less, and secondly, that your greater is greater by the head which is a little thing, and that it would be indeed a prodigy that a man should be great by a little thing. You would be afraid of this, wouldn't you?

Cebes laughed at this, and replied, I certainly should.

Well, said he, that ten is more than eight by two, and that two is the reason of its excess, you would be afraid to assert, instead of saying by number and by reason of its number? and that two cubits are greater than one by half, and not by size? for there is the same fear, I imagine.

Undoubtedly, he said.

And again, in the case of<sup>1</sup> the addition of one, wouldn't you carefully avoid saying that the addition is

<sup>1</sup> ἐνὶ ἐνός. The Zurich editors read ἐνὶ ἐνός.

the cause of their becoming two, or, when a thing is divided, the division; and loudly exclaim that you know no other way whatever in which each particular thing comes into being except by the participation in the appropriate being of each in which it does participate, and that in such cases you have no other cause to assign for their becoming two but their participation in the idea of two, and that all objects that are to be two must participate in this, and all that is to be one, in unity? And all these divisions and additions and the rest of such-like subtleties, you would let alone, leaving the explanation of them to cleverer fellows than yourself: but you, frightened, as the phrase is, by your own shadow and ignorance, would hold fast to that certainty of our hypothesis, and so shape your answer. And should any one attack the hypothesis itself, you would let it pass and make no answer, until you had examined the consequences that proceed from it, whether you find they agree or disagree with one another. And then next when you were required to give an account of that itself, you would do so in like manner, by the assumption again of any second hypothesis which appeared to you the best of the higher generalizations, until you arrived at something satisfactory: and you would not, like those mere debaters, talk about the first principle and its consequences in such a way as to jumble them all up together, supposing you really wished to attain to the knowledge of any real thing? For they, I dare say, have no consideration at all or anxiety about this; for their cleverness enables them to give themselves entire satisfaction, whilst they mix every thing together: but you, if you belong to the order of lovers of wisdom, 102 would do, I doubt not, as I say.

Most true, said Simmias and Cebes both together.

ECH. Yes, by Zeus, Phædo, like enough. For I am amazingly struck with the clearness with which he explained this for any one possessed of a grain of sense.

PH. No doubt, Echebrates, and so were all that were there.

ECH. Why so are we that were not there, and hear it now for the first time. But pray tell us what was said next.

50 PH. I think, after this was conceded to him, and it was admitted that each one of the ideas has a real existence, and that it is by participation in these that every thing else bears the name of themselves, he next enquired, If then, said he, you accept this doctrine, do you not, whenever you pronounce Simmias to be taller than Socrates and shorter than Phædo, say at the same time that both these things reside in Simmias, greatness and smallness?

I do.

But still, said he, you allow that the proposition, Simmias exceeds Socrates in height, is not exactly true as it is expressed in words: for surely it is not Simmias' nature to be taller in virtue of this, that he is Simmias, but in virtue of the tallness which he happens to have; nor again, to be taller than Socrates because Socrates is Socrates, but because Socrates has smallness compared with the other's greatness.

True.

No, nor again to be surpassed in height by Phædo because Phædo is Phædo, but because Phædo has height compared with Simmias' shortness.

It is so.

Thus it is then that Simmias may be called short and tall at the same time, whilst he really is between both, exceeding the shortness of the one by excess of height,



and lending to the other by comparison a size exceeding his own shortness. And at the same time smiling, One would fancy, he continued, that I am going to talk like a legal document<sup>1</sup>; but still what I say is not far from the truth.

He agreed.

And my reason for dwelling upon the subject is the desire that I have to see you of my opinion. For it seems to me, not only that greatness in itself will never be great and small at once, but also that greatness in ourselves never admits what is small nor will be surpassed; but one of two things, either it flies and gives way on the approach of its opposite, the little, or, if the other make good its advance, perishes outright; but it will not stand its ground and admit littleness so as to be different to what it was, in the same way as I can admit and sustain the attack of littleness, and still be what I am, this very identical little fellow; whereas the other cannot bear to be small when it is great: and in the very same way what is small in us will never become or be great, nor will any other of the opposite ideas, whilst it still remains what it was, become or be its opposite, but in such a case it either retires or ceases 103 to be.

That is exactly my own view, said Cebes.

51 And then one of the company present—but who it was I don't distinctly remember—said as soon as he heard this: In heaven's name, didn't we, in an earlier part of our discussion, arrive at a conclusion exactly opposite to what has been just said, that the greater springs from the less, and the less from the greater, and

<sup>1</sup> *ἔνυγγραφικῶς*. That is, in a formal, precise, circumstantial manner. See Stallbaum's note.

that this is just the source from which opposites are generated, viz. their opposites? But now it seems to be denied that this can ever take place.

And Socrates, who had bent his head forward to listen, answered, Manfully suggested: nevertheless you don't remark the difference between our present and former assertions. For it was maintained on the occasion you allude to that the opposite thing derives its origin from the thing opposite to it; but now, that the absolute opposite can never become opposite to itself, neither what resides in ourselves nor what resides in universal nature. For on the former occasion, my friend, we were talking about the things that contain the opposites, and gave them the name that belongs to the latter: but now we are speaking of the ideas themselves, by the inherence of which phenomena named receive the name that they bear; but the ideas themselves, we maintain, never would admit a reciprocal generation. And at the same time he looked at Cebes, and asked, You too, Cebes, were troubled I dare say at something in what he said?

No, replied Cebes, I have not<sup>1</sup> the same feeling this time: although I by no means aver that there are not a good many things that trouble me.

Then, said he, we have arrived at this conclusion absolutely, that the opposite idea will never be opposite to itself.

Undoubtedly, he replied.

52 Then further, said Socrates, let me beg you to consider if you are inclined to agree to this too. There are such things as what you call hot and cold?

To be sure there are.

<sup>1</sup> Read *οὐκ*. If *οὐδ'* is retained, the reference must be to Socrates: 'neither have I [any more than you].'

The same as snow and fire?

No indeed, of course not.

But heat is a thing distinct from fire, and cold a thing distinct from snow?

Yes.

But this, I suppose, you allow, that snow as snow can never admit the presence of heat, according to what we were saying before, so as still to be what it was, snow and hot, but upon the approach of heat will either give place to it or perish?

Yes, by all means.

And that fire again on the approach of cold must either yield to it or perish, but never will bear to admit cold and still be what it was, fire and cold?

Quite true, he replied.

It is true then, said he, in respect of some of such things as we have been talking of, that not only is the idea itself held to have a right to its own name for ever, but also something else which is not it, but always has its form whensoever it occurs. But, to proceed, my meaning will perhaps appear more clearly in the following case. The idea of odd must always, I presume, receive this name as we now pronounce it: must it not?

Yes, certainly.

Is that the only thing in nature which must receive it,—for this is the drift of my question—or something else besides, which is not the same as the odd, but 104 still, together with its own name, must ever receive this appellation also, because its nature is such that it never can be separated from the odd? As an example of what I mean we may take the case of the number three, and many others: but let us examine the number three. Don't you think that it must be called not only by its

own name but also by that of the odd, though that be not the same as the number three? Yet still the nature of the number three and the number five and the entire half of the set of numbers is of such sort that each of them, though it be not the same as the odd, is nevertheless always odd. And again, two and four and the whole of the other row of numbers again, though it be not the same as the even, is still in each case constantly even. Do you admit this, or not?

Of course I do, he replied.

Then pay attention to what I want to explain; which is this, that it appears that not only those opposite ideas do not admit one another, but also all those things which, though not opposite to one another, have opposites inseparably attached to them—that these too have all the air of not admitting that idea which is opposite to that which inheres in themselves, but upon the accession of it either perish or give way. Or must we not say that the number three would perish or undergo any other extremity whatever sooner than submit to become even, whilst still remaining three?

Undoubtedly, said Cebes.

Nor again, said he, is the number two opposite to the number three.

No, certainly not.

Then not only the opposite ideas reciprocally exclude each other, but there are also certain other things which are incompatible with the intrusion of the opposites. ←

Most true, was the reply.

53 Should you like us then, said he, to determine, if we can, of what nature these things are?

Yes, of all things.

Then do you think it likely, Cebes, that they are such as force whatsoever they have possession of, not

merely to entertain the idea proper to itself, but also to entertain constantly that of some opposite?

How do you mean?

Just what we were saying a while ago: for you understand, I suppose, that all things which are possessed by the idea of three must of necessity be not only three but also odd.

Oh, certainly.

Accordingly our assertion is that the idea opposite to that form which effects this [makes it odd] can never obtain access to such a thing as that. ✓

No, never.

But it was effected by the idea of the odd.

Yes.

And opposite to this is that of the even. ✓

Yes.

It follows that the idea of the even will never make its way to three. ✓

Certainly not.

Then three has no portion in the even. ✓

None.

Consequently the number three is uneven. ✓

Yes.

Well then, the definition I undertook to give of the nature of those things which, though not opposite to something else, still do not admit it, this opposite, as in the instance we just now took, the number three, though not opposite to the even, does not admit it any the more for that, for it [the number three] always brings to it [the even] its opposite [the odd], and similarly the number two to the odd, and fire to cold, and a vast number of 105 others—but see now if you accept my definition, that not only the opposite does not admit the opposite idea, but also whenever a thing brings with it an opposite to any

thing that it goes to, the importing object itself can never admit the opposite belonging to the imported. But recall it to mind once again, for it is just as well to hear it often. Five will not admit the idea of even, nor ten, the double of it, that of odd. Now this double in its own nature is opposite to something else, but nevertheless will not admit the idea of odd: nor again will one and a half and all the rest of numbers of that kind, the half for instance, admit that of the whole, and a third again and so on—if you follow me and agree with what I say.

I agree with you entirely, he replied, and follow you too.

54 Then answer me over again from the beginning, said the other. And do not express your answer in the terms of my question, but in different words<sup>1</sup>, as I shall set you the example. And I speak with reference to another safe method of answering which I have discovered from the observations just made, besides that mode, that sure one, which I pointed out at first. For supposing you were to ask me what it is that must reside in a body to make it hot, I shall not now make you that safe, ignorant answer that a body will be hot in which heat resides, but a more refined one derived from our recent conclusions, 'one in which fire resides': nor, should you enquire what must reside in a body to make it sick, shall I answer sickness, but, a fever: nor again, should you ask what must reside in a number to make it odd, shall I say, oddness; but unity and so forth. Now consider if you by this time understand my meaning sufficiently.

Oh yes, quite sufficiently.

Then answer me, said he; what must reside in a body in order that it may be alive?

<sup>1</sup> ἀλλ' ἄλλο, μιμούμενος. The Zurich editors read ἀλλὰ μιμούμενος.

✓ Soul, he replied.

Well but is this always so?

How can it be otherwise? said he.

It follows then that the soul ever by her presence brings life to whatsoever body she herself occupies?

She does indeed.

And is there anything opposite to life, or nothing?

There is, he said.

What?

/ Death.

Well then soul can never possibly admit the contrary of that which she herself ever brings with her, according to the conclusion resulting from our previous discussion?

Beyond all possibility of doubt, said Cebes.

55 But again. What name did we give just now to that which does not admit the idea of even?

Uneyen.

And to that which does not admit justice, or music?

Unmusical, he said, and the other, unjust.

Very well: and what do we call that which does not admit death?

Immortal.

And does the soul not admit death?

No.

Consequently the soul is immortal?

It is.

Very well, said he: may we say now that this has been demonstrated? or how think you?

Yes indeed, and quite satisfactorily, Socrates.

But once more, Cebes, said he, suppose the uneven had been necessarily imperishable, would not three have 106 been imperishable too?

Of course it would.

Well, if again that which is without heat had been necessarily imperishable, whenever any one applied heat to snow, the snow would slip away safe and unmelted, for it certainly would not perish nor stay to admit heat.

Quite true, replied he.

And exactly in the same way, I suppose, if what is unsusceptible of cold had been imperishable, when anything cold approached the fire, it would never have been extinguished nor have perished, but would have made good its escape.

Necessarily.

Well then, must we not hold the same language about what is immortal? If the immortal is also imperishable, it is impossible for a soul to perish at the approach of death: for, agreeably to our previous conclusions, it certainly will not admit death nor exist in a state of death; just as three, we said, will not be even, any more than the odd itself, nor again, fire cold, any more than the heat which is in the fire. But, it may be said, though, as has been settled, the odd cannot become even on the approach of the even, yet what is to prevent its perishing and an even number coming into being in its place? Against one who urges this objection we could not contend that it does not perish: for the uneven is not imperishable; for had we come to this conclusion, we could easily have contended that on the approach of the even the odd and three take their departure: and about fire and heat and the rest we might have contended in the same way: might we not?

Undoubtedly.

Well and in the present instance of the immortal, if we are agreed that it is also imperishable, it would follow that soul is imperishable as well as immortal: or if not, we should require a new train of reasoning.



Nay, said the other, as far as this is concerned, there is no need of it: for it is hardly likely that any thing else could be incapable of destruction, if the immortal, being as it is eternal, can be supposed capable of it.

56 And surely the Divine Being, continued Socrates, and the very idea of life, and all else that is immortal, must be admitted by all to be for ever exempt from destruction.

By all men, most certainly, he replied, and still more, I should conceive, by gods.

If then what is immortal is also indestructible, must not soul, if it be immortal, be also imperishable?

Infalibly.

Consequently, when death comes upon the whole man, the mortal part of him, as it appears, dies, but the immortal part gives place to death and takes its flight far away safe and indestructible.

It seems so.

Then nothing can be more certain, Cebes, he pursued, than that soul is immortal and imperishable, and 107 that our souls will really exist in the world below.

I at any rate, Socrates, replied he, have nothing else to say in opposition to this, nor can I in any way refuse my assent to your arguments. But if perhaps Simmias here or any one else has anything to say, it would be well not to suppress it: for I know not to what other season than the present he may think to put off his enquiries, if he desire to say or to hear anything on such subjects.

Nay indeed, said Simmias, neither have I myself any further ground for withholding my assent after what has been said: yet nevertheless I am compelled by the importance of the subject of our discussion and the distrust inspired by our human weakness still to remain

unconvinced in my own mind as to the truth of our conclusions.

Yes, Simmias, replied Socrates, and not only so, but, besides what you have just so rightly suggested, you should also, however secure they may seem to you, nevertheless re-examine our first premisses; and when you have submitted them to a sufficient analysis, you will then, as I believe, follow the course of the proof, so far at least as it is in any way possible for a human being to follow it; and if this particular point become clear to you, you will make no further search.

True, was the reply.

- 57 But here is another point, my friends, he continued, which it is right to consider, viz. that, if the soul is immortal, it surely requires care and forethought to provide, not only for this time in which consists what we call life, but for the whole: and the hazard of neglecting it must now indeed appear fearful. For, had death been a release from everything, it would have been a godsend to the vicious to be released once for all by death from the body and from their own vice together with the soul: but now, whereas it proves to be immortal, there can be no other refuge for it nor salvation from its misery but to become as good and wise as possible. For the soul takes its journey to the lower world with nothing whatever but its education and cultivation, which in fact, as we are told, bring at once upon the dead the highest service or the deepest injury at the very outset of his journey thither. Now there is a tradition to the effect that each man's genius, to whose charge he had been allotted during his life,—he, when he dies, undertakes to conduct him to some particular place, at which they are all to assemble, and then, after having sentence passed upon them, to proceed to the lower regions in company with that

guide to whom has been assigned the office of conveying the inhabitants of this world to the other. And there after they have received each man his appointed lot and have stayed the appointed time, another guide conducts them back hither after many and long revolutions of ages. And the journey, as they say, is not such as Æschylus' Telephus describes it: for he says that "a simple path leads to the world below"; whereas to me 108 it seems to be neither one nor simple: for had it been so, there would have been no need of guides; for no one, I suppose, would go astray in any direction where there is only one road: whereas in reality it seems to have many branches and windings; a conclusion which I derive from the religious and funereal rites as they are practised here. So the well-ordered and wise soul follows obediently, for she is not absolutely unacquainted with the present state of things: but that which has a passionate desire after the body, as I said before, fluttering long about it and the visible world, after many struggles and much suffering, with reluctance and difficulty is carried off by the appointed genius. And on her arrival at the place where the rest are, if she be impure and guilty of any such crimes as these, either stained, for example, with unrighteous murders or having committed any other such things as are akin to these and the deeds of kindred souls, her every one shuns and shrinks from, and will be neither her fellow-traveller nor her guide, and she wanders by herself involved in uttermost perplexity until certain seasons have elapsed, at the end of which she is borne by necessity to the habitation fitted for her; whilst the souls that have passed their life with purity and discretion obtain gods for companions and guides, and dwell each in the place that is suitable to her nature. Now there are many and wondrous re-

gions in the earth, and the earth itself is neither in quality nor in size what it is imagined to be by those who are accustomed to describe it, as a certain person has convinced me.

58 Here Simmias said, How mean you, Socrates? For I myself have heard a vast deal about the earth, not however the view you have accepted. I should therefore like very much to hear it.

Nay, in truth, Simmias, to describe to you what it is, seems to me hardly to require the skill of Glaucus: but to decide whether it be true, appears to me too hard even for Glaucus' skill; and not only should I very likely find myself quite unable to do so, but also, even if I knew how, my life seems hardly long enough, Simmias, for an argument of such magnitude. Nevertheless the figure of the earth, such as I am convinced it is, and its various regions, there is nothing to prevent my describing to you.

Well, said Simmias, we will be content even with that.

My persuasion is then, said he, first of all, that, if the earth is of a spherical figure and placed in the centre of the heavens, it has no need either of air to keep it from falling, or of any other similar sustaining force; 109 but that the perfect uniformity of the heavens in all their parts and the equipoise of the earth itself are sufficient to support it: for a thing in equilibrium, placed in the centre of another, perfectly uniform and correspondent, will have no reason for inclining more or less to one side than another, and accordingly, as it does so correspond, will remain fixed and immoveable. Here you have then the first article of my creed, said he.

And a sound one too, replied Simmias.

And still further, he proceeded, that it is of vast

size, and that we who are settled from the Phasis to the Columns of Hercules occupy quite a little bit of it, dwelling round the sea like ants or frogs round a pond, and that there are many others in various parts living in many similar regions. For in every direction round the earth there are many hollows, of every kind in shape and size, whereinto collect the water and the mist and the air; whilst the earth itself lies pure in the purity of the heaven, wherein are the stars, which in fact is called the sky by most of those who are accustomed to give an opinion upon such matters: whereof, as we may suppose, all this [water, mist, and air] is the mere sediment, which collects constantly into the cavities of the earth. Accordingly we are living without being aware of it in the hollows of the earth, fancying all the time that we are dwelling above on its surface; just as if a person living at the very bottom of the ocean were to suppose that he was living on its surface, and seeing the sun and all the other stars through the water were to imagine that the sea was heaven, and by reason of his dulness and infirmity had never risen to the top of the water, nor had been able to extricate himself and peer out of the sea into the regions of earth, so as to see how much purer and fairer they are than those with them, nor had heard the tale from one who had seen it. Precisely the same, I say, is the case with ourselves: for dwelling as we do in a kind of cavern of the earth, we yet fancy that we inhabit its surface, and call the air heaven, as though this were heaven and through it the stars ran their courses; whereas the case is just the same with ourselves, that from infirmity and dulness we are unable to penetrate to the outermost parts of the air: for, could any one reach its upper surface or make him wings to fly so high, he might peep out and descry—just as here

on earth the fishes by raising their heads out of the sea can see objects on earth—so, I say, might a man descry also objects there, and, were our nature strong enough to endure the contemplation of them, might discover that that is the true heaven and the true light and the true earth. For this earth where we dwell and these stones and the whole region here are corrupted and gnawed away, as things in the sea are by the brine: and nothing grows in the sea worth noticing, neither is there anything, as one may say, perfect, but there are caves and sand and mud and slime—wherever there *is* land—in endless quantity, all utterly unworthy to be compared to the beautiful objects with us: and those others again would seem still further to surpass things which with us are esteemed beautiful. For if I must tell you a pretty fable, it is worth your while to hear, Simmias, the story of all that is to be found upon the earth beneath the heaven. 110

Nay, you may be sure, Socrates, replied Simmias, that *we* should be glad to hear your fable.

59 Well then, my friend, he proceeded, the story goes, first of all, that this earth of which we are speaking<sup>1</sup>, if it could be seen from above, is to look upon like those balls covered with twelve patches of leather, many-coloured, distinguished with hues whereof the colours here which our painters make use of are, as it were, samples: but there the whole earth is painted with similar colours, nay, with colours even far more brilliant and purer than these; for part of it is of purple and of marvellous beauty, and part of the colour of gold, and the part that is white whiter than chalk or snow, and of all the other colours it is composed in like manner,

<sup>1</sup> ἡ γῆ αὐτῆ. The Zurich editors (after Heindorf) read αὐτῆ.

yet still more numerous and fairer than all that we have ever seen. Even these mere hollows of it, filled as they are with water and air, present a peculiar kind of colour, glittering in the diversity of the rest of them, so that its form appears as one unbroken variegated surface. And in this, such as I have described it, the plants that grow are in like proportion, trees and flowers and their fruits: and the mountains again in like manner, and the stones have their smoothness and transparency and colours fairer in the same proportion; of which also the pebbles here, those that are so highly prized, are fragments, carnelians and jaspers and emeralds and all of that kind; but there everything without exception is of the same sort, nay, still fairer than these. And the reason of this is that those stones are pure, and not eaten away nor spoiled like those on earth by corruption and brine produced by all the sediments that collect here and engender ugliness and diseases in stones and earth and animals and plants as well. But the real earth is embellished, not only with all these ornaments, but with gold besides and silver and everything else of I I I that kind: for from their great number and size and the multitude of places where they are found they are very conspicuous, so that to see it is a sight for the blessed. And not to mention a number of other living creatures, there are also men upon it, some dwelling inland, and some on the shores of the air, as we of the ocean, and others in islands encircled by the air, lying adjacent to the mainland: and in one word, what to us the water and the sea is in regard of our use, that the air is there, and what to us the air is, to them is the sky. And the seasons are so tempered for them that they are free from disease and live a much longer time than men here, and in sight and hearing and smell and all such things

are removed from us by exactly the same distance as air is from water and sky from air in respect of purity. And furthermore they have temples of the gods and sacred edifices wherein the gods are actually dwellers, and they enjoy voices and responses and visions of the gods and all intercourse with them of that nature: and the sun and moon and stars are seen by them such as they really are, and their bliss in all other respects corresponds to this.

60 Such then is the nature of the earth as a whole and its surface: but there are in the hollow parts of it round its entire circumference a number of places, some deeper and more widely open than the one in which we ourselves dwell, whilst others that are deeper have their mouth narrower than the region which we inhabit, whilst others again are shallower and wider than the one here. And all these are pierced in many places below the earth so as to communicate with one another by channels narrower and wider, and have passages where a quantity of water flows from one to the other, as it were into basins, and never-failing rivers of enormous size beneath the earth of hot water and of cold, and a mass of fire and great rivers of fire, and many of liquid mud purer as well as fouler, like the torrents of mud that burst forth in Sicily before the eruption of lava and the lava-stream itself; wherewith each of the places is filled in turn as the stream in its course round chances each time to reach it. And all this is moved up and down by a kind of oscillation in the earth; which is produced, as is said, by a natural cause of the following description. One in particular of the openings in the earth, besides that it is the largest of all, is also pierced right through the 112 entire earth; that, namely, which Homer meant when he says of it,



“Very far away, where is the deepest abyss beneath the earth,” to which in fact elsewhere not only he but many others of the poets have given the name of Tartarus. For into this hollow all the rivers run together, and from it they again run out; and each of them takes a character corresponding to that of the earth through which it flows. And the reason why all the streams flow out of and into it is, that this liquid has no bottom nor resting-place: it is accordingly held in suspension and surges up and down, and the air and the wind about it do the same; for it is accompanied by them in its passage equally to the other side and to this side of the earth; and just as in the process of breathing the breath is constantly in motion by expiration and inspiration, so there also the wind which is held in suspension with the liquid creates by rushing in and out fearful and irresistible sorts of blasts. And whensoever the water retires with impetuous current to the region which is called ‘below,’ it flows through the earth to the neighbourhood of those streams and fills them, as it were by a pump: and again whenever it quits those regions and rushes back hither, it fills in their turn the streams on our side; and these when they are filled flow through the channels and through the earth, and, arriving each at the places towards which in each instance they are making their way, produce seas and lakes and rivers and fountains: and thence descending again beneath the earth, after a circuit, some longer and of more places, some shorter and of fewer, they again discharge themselves into Tartarus, some far lower, and others a little lower, than the point at which they were pumped into their beds: but all of them enter at a lower point than that at which they issued. And some of them make their escape on the side directly opposite to their entrance, and some in

the same quarter: but a few there are which encompass the earth completely round, twining round it like snakes once or even oftener, and then throw themselves again into Tartarus at the lowest depth they can possibly reach. And the depth they are able to attain is the centre of the earth in either direction, no lower: for the part beyond from either side is an ascent for both streams.

61 Now, to say nothing of all the rest of the streams many and large and various, there are in this great number four in particular, whereof the largest and outermost, flowing entirely round, is that which is called Ocean; opposite to it and flowing in the contrary direction is Acheron, which not only traverses various desert regions, but also flows in a subterranean channel till it reaches the Acherusian lake, in the quarter where the souls of 113 most of the dead repair, and after abiding there certain appointed seasons, some longer and some shorter, are again sent out to animate the bodies of living creatures. And between these a third river rises, and not far from its source falls into a vast region burning with a great fire, and makes a lake larger than our sea, boiling with water and mud; and thence it pursues its circular course all turbid and muddy, and as it rolls round, besides other places, it arrives at the extremity of the Acherusian lake, though it mingles not with its waters; and after winding many times round underground it falls into the lower depths of Tartarus; and this is the one to which they give the name of Pyriphlegethon, whereof fragments are discharged by our volcanoes, wherever they chance to be found on the face of the earth. And on the opposite side to this the fourth river falls first into a place fearful and wild, as we are told, with a pervading colour like indigo, which goes by the name of

Stygian, and the lake which the river makes by its discharge, Styx. But after falling into it and contracting horrible properties in its waters, it buries itself underground, and flows in a winding course in the opposite direction to the Pyriphlegethon, until it meets it from the opposite side in the Acherusian lake; and neither do its waters mingle with any other, but this also, after flowing round and round, discharges itself into Tartarus in the opposite direction to the Pyriphlegethon; and its name, as the poets say, is Cocytus.

- 62 Such being the nature of these regions, as soon as the dead have arrived at the spot to which each is conveyed by his genius, they first receive sentence whether they have led good and holy lives or no. And those that are found to have passed tolerable lives proceed to Acheron, and embarking in the vessels there provided for them are conveyed upon them to the lake; and there they dwell, either undergoing purification by the penalty they pay for their transgressions till they are absolved from the offences any one may have committed, or receiving rewards for their good deeds each according to his deserts. But those that are found to be incurable by reason of the enormity of their offences, either many and grievous acts of sacrilege or many unrighteous and lawless murders of which they have been guilty or any other crimes of that magnitude,—them the fate due to their guilt precipitates into Tartarus, whence they never come forth. But those that prove to have been guilty of offences curable indeed yet great, as for instance if they have been driven by passion to offer violence to father or mother but pass the rest of their lives in penitence for the act, or have committed homicide in any other similar way,—these must also be thrown into Tartarus, but after they have been cast in 114

and have continued there a year, they are thrown out by the tide, the homicides by the Cocytus, and the parricides and matricides by the Pyriphlegethon; and as soon as they arrive in their course at the Acherusian lake, there with loud cries they invoke those whom they slew or insulted, and when they have thus summoned them, they implore and entreat them to suffer them to come out into the lake, and to admit them into their company; and if they prevail, they come forth and cease from their miseries, but if not, they are borne back into Tartarus, and thence again into the rivers, and this they never cease to endure until they have won over those whom they wronged; for this was the sentence pronounced upon them by their judges. But those that are found to have passed a preeminently holy life—these are they that are delivered and set free from these our earthly regions, as it were from a dungeon, and attain to that pure dwelling-place above, and make their abode upon the surface of the earth. And further of these all that have fully purified themselves by philosophy pass their lives for the future entirely without bodies, and attain to habitations still fairer than these, which it is neither easy to describe nor would the time suffice at the present moment.

However, for the reasons I have assigned, Simmias, it is incumbent upon us to leave nothing undone for the acquisition of a share in virtue and wisdom during our lifetime: for noble is the prize and great the hope.

63 7 Now to insist upon it that everything is precisely as I have described, is unworthy of a man of sense: that however this or something like this is true of our souls and their dwelling-places, seeing that it is evident that the soul is a thing immortal,—this does seem to me to be worthy of one, and that it is worth while for him to

run any risk in this belief: for noble is the hazard, and it is well to encourage oneself by such incantations, for so one may call them, as these: for which reason in fact I have been ever so long spinning out my fable. However, for these reasons any man may well feel confidence about his own soul, who during his lifetime has bid adieu to all other pleasures of the body and to its ornaments, because he thought them foreign to his true nature and rather likely to work mischief than good, and has zealously pursued the pleasures of knowledge, and having decked his soul with no foreign ornament, but with her own true one, temperance and justice and fortitude and freedom and truth, so awaits his journey to <sup>115</sup> the other world, prepared to depart whenever fate call him. You, said he, Simmias and Cebes and the rest, will make this journey each at his own time in the future; but me, as a tragic poet would say, destiny summons forthwith at this very moment, and it is about time for me to betake myself to my bath; for it seems to me better to bathe before I drink the poison, and so save the women the trouble of washing the corpse.

64 So after he had finished speaking, Crito said, Well, Socrates, but what charge have you to give your friends here or myself, either about your children or in any other matter, in which we may be able to serve you best?

Just what I always tell you, Crito, he replied, nothing more than usual: by attending to yourselves you will gratify not only me and mine but yourselves too in all that you do, even though you are not inclined to admit it now: but if you neglect yourselves and do not choose to pass your lives as it were in the track of what has been said now and on former occasions, you will gain nothing by it, no, not even if you bind yourselves to-day by ever so many and ever so sacred promises.

Well then, we will do our best, said he, to comply with your wishes: but how are we to bury you?

Anyhow you please, returned he, provided, that is, you catch me, and I don't escape you altogether. And at the same time with a quiet smile and a glance at us, he continued, I can't convince Crito, my friends, that the Socrates who is now conversing with you and arranges in due order each part of his discourse is my real self, but he fancies that I am that body which he will by and by see a corpse, and so he asks how to bury me. But all that long argument that I have held, to the effect that as soon as I have drunk the poison I shall stay with you no longer, but shall be gone at once to some happy state of the blessed,—all this he takes for mere idle talk to comfort you and myself alike. Go bail for me therefore to Crito, he continued, only in the opposite way to that which he offered for me to the judges. For he was security for me that I would assuredly stay; but I want you to be my bail that I shall assuredly not stay after my death, but shall be gone at once, so that Crito may be less afflicted, and may not be vexed about me when he sees my body burnt or buried, as if I were shamefully ill-treated, and may not say at my funeral that it is Socrates that he is laying out or carrying to his grave or burying. For be assured, said he, my excellent Crito, that to use improper expressions not merely is an offence in respect of the thing itself, but also engenders some mischief in our souls. On the contrary you should take heart and say that it is my body that you bury, and bury it precisely as is most agreeable to yourself and as you deem most conformable to custom. 116

65 Having thus spoken he rose to retire into another room to take his bath, and Crito accompanied him, but bade us

wait. Accordingly we waited, talking over amongst ourselves and reconsidering the subject of our conversation, and then again dwelling upon the magnitude of the calamity which had befallen us, regarding ourselves exactly in the light of orphans who would have to pass the rest of our lives deprived of a father. And after he had bathed and his children had been brought to him—for he had two sons of tender age and one grown up—and the women of his family had arrived, he conversed with the latter in the presence of Crito and gave them his parting injunctions, and then, desiring the women and children to go away, returned himself to us. And it was now near sunset; for he had spent a considerable time within. And he came and sat down after his bath, and after this he did not talk much. By and by came the officer of the Eleven, and standing near him said, I am sure, Socrates, I shall not have to find the same fault with you as with the rest, that they are angry with me and curse me when I bring them the order to drink the poison because the magistrates force me: but I have found you all along the noblest and gentlest and best man of all that ever came here, and now too I am quite sure that you will not be angry with me<sup>1</sup>,—for you know who are to blame—but with them. Now therefore—for you know the message with which I came—farewell, and try to bear your fate as easily as you can. And bursting into tears he turned away and left the room. And Socrates, looking up at him, said, And you too farewell, and we will do as you bid. And at the same time to us, How courteous, said he, the man is! in fact during the whole time I have spent here he used to pay

<sup>1</sup> χαλεπαίνει. So Bekker and Stallbaum. The Zurich editors retain χαλεπαίνεις.

me visits and sometimes talk to me, and was the best fellow in the world: and now how generous it is of him to weep for me! So come therefore, Crito, let us do as he says, and let some one bring the poison, if it is bruised; or if not, let the fellow bruise it.

And Crito said, Nay, I think, Socrates, the sun is still upon the mountains and is not set yet. Besides, I know that others take it quite late, after the order has been brought them eating and drinking heartily and some enjoying the society of their intimates. Let me entreat you not to be in a hurry; for there is still time.

And Socrates replied: Yes, it is natural enough for those you speak of to act thus, for they suppose they shall be gainers by doing so, and it will be equally natural for me to do otherwise: for I think I should gain nothing by a little delay in taking it, except my own 117 contempt and ridicule for showing such greediness of life and 'husbanding it when there is no longer a drop left.' So go, he ended, do as I bid you, and don't disoblige me.

66 And Crito, when he heard this, made a sign to his slave standing by: and the slave went out, and after some delay came back with the man who was to administer the poison, which he carried bruised in a cup. And as soon as Socrates saw the fellow, he said, Well, my excellent friend, as you understand these things, what is to be done?

Nothing else, he replied, but walk about after you have swallowed it until a feeling of heaviness comes on in your legs, and then lie down; and so it will act of itself.

And at the same time he handed the cup to Socrates; who took it, and with the utmost cheerfulness, Eche-crates, without trembling in the least or changing a jot



either of colour or of feature, but just as usual, with his fixed underlook at the man, said, What say you to offering a libation to any one of this draught? may I or not?

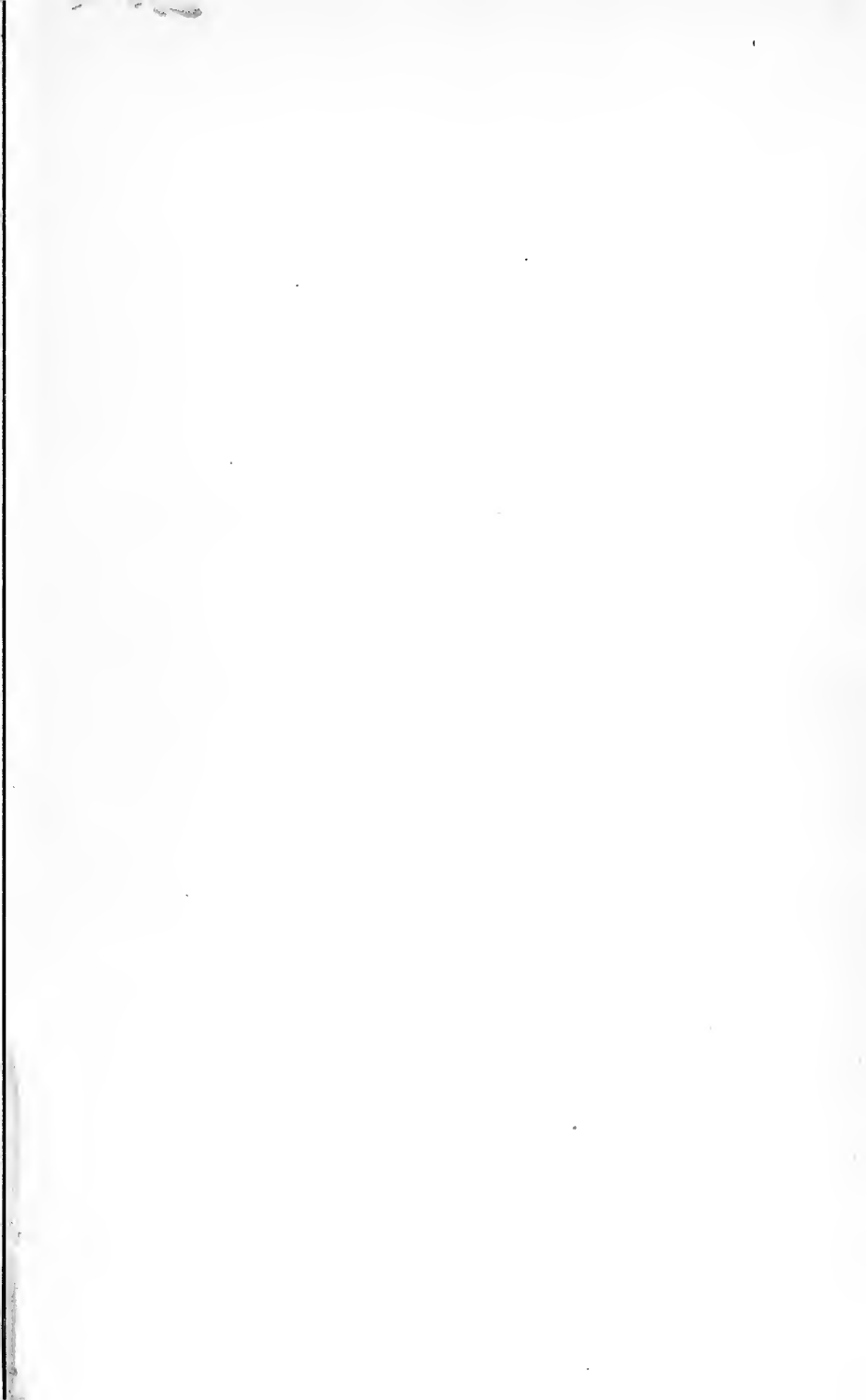
We bruise only just as much, Socrates, replied he, as we think sufficient for a dose.

I understand, said he; but at any rate I suppose I may, and indeed must, pray to the Gods that my change of abode from this world to the other may turn out prosperous: which indeed I do pray, and so be it.

And just as he finished these words, he put the cup to his lips, and with the most perfect serenity and cheerfulness drank it off. And most of us up to this time had been tolerably successful in controlling our tears, but when we saw him drinking and the cup actually finished, it was all over, but in spite of myself my tears began to flow in torrents, so that I was obliged to cover my face and weep for myself;—for assuredly it was not for him, but for my own fate in being deprived of such a friend. And Crito, still earlier than myself, finding that he could not repress his tears, rose and quitted the room. But Apollodorus, who all along had never ceased weeping, burst out then into loud sobs, and by his tears and expressions of grief quite overcame every one that was present, except Socrates himself. But he exclaimed, What conduct is this, my very worthy friends! Why, this was my chief reason for sending away the women, that they might not offend in this way: for indeed I have heard that one should die in silence. Pray be quiet and have patience. These words made us feel ashamed, and we refrained from weeping. But he walked about for some time, and then, when he told us that his legs began to feel heavy, lay down on his back: for such were the directions of the attendant. And at the same time the man that administered the poison touched

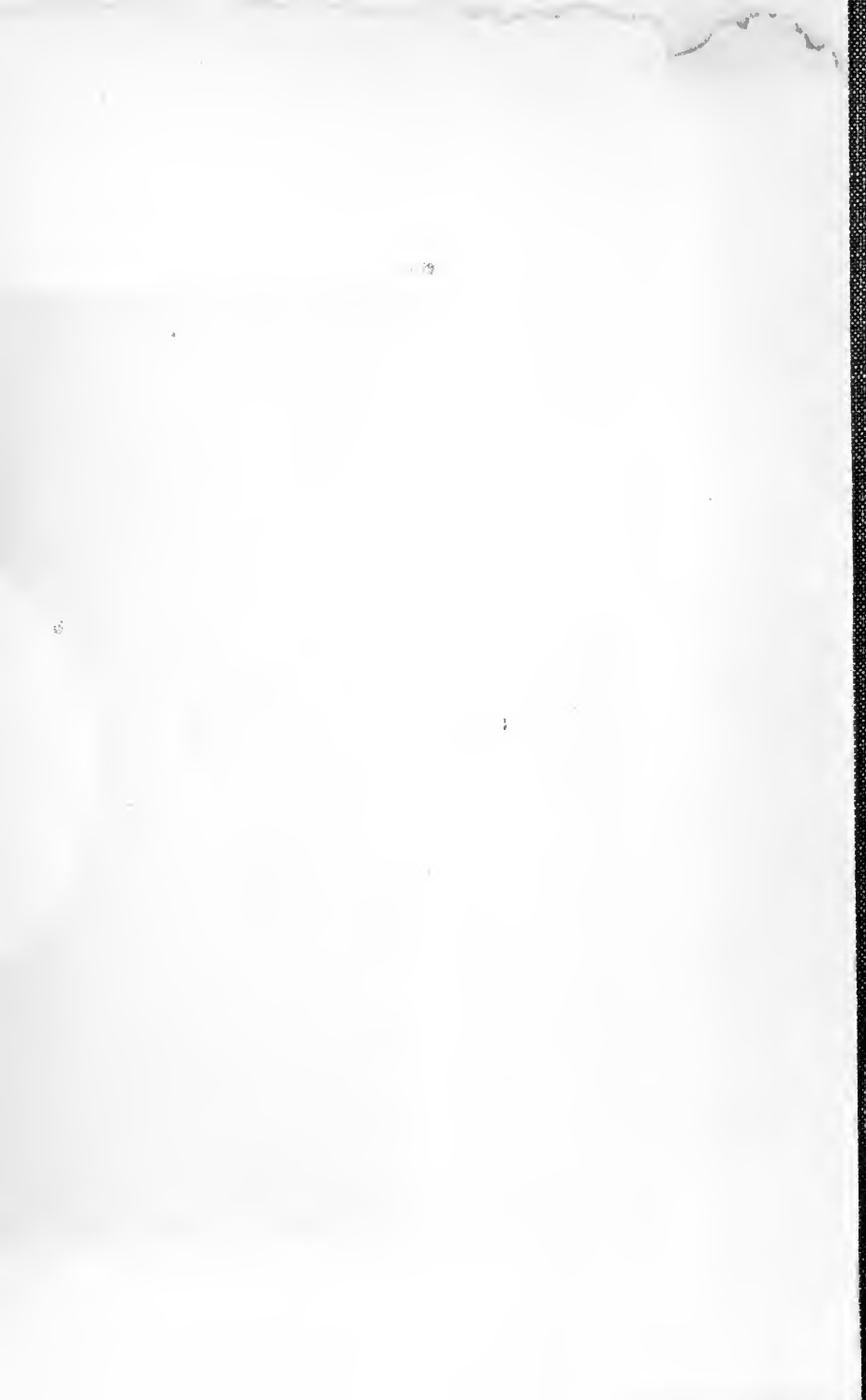
him at intervals to examine his feet and legs, and then pressing his foot hard enquired if he felt it: and he said, No; and next his legs again; and so advancing upwards, showed us that he was growing cold and stiff. And he himself did the same, and told us that as soon as it reached his heart, then he should be gone. Well, the cold was already beginning to affect the region of the abdomen, when he uncovered his face—for it had been covered—and said,—which were indeed the last words he spoke,—Crito, he said, we owe a cock to Æsculapius: pray pay it, and don't forget. Oh, certainly, said Crito, it shall be done: but consider if you have any other injunctions for us. To this question he made no reply this time; but after a short interval he stirred, and the attendant uncovered his face, and his eyes were fixed: upon which Crito, observing it, closed his mouth and his eyes.

This, Echecrates, was the end of our friend, a man, in my judgment, of all his contemporaries that I ever had any knowledge of, the best natured, and besides the wisest and most just.









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