PHÆDON;

OR, THE

DEATH OF SOCRATES.

By MOSES MENDELSSOHN,

A JEW, LATE OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

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M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY DUNDAS,

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to preſent to you a work deſigned by an ancient, but finiſhed by a modern philoſopher, in which the features of a manly character are delineated.

Though the peruſal of it muſt give you pleaſure, may I requeſt you will be pleaſed to accept it as ſome expreſſion of the

ſenſe

ſenſe I entertain of the reſpect and attention you have lately paid to my name, and the regard and protection with which you have honoured myſelf.

I have the honour to be,

With the utmoſt gratitude and eſteem,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient,

Humble ſervant,

Middle Temple,
July 12, 1789.

CHARLES CULLEN.

PREFACE.

THE following work is written in imitation of the Phædon of Plato; but the author, rejecting the ſuperficial and almoſt chimerical arguments of his model for the immortality of the ſoul, has recourſe ſolely to the lights of the moderns, and makes Socrates ſpeak as a philoſopher of the eighteenth century. He does not examine the grounds on which the Greek philoſopher reſted his faith, but endeavours to offer thoſe arguments which a man like Socrates, who were deſirous of founding his belief upon ſound reaſon, would find, at the preſent day, after the efforts of ſo many men of genius, in ſupport of his opinion.

Though it may be difficult to advance any thing new on a ſubject which has exerciſed ſo many able pens, the author, nevertheleſs, requeſts the reader's attention to the proofs which he draws from the harmony of moral truths; he does not remember to have read them elſewhere; and to every perſon who admits his principles, he thinks they muſt carry perfect conviction.

It was thought proper to prefix to this work an abridgement of the life of Socrates.

THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

SOCRATES.

SOCRATES, the wiſeſt and moſt virtuous of the Greeks, was born at Athens, in the diſtrict called Alopece, in the fourth year of the 77th Olimpiad. He was the ſon of Sophroniſcus, a ſtatuary; and Panarete, a midwife. In his youth he applied himſelf to ſculpture, under the tuition of his father; and if it is true, that the cloathed

Graces, which ſtood behind the Temple of Minerva upon the walls of Athens, were of his workmanſhip, as many authors aſſert, the progreſs which he made in this art muſt have been conſiderable. In the times of Phidias, Zeuxis, and Myron, an indifferent performance would not have been honoured with ſo reſpectable a ſtation.

After his father's death he continued to follow the profeſſion of a ſtatuary, though more from neceſſity than inclination, until he was thirty years of age. At this period he became known to an Athenian of high birth, named Crito, who diſcovered the ſuperiority of his talents, and foreſaw he would prove more uſeful to the human race, by the free exerciſe of his mental faculties, than his labours with the chiſſel. Crito took him from the ſchool of art, and introduced him among the philoſophers of thoſe times, in order to let him contemplate and imitate beauties of a higher order. Art teaches us

to imitate life, by means of ſubſtances which are lifeleſs: to make ſtone reſemble man; Wiſdom, on the other hand, endeavours to imitate what is infinite by that which is finite; to bring the ſoul of man as near to the beauty and perfection of her origin as it is poſſible in this life.

Socrates enjoyed the converſation and inſtruction of the moſt eminent men of Greece in every art and ſcience; among whom his ſcholars mention Archelaus, Anaxagoras, Prodicus, Evenus, Iſymachus, Theodorus, and others.

Crito provided him with the neceſſaries of life, and Socrates applied himſelf firſt with extraordinary diligence to the ſtudy of nature, which was then the faſhionable purſuit of Athens. He ſoon, however, found it neceſſary to recal reaſon from the inveſtigation of nature to the contemplation of man. This is the courſe which philoſophy always ought to purſue. She ſhould begin with the examination of

external objects; but at every ſtep ſhe advances throw a retroſpect on man, to the accompliſhment of whoſe well-being all her efforts ought to be directed. If the motions of the planets, the qualities of the other heavenly bodies, the nature of the elements, have no immediate influence on our happineſs, man is not deſtined to make them the object of his enquiries.

Socrates, as Cicero ſays, was the firſt who called philoſophy down from heaven, eſtabliſhed her in cities, introduced her into the dwellings of men, obliged them to examine their own actions, and conſider the nature of good and evil. Like moſt other reformers, however, he ſet no juſt boundaries to his ſyſtem, but ſometimes ſpoke of the moſt ſublime ſciences with a degree of contempt that was unbecoming one who judged with diſcernment in human affairs.

During thoſe times in Greece, a ſet of

perſons, reputed, learned, who favoured and abetted every popular prejudice and ſuperſtition by plauſible but falſe arguments and ſubtilities of reaſoning, were held in high eſtimation by the vulgar. They aſſumed to themſelves the honourable name of Sophiſts; a title which their conduct brought into diſgrace.

They charged themſelves with the education of youth, and taught in the public ſchools, as well as in private houſes, the arts and ſciences, morality and religion, with uncommon applauſe. They were ſenſible that, under a democratic form of government, eloquence is admired above all other talents, that a free citizen liſtens with avidity to political harangues, and that knowledge is moſt gratefully communicated to ſhallow minds, through the medium of fiction and allegory. On this account they never omitted, in the propoſitions of their ſhewy rhetoric, to mix falſe political tenets

and fables, though inapplicable, ſo artfully together, that the people heard with aſtoniſhment, and recompenſed them with profuſion. They maintained a good underſtanding with the prieſthood, as both parties adopted the wiſe maxim, "to live and to let live." When the tyranny of the hypocrites among the latter could no longer keep the ſpirit of free men in awe, the ſophiſtry of the former was employed under the maſk of friendſhip, to recal the multitude form a falſe path, to confound their natural perceptions, and render them incapable of diſcerning truth from error, right from wrong, or good from evil. In theory their leading principle was, "Every thing "may be proved or refuted;" and in practice, "The greateſt advantage ought to "be taken of ſelf ſuperiority, and the folly "of others." This laſt maxim, as may naturally be imagined, was carefully concealed from the people, and revealed only

to thoſe favourites who embraced their profeſſion, or ſupported their cauſe. The morality which they taught in public was as pernicious to the human heart, as their political doctrines were ſubverſive of the rights, freedom, and happineſs, of mankind.

As they were artful enough to entangle the prevailing religion in their intereſts, not only the greateſt reſolution, and even heroiſm of ſpirit, were neceſſary to put a ſtop to their impoſitions, but a true friend to virtue durſt not make the attempt without the utmoſt precaution and foreſight. There is no ſyſtem of religion ſo corrupt as not to give a certain ſanction to ſome duties of humanity, which every friend to mankind holds ſacred, and the reformer of morals, if he would not act contrary to his own views, muſt therefore leave untouched. From doubt in religious matters to free thinking, from neglect of the external worſhip of God to the undervaluing of his

ſervice in general, the tranſition is eaſy; eſpecially to minds which are alienated from reaſon, and abandoned to avarice, ambition, or voluptuous paſſions. The prieſts of ſuperſtition too frequently fly to this argument for their defence, whenever an attack is made upon them, and conſider it as a ſanctuary where they are invulnerable.

Such were the difficulties and obſtacles to be ſurmounted, when Socrates formed the great deſign of diſſeminating wiſdom and virtue among his fellow creatures. He had on the one hand, to conquer the prejudices of his own education, to enlighten the ignorance of others, to refute the ſophiſtry and calumny of his adverſaries, to bear poverty, to contend againſt eſtabliſhed power, and, what was ſtill more hard than either, to diſſipate the dark terrors of ſuperſtition. On the other hand, the feeble underſtandings of his fellow citizens required to be managed with great tenderneſs, that he might draw no

reproaches

reproaches upon himſelf, or leſſen the influence which the pooreſt religion has on the morals of weak minds. He overcame all thoſe difficulties with the wiſdom of a philoſopher, the diſintereſted virtue of a true friend to mankind, and the reſolution of a hero, at the expence and loſs of all worldly wealth and pleaſures. So powerfully had reaſon impreſſed his mind with the exiſtence and attributes of the Deity, that he made a ſacrifice of health, reputation and peace, to virtue, and at laſt gave up life itſelf, in the moſt exemplary manner, for the good of his fellow creatures.

All thoſe higher aims which he cheriſhed as a friend to mankind, did not prevent him from fulfilling the common duties which he owed his native country. At the age of thirty-ſix he bore arms againſt the Potideans, the inhabitants of a town in Thrace, who had revolted againſt their tributary lords the Athenians. There, as he omitted no opportunity

portunity of hardening his body to all the fatigues of war and ſeverity of the ſeaſons; neither did he neglect to exerciſe his ſoul in courage and contempt of danger. By the unanimous voice of his rivals he bore away the palm of military proweſs from the whole army; but gave it up to Alcibiades, whom he loved, and wiſhed to encourage, to merit ſuch honours from his native country, by his own actions. Alcibiades confeſſed, that a ſhort time before Socrates had ſaved his life in battle.

The town of Potidea was beſieged in the depth of winter. While others put on fur cloathing to guard themſelves from the froſt, he continued in his uſual dreſs, and walked barefooted over the ice.

The plague ſpread from Athens to the camp before Potidea. Though it is ſcarcely credible, Diogenes Laertius and Ælian aſſert, that Socrates was the only perſon who eſcaped the contagion. Without drawing any concluſion

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from this circumſtance, which may have been a mere accident, we may confidently infer, his conſtitution was of a ſtrong and durable nature, and that by means of temperance, exerciſe, and the avoiding of every effeminate cuſtom, he rendered himſelf proof againſt all the accidents and hardſhips of life.

Neither did he forget in the field to employ and improve the faculties of his mind, but, on the contrary, was frequently intenſely engaged with them. He has been ſeen, ſays Aulus Gellius, ſtanding fixed to one ſpot, immerſed in thought, for twenty-four hours, with unaltered look, as if the ſpirit had left his body. It cannot be denied, that thoſe reveries, bordered upon enthſiaſm, and other traces of his life, ſhew that he was not entirely free of it. It was an innocent enthuſiaſm, however, apparently founded neither on pride, nor hatred to man, but may have been very uſeful to him in the ſituations in which he was placed. Perhaps the com-

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mon powers of nature are not ſufficient to give men ſuch elevated thoughts and patient reſolution.

At the cloſe of the campaign he returned to his native city, and began to oppoſe ſophiſtry and ſuperſtition with ſucceſs, and to teach his fellow citizens wiſdom and virtue. In the open ſtreets, in the public walks and baths, in private houſes, in the workſhops of artiſts, or wherever he found men whom he thought he could make better, he entered into converſation with them, explained what was right and wrong, good and evil, holy and unholy; diſcourſed of the providence and government of God, of the means of pleaſing him, of the duties of a citizen, a father, and a huſband; delivering himſelf not in the arrogant tone of the ſophiſts, but addreſſing them in the accents of a friend who was deſirous of ſearching with them for truth, to which he led them by a ſeries of ſimple queſtions, in order

that they might follow him ſtep by ſtep, without any ſtrain to their underſtandings, until he brought them imperceptibly to the wiſhed-for point, or concluſion.

Thus he made them believe, that they themſelves diſcovered the truths which he taught them — "I imitate my mother in "this," he uſed to ſay. She no longer bears children herſelf, but ſhe helps others to bring their births into the world. In like manner I perform the office of a midwife to my friends: I put queſtions to them until the hidden fruit of their underſtanding comes to light.

This method of enquiring after truth was the moſt ſucceſsful in refuting the ſophiſts. When any of their diſputes happened to reſt upon a ſingle point or propoſition, it was difficult to overthrow them in argument. They had ſo many evaſions and ſubterfuges, ſo many plauſible fables and figures of rhetoric at their command, that their

their hearers were outwitted, and imagined themſelves convinced. A general applauſe, therefore, uſually followed. We can eaſily conceive the triumphant look with which ſuch teachers looked down upon their ſcholars, or, perhaps, even their adverſaries. What did Socrates do upon ſuch occaſions? He applauded them too; but at the ſame time took occaſion to put ſome ſlight indirect queſtions to the ſophiſts, which they conſidered to be the effect of his dulneſs of comprehenſion, and anſwered out of pity. By multiplying queſtions he came nearer to his aim, gradually cutting off from his adverſaries any opportunity of wandering into long-winded harangues. Thus they were obliged to define their ideas accurately, to admit juſt explanations, and to allow abſurd concluſions to be drawn from their falſe premiſes. At length they found themſelves driven to a point, became impatient, and anſwered with invectives.

Socrates,

Socrates, however, bore their rudeneſs with great calmneſs, continued to unfold their ideas, until at laſt the abſurdities which aroſe from their falſe poſitions grew manifeſt to their ſhalloweſt hearers. In this manner they became ridiculous to their own ſcholars.

With reſpect to religion, he appears to have adhered to the following maxim:—That every falſe tenet or opinion which led openly to immorality, and was conſequently contrary to the happineſs of the human race, ought to be reprobated, and its pernicious conſequences expoſed to public ridicule in preſence of the ſophiſts, the prieſts, and the common people. Of this deſcription were the doctrines of thoſe fable writers who imputed weakneſs, injuſtice, and ſcandalous paſſions, to their gods. On ſuch a ſubject, as well concerning any imperfect conception of the providence and government of God, the reward of the good

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and puniſhment of the wicked, he was never reſerved, or, even to appearance, doubtful; but invariably firm in his faith, he fought the cauſe of truth with unſhaken reſolution, and, as the ſequel ſhewed, ſealed his confeſſion with death. A doctrine, however, which was merely theoretically falſe, and could have no ſuch dangerous influence on morality, as was to be apprehended from the introduction of any new ſyſtem, met with no oppoſition from him; he rather gave his aſſent to the prevailing opinions of his time, and obſerved the eſtabliſhed forms and ceremonies of religion, though he ſhunned every occaſion of coming to a particular explanation of his own ſentiments. When he was under the neceſſity of making ſome reply to thoſe who queſtioned him on that ſubject, he had an apology always ready, which was, a pretence of ignorance.

This general excuſe which he made uſe of was rendered very conſiſtent by the method

method of teaching, which, as we have before ſhewn, he adopted from other motives. As he never pronounced his doctrines with the impoſing tone of a perſon of infallible wiſdom, as he aſſerted no opinions peremptorily himſelf, but endeavoured to draw out truth from his hearers by means of the queſtions which he put to them, he was permitted not to know that which he either could or would not know. The vanity of being able to give an anſwer to every ſort of queſtion, has led many a great genius to defend propoſitions which he would have condemned in the mouth of another perſon. Socrates was far removed from any ſuch weakneſs. If he found any thing exceed his comprehenſion, he avowed with the moſt ingenuous freedom, "This I do not know:" and when he perceived a ſnare laid in order to gain particular confeſſions from him, he evaded it by ſaying, "I know nothing." The oracle at Delos declared him the wiſeſt

of mortals. The artful prieſteſs, it is probable, deſigned to win a man who was ſo dangerous to her by this piece of flattery, and to lay him under the neceſſity of allowing the ſayings of her oracle to be infallible, if he wiſhed to be eſteemed the wiſeſt of mankind. Socrates, however, gave the matter a quite different turn. "Do you "know," ſaid he, "why Appollo has "pronounced me the wiſeſt of men? "Becauſe other people in general believe "that they know ſomething: I am ſenſi- "ble, however, and acknowledge, that all "my knowledge amount to this—that I "know nothing."

The fame of Socrates ſpread over Greece, and brought the moſt reſpectable and learned perſons from all parts to Athens to enjoy his converſation and inſtructions. The deſire of his pupils to hear him was ſo ſtrong, that many ventured their lives for the pleaſure of being daily with him. The

Athenians had forbid, under pain of death, any ſubject of Megara, to enter into their territories. Nevertheleſs, Euclid, the friend and ſcholar of Socrates, could not refrain from viſiting his teacher. He went by night, diſguiſed in female dreſs, from Megara to Athens, and in the morning, before it was day, returned his twenty thouſand paces back to his own dwelling.

Socrates lived in the utmoſt poverty and indigence, ſuffering no perſon to pay him for his inſtructions, although the Athenians valued them ſo highly, that they would have given him any recompence he had demanded. The ſophiſts did not fail to take more advantage of their liberal diſpoſition.

It muſt have coſt him a greater ſtruggle to bear his poverty of circumſtances, that his wife, the famed Xantippe, was not a very notable houſewife, and that he had to provide for children who expected their ſup-

port from his hands. It is not at all certain, however, that Xantippe had ſo bad a temper as has generally been ſuppoſed. The ſtories that are told to her diſcredit, ariſe from ſome later writers, who could learn them only by report. Plato and Xenophon, who were certainly the beſt informed on this ſubject, repreſent her to have been a wife of the middling ſort, of whom neither much good nor much bad could be ſaid. In the following dialogues, agreeable to the account given by Plato, it will appear, that, on the day on which Socrates died, ſhe attended him in priſon, took her children there with her, and was deeply afflicted by his death. All that is related to her prejudice, in theſe creditable authors, is a paſſage in the Banquet of Xenophon, where ſome perſon aſks Socrates how he came to chooſe a wife who was ſo unſociable in her temper? To which he anſwered, in his uſual way: "Whoever would learn to manage

horſes muſt not chuſe a patient beaſt of burden to command, but exerciſe himſelf with a mettleſome ſteed, that is difficult to break. I, who am deſirous of learning how to converſe with men, have for that purpoſe choſen a wife who is untractable, that I may be the better able to bear with the different humours of mankind."

In another place of this writer we find Lamproclus, the ſon of Socrates, complaining to his father of the fretful and peeviſh temper of his mother. But from the anſwer made by Socrates, it is manifeſt to her praiſe, that notwithſtanding her diſcontented diſpoſition, ſhe was attentive to the duties of a houſewife, loved her children, and was at pains in bringing them up. This teſtimony of her huſband is a ſufficient refutation of all the ſcandalous anecdotes that have been told to diſgrace and exhibit her to poſterity as an example of a bad wife. We may juſtly believe, that the ſkill

which Socrates had in managing men was not ineffectually exerciſed upon her; or rather, that by his inexhauſtible patience, mildneſs, and perſuaſive precepts, he ſubdued the natural harſhneſs of her temper, won her love, and made her ſo much a better woman, that, from having been a termagant and ſcold, ſhe became a good mother of a family, and, as her conduct before his death demonſtrated, an affectionate wife.

Whatever was the truth in this point, the ſtate of his domeſtic affairs muſt have made his poverty doubly diſtreſſing, as he was not reſponſible to himſelf alone for his conduct and actions, but to a whole family, which, it is very probable, was diſſatisfied at, and complained of, the extreme contentedneſs of his nature. No perſon was better inſtructed in the duties of a father than Socrates. He knew well that it behoved him to earn what was neceſſary for

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the decent ſupport of his own family; and he had often inculcated this natural duty to his friends. But where it concerned himſelf, a higher obligation ſtood in the way, and hindered him from attending ſufficiently to the diſcharge of it. The corruption and venality of the times, and, in particular, the mean avarice of the ſophiſts, who ſold their poiſonous inſtructions for ready money, and employed the moſt ſhameful arts to enrich themſelves at the expence of the deluded people, were circumſtances which compelled him to oppoſe the prevailing paſſion for gold, by the utmoſt diſintereſtedneſs of conduct in himſelf, in order that his pure and unſpotted intentions might be capable of no evil conſtruction. He would rather have lived upon alms, or ſtarved, if want ſo far oppreſſed him, than have juſtified the dirty covetouſneſs of thoſe falſe pretenders to wiſdom, in the ſmalleſt degree, by his own example.

He interrupted his benevolent deſigns by again voluntarily entering the field againſt the Beotians. The Athenians loſt a battle at Delium, and were totally defeated. Socrates ſhewed his intrepid ſpirit, not only during the engagement, but likewiſe in the retreat.

"Had every man done his duty as well as Socrates," ſaid the General Laches to Plato, "the day would certainly not have proved unlucky for us."

While the Athenians fled, Socrates retreated ſtep by ſtep, and frequently turned about to face ſome enemy who came too cloſely after him. Meeting with Xenophon, who had been wounded and fallen from his horſe, lying upon the ground, he took him up on his back, and carried him until he brought him to a place of ſafety.

The prieſts, ſophiſts, and others, equally venal in their profeſſion, who muſt have felt Socrates a thorn in their ſide, took

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advantage of his abſence, and endeavoured to turn the minds of the Athenians againſt him. At his return he found his enemies had formed themſelves into a party, and ſtooped to every baſeneſs to injure him. They hired, there is reaſon to believe, the comic writer Ariſtophanes to compoſe a ludicrous piece, which, at that time, was called Comedy, in order to expoſe Socrates to public ridicule and hatred, that they might ſound the ſentiments of the common people concerning him, and give them ſuch impreſſions as, if their artifice ſucceeded, might lead to ſome more deciſive ſtroke againſt him. This farce bore the name of THE CLOUDS. Socrates was the principal character; and the perſon by whom he was repreſented endeavoured to exhibit him according to life: his dreſs, walk, geſtures, and voice, were all ſtudiouſly copied and imitated. The piece itſelf, to the honour of the perſecuted philoſopher, is ſtill extant.

But

But a compoſition more wild and extravagant can hardly be imagined.

Socrates was accuſtomed to viſit the theatre only when the pieces of Euripides, which ſome think he helped to compoſe, were repreſented. The day, however, on which this paſquil was brought forth, he made one of the audience. Hearing ſome ſtrangers, who were preſent, enquire for the original of this Socrates who was ſo much abuſed upon the ſtage: he ſtepped forward in the midſt of the performance, and remained until the piece was ended, ſtanding in one place, where every perſon could ſee and compare him with the copy. This was a mortal wound to the poet and his comedy. The moſt ridiculous incidents in it could no longer make any impreſſion on the audience, as the appearance of Socrates commanded reſpect, and raiſed a kind of aſtoniſhment at his undauntedneſs of mind. The piece, of courſe,

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met with no ſucceſs. The poet altered it, and brought it the following year upon the ſtage, but with no better fortune. The enemies of the philoſopher found the neceſſity of dropping their intended perſecution until a more favourable opportunity.

The war with the Beotians was ſcarcely concluded when it became neceſſary to muſter a new army to check the progreſs of the Lacedemonian general, Braſidas, who had taken ſeveral places of Thrace, and, amongſt others, the important city of Amphipholis, from the Athenians. Socrates, notwithſtanding the danger to which his laſt abſence had expoſed him, did not withhold his ſervices from his country. This was the laſt time that he left his native city; from that period unto his death he never went out of the Athenian territories. He devoted his time to the youth of Athens, who courted his friendly converſation, and inculcated to them the love of virtue by his precepts

precepts and good example. As he was, above all things, a great admirer of beauty, it appears that, in the choice of his friends, he paid great regard to their perſonal beauty. A fair form, he uſed to ſay, beſpeaks a fair ſoul; and when the latter does not fulfil this expectation, the virtue of the former is loſt. On this account he was at great pains to make the inſide of men correſpond with the fairneſs of their outſide. He was attached to no one ſo much as Alcibiades, a youth of uncommon beauty and great talents, but of an imperious, fiery temper. Socrates followed him inceſſantly to all places, and engaged him at every opportunity in converſation, in order to reſtrain, by means of friendly admonition and gentle reproofs, the ambitious and voluptuous paſſions which were predominant in his mind. On ſuch occaſions Plato puts expreſſions into his mouth that ſeem almoſt amorous; from which circumſtance it aroſe, that in later

later times Socrates was accuſed of having had a criminal intercourſe with young people. But the enemies of Socrates themſelves, Ariſtophanes in his comedy, and Melitus in his impeachment, do not offer the ſmalleſt inſinuation of this kind againſt him. Melitus, it is true, charges him with being the corrupter of youth; but this charge, as the anſwer made by Socrates, perfectly explains, reſpected the laws of religion and government, which it was ſaid he taught youth to ſlight and treat with indifference. Admitting the depravity of thoſe times to have been ſo far advanced, that this odious vice was no longer conſidered an unnatural crime; his enemies, notwithſtanding, would not have been ſilent on this head, had it been poſſible to accuſe the man who was the example of temperance and chaſtity of ſo foul a paſſion. When we read the many harſh reproaches uttered againſt him by Critias and Critobu-

bus;

bus; when we attend to the teſtimony of the diſſolute and debauched Alcibiades in his favour, in the dialogues of Plato, the ſilence of his enemies and ſlanderers on the one hand, and the poſitive atteſtations of his friends on the other, leave us no room to doubt that ſuch an accuſation was a malicious and ungrounded calumny. From the expreſſions in Plato, however ſtrange they may ſound in our ears, nothing more can be inferred than that this unnatural gallantry was the faſhionable language of thoſe times; as the graveſt perſon of the preſent day does not heſitate in addreſſing one of the ſex to uſe the complimentary ſtile of a lover.

With reſpect to the GENIUS of Socrates, which reſtrained him from every hurtful undertaking, the learned are divided in their opinions. Some think Socrates allowed himſelf the aid of a little fiction here, in order to gain the ear of the ſuperſtitious vulgar; but this idea is at variance with his

uſual

uſual conduct. Others underſtood by this genius a quick ſenſe of good and evil, a power of diſcernment, which, by long experience, reflection, and conſtant exerciſe, grew to a ſort of moral inſtinct, by means of which he could trace and diſcover the probable conſequences and effects of every free action, without being able to account to himſelf for this intuitive faculty. We find in Xenophon, as well as in Plato, however, ſeveral inſtances mentioned where this ſpirit appears to have foretold things to Socrates which cannot be accounted for by any natural powers of the ſoul. Theſe his ſcholars may have added from a well-meant intention; perhaps, alſo, Socrates, who, we have ſeen, was enthuſiaſtic in his temper, was weak and viſionary enough to let his imagination create this quick moral perception which he could not account for, into a confidential ſpirit, and to aſcribe thoſe ſuggeſtions to it which aroſe from very different

ferent cauſes. Is it abſolutely neceſſary, however, that a good man ſhould be free from every weakneſs and prejudice? In the preſent age it is no longer a point of merit to deride the inſtigations of ſpirits. To do ſo, perhaps, in the days of Socrates, required an uncommon ſtrain of genius, which he employed to a more uſeful purpoſe. It was uſual for him beſides, as we have already mentioned, to everlook every ſuperſtition which did not lead directly to immorality.

The happineſs of the human race was his ſole ſtudy. As ſoon as any opinion or ſuperſtition occaſioned an open violence, the invaſion of the natural rights of men, or the corruption of their morals, no threats or perſecution could deter him from declaring againſt it. There was among the Greeks an ancient tradition, that the ſpirits of the unburied dead were obliged to wander up and down the banks of the river Styx

for

for a hundred years before they were allowed to paſs to the other regions.

This belief might have been impreſſed on the common people by the firſt founders of ſociety, from very laudable motives.

In the time of Socrates, however, it was moſt ſhamefully abuſed, and coſt many brave patriots their lives. The Athenians obtained a complete victory over the Lacedemonians near the iſle of Argos. The commanders of the victorious fleet being prevented by a ſtorm from burying their dead, were, upon their return to Athens, with the groſſeſt ingratitude, publicly impeached for the crime of this omiſſion. Socrates preſided on the occaſion in the ſenate of the Prytaneum, which took cognizance of charges of that nature. The malice of ſeveral perſons in power, the hypocriſy of the prieſts, and the meanneſs of the mercenary rhetoricians and ſophiſts were all combined to excite the blind reſentment of

the people againſt the defenders of the ſtate. The multitude preſſed vehemently for their condemnation. A part of the ſenate were ſwayed by the vulgar ſuperſtition, and the reſt had not ſpirit enough to oppoſe the general prepoſſeſſion. All aſſented to condemn thoſe unhappy patriots to death. Socrates alone had the fortitude to defend their cauſe. He deſpiſed the threats of the perſons in power and the rage of the excited multitude, ſtood alone on the ſide of perſecuted innocence, and would rather have ſuffered the worſt that could have happened to himſelf than conſented to a meaſure of ſuch notorious injuſtice. All his efforts for their acquittal, however, proved fruitleſs. He had the mortification to ſee the popular phrenzy prevail, and the republic infatuated enough to ſacrifice her braveſt protectors to a weak and miſtaken prejudice. The following year the Athenians were totally defeated by the Lacedemonians; their fleet

was ſhattered, and their capital beſieged, and reduced to ſuch diſtreſs, that they were obliged to ſurrender to the conquerors at diſcretion. It is extremely probable, that the want of experienced leaders on the part of the Athenians contributed not a little to their overthrow. Lyſander, the general of the Lacedemonians, who had taken the city, favoured the views of a faction which courted him, changed the democratical form of government into an Oligarchy, and eſtabliſhed a ſenate of thirty men, who were known by the name of the *thirty tyrants*. The moſt cruel enemy could not have committed more barbarous outrages than thoſe monſters. Under the pretext of puniſhing rebellion and treaſonable offences, they robbed the moſt upright men of the republic of their property and their lives. To plunder and proſcribe, the latter of which they did openly, the former more like aſſaſſins or murderers, were the deeds which cha-

racterized their government. How muſt the heart of Socrates have bled to ſee Critias, who was formerly his ſcholar at the head of ſuch a band of aſſociates: even this very Critias, his former friend and pupil, now ſhewed himſelf his open enemy, and ſought opportunities of perſecuting him. The wiſe man had once reproached him in ſevere terms for his foul and unnatural paſſions; on this account he had ever after bore Socrates a grudge, which made him watch for an opportunity of gratifying his reſentment.

When he and Charicles were appointed legiſlators, in order to find grounds for an accuſation againſt Socrates, they made a law that no perſon ſhould teach rhetoric. They found that Socrates tranſgreſſed againſt them in words, and had let it be variouſly reported that it was wonderful if ſhepherds made the herd, which was entruſted to their care, grow ſmaller and meagerer, and yet

ſhould

ſhould not be accounted bad ſhepherds; but it was ſtill more wonderful, if the guardians of a ſtate made its ſubjects grow fewer and worſe, that they ſhould not be accounted bad guardians. They ſummoned him before them, ſhewed him the law, and forbid him to enter into converſation with young people.

Is it permitted, ſaid Socrates, to aſk queſtions? For this prohibitory law is not ſufficiently clear to me.

O yes, they anſwered.

I am ready, replied Socrates, to abide by the law, and fear only to err againſt it through ignorance. I beg, therefore, for a more full explanation, whether by rhetoric is meant the art of ſpeaking properly, or ſpeaking improperly? If it is the former, then I muſt forbear to teach any one to ſpeak properly; if it is the latter, neither would I teach any one to ſpeak improperly.

Charicles was irritated, and ſaid, As

you do not underſtand the law, we have, in order to make it more comprehenſible, totally forbid you to diſcourſe with young people.

That I may know alſo how I am to conduct myſelf in this particular, ſaid Socrates, inform me how long men are to be accounted young?

As long as they are not entitled to a ſeat in the Senate, anſwered Charicles; that is, until they arrive at maturity of underſtanding, to wit, at thirty years.

If I ſhould purchaſe any thing, returned Socrates, which a young man under thirty years has to ſell, May I not aſk him how dear it is?

That is not forbid thee, ſaid Charicles; but you aſk many things which you know: from ſuch queſtions in future refrain?

And anſwers? continued Socrates. If a young man aſks me where Critias or Charicles dwells, May I not anſwer him?

Yes,

Yes, certainly, ſaid Critias: but mingle not in your diſcourſe old thread-bare maxims and alluſions to beltmakers, carpenters, and ſmiths.

Probably, replied Socrates, I muſt alſo avoid communicating the ideas of juſtice, holineſs, piety, &c., which I have been uſed to illuſtrate by thoſe examples, &c.

Perfectly right, anſwered Critias; and above all things, ſpeak not of ſhepherds. Mark that well, or I fear you alſo will make the herd ſmaller.

Socrates regarded their threats as little as their abſurd law, which they had no right to paſs contrary to reaſon and the law of nature. He continued his efforts in ſupport of virtue and juſtice with the moſt unwearied zeal. The tyrants never dared, notwithſtanding, to make a direct attack upon him. They attempted by ways, and endeavoured to make him concerned in their own iniquities. For this purpoſe he was

charged, together with four other citizens, to bring Leon from Salamin to Athens, in order to have him executed. The others undertook the commiſſion; but Socrates proteſted he would never lend his hand to an unjuſt action.

Then, ſaid Charicles, you would enjoy the liberty of ſpeaking whatever you pleaſe, and yet ſuffer nothing for it.

I will ſuffer every poſſible evil, he anſwered, rather than do any man an injuſtice.

Theſe freedoms of ſpeech would in the end have coſt Socrates his life, if the people, who were become weary of the cruelty of the tyrants, had not riſen againſt them, killed the principals amongſt them, and driven the reſt out of the city.

Under the new re-eſtabliſhed democratic form of government, Socrates did not fare much better. His ancient enemies, the ſophiſts, prieſts, and rhetoricians, found at laſt the long-wiſhed-for opportunity of perſecuting

ſecuting him with ſucceſs, and of removing him entirely out of their way. Anytus, Melitus, and Lycon, whoſe diſgrace is never to be forgotten, are the three names of thoſe who ſuffered themſelves to be made uſe of for the purpoſe of carrying on a ſcandalous proſecution againſt him. They firſt ſpread this calumny among the people, "Socrates inſtilled into Critias the principles of tyranny which he ſo lately practiſed with unexampled cruelty." Any one who conſiders the fickleneſs and credulity of the vulgar of every nation will not wonder that the Athenians liſtened to ſo direct a falſehood, although they knew what had paſſed between Socrates and the tyrants. A few years before this, Alcibiades, who, though poſſeſſed of great talents, was a moſt diſſolute character, had, in company with ſome other high-ſpirited youths, ſtruck the ſtatue of Mercury, made open mockery of the Eleuſinian myſteries, and, on account

of

of ſo outrageous a ſacrilege, been obliged to fly his native country. From theſe paſt events, which were at this time induſtriouſly commemorated, the enemies of Socrates inferred, that he had taught young men to deſpiſe religion. Nothing was more oppoſite to the doctrine and conduct of Socrates than ſuch a practice. The public worſhip of God, however ſuperſtitious it might be, was always inculcated and reſpected by him; and with regard to the Eleuſinian myſteries, he counſelled all his friends to conſecrate themſelves to them, although he might have had his own private reaſons for not doing ſo himſelf. There are good grounds for belief, that the myſteries at Eleuſis were nothing elſe than the doctrine of natural religion, and a rational interpretation of the fables. If Socrates refuſed to initiate himſelf, he did ſo moſt probably becauſe he wiſhed to preſerve to himſelf the liberty of extending

theſe myſterious rites with impunity, which the prieſts, if he had conſecrated himſelf, would have reſtrained him from doing.

When his calumniators thought they had ſufficiently prepared the minds of the people, by numerous malevolent reports to his prejudice, Melitus brought a formal charge againſt him before the magiſtrate of the city. He immediately acquainted the people of it; the Court of Heliæa was ſummoned, and the uſual number of citizens choſen by lot to try the accuſed. The charge was, Socrates acts contrary to the laws; becauſe, (1) he does not honour the gods of the city, and endeavours to introduce a new divinity; and (2) he corrupts youth, by teaching them to contemn every thing that is holy. Let his puniſhment be Death.

His friends brought him ſeveral ſtudied compoſitions for his defence.

They

They are very fine, he ſaid; but ſuch arts do not become an old man like me.

Will you not yourſelf, then, prepare ſomething for your defence? they aſked.

The beſt defence which I can make, he anſwered, is, that I have never in my life done any man an injuſtice. I ſeveral times began to think of making a defence to the charges againſt me, but have always been hindered in it by God. "Perhaps it is his "will that I ſhould die an eaſy death in "my preſent years, before old age and in-"firmities arrive, and make me a burden "to my friends or myſelf."

From thoſe words many for ſome time endeavoured to draw a proof, that Socrates was faint-hearted, and had more dread of the troubles attending old age than of death itſelf. No little confidence, however, would be neceſſary to attempt to perſuade the reader of this.

Upon the day appointed for his trial, Melitus,

Melitus, Anytus, and Lycon, appeared the firſt for the poets, the ſecond for the people, and the laſt for the rhetoricians, mounted one after another the orator's ſtool, and delivered the moſt virulent and calumnious harangues againſt Socrates. After they had done, Socrates mounted into their place without trembling, or appearing diſmayed, or endeavouring, as was the cuſtom at tribunals in thoſe times, to excite the compaſſion of his judges by looks of diſtreſs, but bearing a firm confident aſpect conſiſtent with his character. He made an unſtudied and artleſs, but manly and expreſſive ſpeech, in which he refuted, without aſperity, all the malicious reports which had been ſtudiouſly circulated againſt him, put his accuſers to the bluſh, and expoſed the contradiction and inconſiſtency of their charges. He treated his judges with due reſpect, but ſpoke in ſo conſcious a tone of his own ſuperiority, that his diſcourſe was frequently

quently interrupted by murmurs of diſcontent. He concluded with the following words:

"Be not diſpleaſed, Athenians, that I, contrary to the cuſtom of the accuſed, neither addreſs you in tears, nor bring with me a melancholy train of children and friends to move you to compaſſion. I have not omitted to do ſo either from pride or diſdain, but becauſe I deem it unbecoming to ſupplicate a judge, or endeavour to impreſs him, otherwiſe than by the equity of the cauſe before him. The judge has bound himſelf by an oath to decide according to law and juſtice, to let neither prejudice nor pity bias his ſentence. We who are accuſed therefore would act contrary to law and equity, if we attempted to make you break your oaths, and contrary to the reſpect due to you, if we ſuppoſed you capable of it. I will upon no account owe my acquittal to means which are neither juſt, equitable, nor

conſiſtent

conſiſtent with the fear of God, eſpecially as I have been accuſed by Melitus of impiety. If I uſed ſupplications to make you forſwear yourſelves, I ſhould give a convincing proof that I believed in no God; ſuch a defence alone would convict me of atheiſm. No; I am more ſtrongly convinced than my accuſers are of the exiſtence of God, and therefore ſubmit myſelf to God and you to be judged according to truth, and meet ſuch deſtiny as you ſhall think fitteſt for yourſelves and me."

The judges were extremely diſſatisfied with the freedom of this addreſs, and interrupted Plato, who had ſtepped forward after him, and began to ſpeak — "Although, Athenians, I am the youngeſt of thoſe who have "ſtood up here" — They called to Plato to come down again, and would not ſuffer him to proceed. Socrates was found guilty by a majority of thirty-three voices.

It was the cuſtom at Athens for a condemned

demned perſon to impoſe ſome puniſhment upon himſelf, ſuch as a fine, impriſonment, or baniſhment, to confirm the equity of his ſentence, or rather as a confeſſion of his crime. Socrates was deſired to chooſe; he would by no means, however, be ſo unjuſt to himſelf as to declare that he was guilty, and ſaid: "If I am to tell you freely, Athenians, what I think I have deſerved, know ye, Athenians, I think that, in return for the ſervices I have done the republic, I juſtly merit to be maintained in the Prytaneum at the public expence all the reſt of my life."

At the perſuaſion of his friends he at laſt conſented to a ſmall fine, but would not permit them to raiſe any large ſum amongſt them.

The judges conſulted together what puniſhment they ſhould inflict upon him, and the malice of his enemies operated ſo powerfully that his ſentence was, DEATH.

Athe-

"Athenians, you have been too precipitate in your judgement, ſaid Socrates, and have given the ſlanderers of this city cauſe to reproach you with taking away the life of the wiſe Socrates; for they will call me wiſe on purpoſe to throw the greater blame upon you. You would not have had a long time to wait for my death without your aſſiſtance. You ſee how near I am to death already *."

"Do you believe, men of Athens, that I wanted words to perſuade or prevail upon you, had it been my opinion that a man may ſay and do every thing in his power to obtain a favourable ſentence? Certainly not. If I ſubmit calmly to my fate, it is not becauſe I want either arguments or remonſtrances to make to you, but becauſe I have not effrontery and meanneſs enough to let you hear what might be agreeable to

* He was then ſeventy years of age.

be heard, but moſt unbecoming an upright man to ſay. Diſſembling, crying, and other ſuch low artifices of perſuaſion, which you have been accuſtomed to from others, are totally unworthy of me. I have from the firſt been reſolved rather to loſe my life than owe my acquittal to a baſe action. I am of opinion, that a man is as little to be juſtified in doing every thing he can to eſcape death from the laws, as he is in war. How often has he an opportunity in battle of ſaving his life, if he throws down his arms, and calls to his antagoniſt for mercy. And in the courſe of human life there are many occaſions where death can be eaſily avoided, if a man will only be ſhameleſs enough to ſay and do every thing which is neceſſary to that end. To ſhun death is ſometimes not very difficult, but to eſcape from ſhame is far more ſo, for it is quicker than death. Thus I, who am a ſlow old man, am attacked by the ſloweſt; whereas

my accuſers, who are young and lively, will be overtaken by very ſudden ſhame. I go to the death to which you have condemned me; they to the infamy and diſgrace to which they are condemned by truth and juſtice. I am ſatisfied with my ſentence; probably they are ſo likewiſe. I, for my part, find even here the ways of fate juſt and reſpectable."

After he had told the judges who had condemned him ſome truths, with much freedom, but without any acrimony of temper, he turned himſelf round to thoſe who had voted for his acquittal, and entertained them with ſuch obſervations on life, death, and immortality, as were ſuited to the comprehenſion of the common people. But when he was alone with his confidential friends and ſcholars, he expatiated more at large on this ſubject: for which reaſon it will be proper to ſpare thoſe of our readers, who would be acquainted with the mature

reflections of this philoſopher, any recital of the extravagant and leſs rational doctrines of thoſe times.

They conducted him to the priſon, which as Seneca ſays, loſt its gloom and ignominy by his preſence, as no place can be a jail where there is a Socrates. On the way to it he was met by ſome of his ſcholars, who were inconſolable for what had happened to him. The wiſe man aſked them why they complained. Has not nature from my birth condemned me to death? If death robbed me of a true and valuable good, I, and thoſe who love me, would have reaſon to lament my fate. But as I leave only ſorrow and miſery behind, my friends ſhould wiſh me happineſs on my journey.

Appollodorus, who has been repreſented as a man of a weak underſtanding, but an excellent heart, could not at all reſt ſatisfied that his teacher and friend ſhould ſuffer innocently.

Good

Good Appollodorus, ſaid Socrates ſmiling, as he laid his hand upon his head, Wouldſt thou rather have ſeen me die guilty?

What farther paſſed in the priſon during the laſt hours of the dying Socrates the reader will learn in the following dialogues. We cannot here omit, however, to take notice of a converſation which he held with Crito, as Plato has made a diſtinct dialogue of it.

Some days before the ſentence of Socrates was put in force, Crito came to him before dawn, found him in a ſweet ſleep, and ſat down ſoftly at his bed ſide.

When Socrates waked, he aſked, Why ſo early, my friend Crito?

Crito told him, he had got intelligence that the next day the ſentence of death was to be executed upon him.

If it is the will of God, anſwered Socrates, with his uſual calmneſs, ſo be it.

How-

However, I do not believe it will happen to-morrow; for juſt as you came to me I had a very pleaſant dream. A woman of uncommon beauty appeared before me in a long white robe, called me by my name, and ſaid, "In three days thou wilt arrive "in thy fruitful Pthia." An alluſion, by which he expreſſed his longing after another life, as in Homer the angry Achilles wiſhed himſelf out of the camp, and again in his native country Pthia.

Crito, however, whoſe viſit was occaſioned by very different views, acquainted him, that his friends had corrupted the watch, and prepared every thing neceſſary to remove him by night from the priſon, and that it now depended entirely upon himſelf, whether or not he would eſcape an ignominious death. He endeavoured alſo, by the moſt forcible arguments, to convince him that it was his duty to do ſo. As he knew his love for his native country,

he

he repreſented to him how much he was bound to hinder the Athenians from ſhedding innocent blood: above all things, he urged him to follow his counſel for the ſake of his friends, who, beſides their grief for his loſs, would remain expoſed to the moſt painful reproaches for having neglected his releaſement; and laſtly, he did not omit to draw a very moving picture of the miſery of his helpleſs children, who would be deprived of his parental inſtructions, example, and protection.

To this Socrates replied, My dear Crito, your friendly and provident care is praiſeworthy, and to be acknowledged with thanks, if the meaſure you adviſe is conſiſtent with ſound reaſon: if it is contrary to that, however, we muſt the more cautiouſly avoid it. It is neceſſary, therefore, firſt to conſider, if your propoſition is agreeable or not to reaſon. I have been accuſtomed not to allow myſelf to be perſuaded

to

to do any thing except that which, after mature reflection, I have judged to be for the beſt; and although I am in the ſituation in which you view me, I ſee no grounds for deviating from my former rule of life, I have not altered my opinion of it, and I cannot therefore do otherwiſe than ſtill to practiſe it.

After Socrates had refuted his falſe arguments, and ſhewn him the duty a reaſonable man owed to his country and the laws, he continued thus: If I had now an intention to eſcape, and the republic and the laws appeared to aſk me, Say, Socrates, what are you willing to do? Do you not think that your conduct is preparing deſtruction for us, the laws, and the whole ſtate? Or do you believe that a ſtate can ſubſiſt, and not abſolutely go to ruin, after the laws have loſt their force, and can be fruſtrated by every private perſon? What can I anſwer to this, my dear friend? Perhaps

haps that I have met with wrong, and do not merit the ſentence which has been pronounced againſt me. Shall I anſwer in this way, Crito?

Yes, O Socrates. If, however, the laws reply, How, Socrates, have you not bound yourſelf to aſſent to all the verdicts of the republic? I would certainly be ſtaggered by this queſtion: but they would proceed: Let it not aſtoniſh you, Socrates, for you have always been a friend to queſtions and anſwers. Say, what do you find diſpleaſing in us and the republic that you endeavour to pull us down? Are you diſpleaſed with the matrimonial laws, by which your father has married your mother, and brought you to the world? Are you diſpleaſed with them? — Not at all, I ſhould anſwer. Are you diſpleaſed with the manner in which we bring up and educate children? Are the inſtitutions for that purpoſe not laudable, which have allowed your father

to inſtruct you in muſic and the gymnaſtic exerciſes?—Very laudable, I muſt reply. You confeſs, therefore, that you have to thank us for your birth, bringing up, and inſtructions; and, conſequently, we can conſider you, as well as your predeceſſors, as our ſon and our ſubject. If it is ſo, however, we then aſk, if you would poſſeſs an equal right with us? And are you entitled to repay every thing which you receive from us in the ſame kind? You do not pretend to an equal right with your father, or with your maſter, if you have one; to make them feel in return every thing which they make you ſuffer; to reſent, in words or deeds, every act by which they ſeem to oppreſs you; and would you have an equal right with your native country and the laws? Will you think yourſelf entitled, whenever we make a decree againſt you, to revolt againſt us, to ſubvert the laws and your native country? And do you think,

that

that you would act right? You who so earneſtly ſtrive after virtue, is this your wiſdom? That you do not ſee that your father, mother, and forefathers, are not ſo much to be reſpected, not ſo much to be valued and held ſacred by gods and men, who are ſound of underſtanding, as your native country; they continue this ſtrain of expoſtulation, and at laſt conclude: Conſider, Socrates, if you do not act inequitably to us; we have born, bred, add brought you up; we have, to the utmoſt of our power, ſhewn you, and every citizen of Athens, every benevolence which ſocial life can beſtow, and at the ſame time have given every one who has ſettled at Athens the permiſſion, if, after a ſufficient trial, he does not find our government agreeable to him, to go away from us and ſettle elſewhere. The doors of Athens are open to every one who is not pleaſed with its government, and he may take every thing with him which

which is his without any hindrance. But whoever has ſeen how we act, and how we adminiſter juſtice, and yet continues to ſtay amongſt us, who has tacitly formed a contract to be pleaſed with every thing commanded to him; if then he is diſobedient, he commits a threefold offence; he is diſobedient to his parents, diſobedient to his tutors and governors, and he breaks the contract which he entered into with us.

Deareſt Crito, I think I hear theſe ſpeeches as the Corybantes imagine they hear the playing of the ſacred flutes, and they ſound ſo ſtrongly in my ears, that I cannot harken to any thing farther on the ſubject.

Crito left him diſſatisfied, but convinced that reaſon could not give her ſanction to his propoſal.

PHÆDON;

OR, THE

DEATH OF SOCRATES.

PART I.

Execrates, Phædon, Appollodorus, Socrates, Cebes, Crito, and *Simmias.*

EXECRATES.

WERE you, Phædon, preſent when the fatal cup was adminiſtered to Socrates?

PHÆDON.

I was preſent, Execrates.

EXECRATES.

You can tell us, then, what were his laſt words, and how the wiſe man died—We long anxiouſly to hear it. Our Phi-

lacean citizens go ſeldom to Athens, and from thence we have ſeen no perſon who could give us intelligence of this event. Thus far we have heard; that Socrates has drank poiſon, and is dead: but not a ſingle circumſtance more.

PHÆDON.

Nothing of his condemnation?

EXECRATES.

Yes; of that we have been told: but we wondered ſtill why he was permitted to live ſo long, after he was condemned.

PHÆDON.

Accident alone, Execrates, was the cauſe of it. The ſhip which the Athenians ſend annually to Delos, happened to receive her cuſtomary decorations of flowers, the very day before his condemnation.

EXECRATES.

What ſhip is that?

PHÆ-

PHÆDON.

The ſame, as the Athenians tell, in which Theſeus carried formerly the ſeven couple of tributary children to Crete, whoſe lives, as well as his own, he preſerved there by deſtroying the Minotaur. Previous to their departure, it is ſaid, the city made a vow to Apollo, that if the children, through his auſpices, ſurvived the expedition, ſhe would ſend annually by this ſhip rich preſents to him at Delos; and ever ſince her promiſe to the God has been kept inviolate.

When the ſacred ſhip is ready to ſail the prieſt of Apollo adorns her ſtern with garlands of flowers; at the ſame time the feſtival of the *Theory* commences, and continues from the departure of the ſhip for Delos, until her return to Athens. During the interval of its celebration the city abſtains from all bloodſhed, and the laws forbid any criminal to be publickly executed. If the ſhip ſhould be detained,

by contrary winds, thoſe who have been condemned to die may gain a conſiderable reſpite. It was on account of this feſtival that ſo long a time elapſed between the condemnation and the death of Socrates.

EXECRATES.

But the laſt day, Phædon; how did it paſs? How did he behave? What did he ſay? and what did he do? Who attended him in his laſt moments? or would the Archons ſuffer no perſon to be preſent? and did he die without having a friend beſide him?

PHÆDON.

By no means; there were many preſent.

EXECRATES.

Gratify us, then, my dear Phædon, with the relation of what paſſed on that memorable occaſion.

PHÆDON.

I will endeavour to ſatisfy your wiſh. Nothing is more pleaſing to me than to call

call Socrates to my mind, to ſpeak of him myſelf, or to hear him ſpoken of by others.

EXECRATES.

And we who are your hearers hold his memory in the ſame reſpect and veneration, and will be pleaſed to be informed as minutely and circumſtantially as poſſible, how he bid his friends and the world farewel.

PHÆDON.

I was preſent at that ſcene; but none that I had ever before witneſſed affected me in the ſame manner. I did not feel that compaſſion or affliction for him which I had been uſed to do upon other occaſions while a friend has departed in my arms. Socrates, when he drank the poiſon, appeared to be happy, and in a compoſure of mind that was enviable; ſo calm, ſo tranquil was his behaviour in his laſt moments, ſo reſigned were his laſt words. His looks and demeanour did not ſeem thoſe of a mortal who deſcends prema-

turely to the ſhades, but rather thoſe of an immortal who was confident, wherever he might go, he would be as happy as any one had ever been. It was impoſſible for me, therefore, to be impreſſed with that awe and melancholy which the ſight of death uſually awakes in the ſoul. At the ſame time we did not taſte in the philoſophical converſation of our teacher, that pure delight and ſatisfaction to which we had been before accuſtomed; but, on the contrary, an extraordinary and, till then, unknown mixture of pleaſure with diſtreſs; our enjoyment being continually interrupted by the bitter conſciouſneſs and reflection, "that we were ſoon to loſe him for ever."

Thoſe alternate ſenſations of grief and joy agitated the minds of all who were preſent, but appeared ſtill more ſtrongly marked in our countenances. Sometimes we laughed, and ſometimes we wept; a ſmile was often on our lips, and

warm

warm moiſture in our eyes. But Apollodorus exceeded us all. You know him, and his ſenſibility of temper.

EXECRATES.

I do.

PHÆDON.

His emotions were the moſt ſingular; every word and look of Socrates that day penetrated him deeply; what made us only ſmile, frequently threw him into rapture; and while drops were but gathering upon our ſight, the eyes of Apollodorus appeared ſwimming in tears. We were almoſt as much affected at the ſight of him, as with the contemplation of our dying friend.

EXECRATES.

Who were all preſent?

PHÆDON.

Of the inhabitants of this town—Apollodorus, Critobulus, and his father Crito; Hermogenes, Epigenes, Æſchines, Cteſi-

phon, Antiſthenes, Menexenus, and ſome others. Plato, I believe, was ſick.

EXECRATES.

Were there any ſtrangers amongſt you?

PHÆDON.

Yes; Simmias, Cebes, and Phædondas, from Thebes; and Euclid and Terpſion, from Megara.

EXECRATES.

What! were not Ariſtippus and Cleombrotus there?

PHÆDON.

No: it is ſaid they were then reſiding at Ægina.

EXECRATES.

No others were preſent?

PHÆDON.

I do not recollect any other perſon who was there.

EXECRATES.

Pray, then, inform us of the ſubject of your diſcourſe.

PHÆ-

PHÆDON.

I will tell you every thing from beginning to end. We were in the habit of viſiting Socrates daily whilſt he was in priſon. We uſed to aſſemble for this purpoſe in the court where his ſentence was pronounced, which was cloſe adjoining, and entertain ourſelves with converſation there until the priſon door was open, which did not uſually happen early. As ſoon as it was unlocked we went into Socrates, and generally ſpent the whole day with him. The morning of his departure we repaired to him ſooner than uſual. Having heard the evening before, as we were going home, that the ſhip was returned from Delos, we reſolved to be with him the laſt day as early as poſſible. When we were all met, the jailor, who uſed to open the priſon door, came up to us, and requeſted we would not go in juſt then, but wait till he ſhould call us; for the eleven men, he

ſaid,

ſaid, are now taking the chains off Socrates, and acquainting him that this day he muſt die. Not long after he came and called us. When we went in we found Socrates, unbound, lying upon his bed. Xantippe, his wife, ſate beſide him in ſilent ſorrow, and held her child in her lap. When ſhe perceived us, ſhe began like a woman to lament aloud, Ah, Socrates! thy friends ſee thee this day, and thou them for the laſt time; and a flood of tears interrupted her words.

Socrates turned to Crito, and begged of him to let her be conducted home. The ſervants of Crito led her out, crying and beating her breaſt in diſtreſs.

Socrates then raiſing himſelf up in the bed, bent his leg which had been fettered, and as he rubbed it with his hand, Oh my friends, he ſaid, what a ſtrange thing does that ſeem to be, which men call agreeable! At firſt thought we conceive it to be the oppoſite of diſagree-

able,

able, as nothing can be at the ſame time agreeable and diſagreeable to man: yet no perſon can feel either of theſe ſenſations by means of the ſenſes without being immediately ſenſible of the other, as if they were joined at both ends together. Had Æſop made this remark, he would probably have written the following fable:—"The gods were willing to unite "oppoſite ſenſations; but as they found "it impoſſible, they tied them at both "ends together, ſince which they have "been conſtantly inſeparable."—This truth I have juſt experienced. Theſe fetters gave me much pain; but they are no ſooner removed than the moſt agreeable ſenſation enſues.

I am glad, ſaid Cebes, interrupting him, that you have mentioned Æſop, for you make me remember to aſk you one queſtion, Socrates: Whether it is true, as reported, that you have turned

ſome

ſome of the fables of Æſop into poetry, and written a hymn in honour of Apollo? I am aſked by many, and particularly by the poet Evenus, what has led your thoughts to write poems now, as you never did ſuch a thing before. What anſwer ſhall I give him when he aſks me next? and aſk me he certainly will: therefore ſay what ſhall I tell him.

Tell him, Cebes, replied Socrates, nothing but the truth: that I have not by any means written theſe poems in order to diſpute rank with him in the art of poetry, for I know how difficult that is; but in compliance with an advice given me while aſleep, to which I have endeavoured to conform my life and actions in every poſſible manner. The occaſion was as follows: — In times paſt a dream preſented itſelf to me in various ſhapes, but conſtantly gave me the ſame admonition. "Socrates, apply yourſelf to muſic, and

perfect

perfect yourself in that art." Hitherto I considered this exhortation merely as words of encouragement, such as we Grecians make use of to wager runners. The dream I have thought enjoins me nothing new, philosophy, which I have always studied, being the most excellent music. It only means, therefore, to keep up my zeal and love for wisdom, that I may not relax in the pursuit of it. Since my sentence has been pronounced however, as the festival of Apollo has delayed my death, in the leisure time it has afforded I have again deliberated upon my dream; and lest I may have been required to prosecute common music, I have written a song in praise of the God, whose feast was celebrating: I recollected after, that in the works of a poet fictions were necessary; but as a song of praise contains no fiction, nor having any talent for original poetry myself, I therefore supplied my want of genius with the inventions of others; and the

fables

fables of Æſop coming firſt to my hands, I turned ſome of them into verſe. This, Cebes, you may give for your anſwer to Evenus; ſalute him alſo on my part, and tell him, if he is wiſe, he will ſoon follow me. According to all appearances, by command of the Athenians, I ſhall this day take my departure.

And is this your wiſh to Evenus? ſaid Simmias. I know him ſo well, that as far as I can judge, he will return you no thanks for the advice.

How! replied Socrates; is Evenus no philoſopher?

Yes, Simmias anſwered, I think he is.

Why then, ſaid Socrates, he will follow me chearfully, and not only he, but all thoſe who deſerve the name. I do not mean, however, that he ſhould lay violent hands on himſelf, for that is not permitted to any man, as we all know. And while he ſpoke this he put both his feet down

from the bed to the ground, to continue the converſation in that poſture.

How are you to be underſtood? ſaid Cebes. You ſay we are not permitted to take away our own lives, and yet every philoſopher ſhould be willing to follow a dying man.

Cebes, ſaid Socrates, you and Simmias have both attended the philoſopher Philolaus. Did he never explain himſelf to you upon this point?

Not fully, Socrates.

I will freely, then, impart my ſentiments to you upon the ſubject. I think, if any perſon is going to travel, he ought to enquire well into the condition of the country which he is to viſit, that he may form a juſt idea of it.

This converſation is much adapted to my preſent circumſtances; for what could we propoſe more befitting this ſolemn day until the ſun goes down?

How

How do you prove, ſaid Cebes, that ſuicide is illicit? though Philolaus, and other teachers, have ſtrongly impreſſed me with this opinion, I wiſh to be fully convinced of it.

Liſten, then, to me, ſaid Socrates.—I maintain, that ſuicide, in every poſſible caſe, is abſolutely inadmiſſible. We know there are perſons exiſting, to whom life muſt be burdenſome. It may ſeem ſtrange to you, on this account, that the ſacred duties of ſociety ſhould not permit the unhappy to relieve themſelves by voluntary death, but ſhould enjoin them to wait for another helping hand to releaſe them; yet nothing is more conſiſtent with the views of the Supreme Being.

Men are placed here on earth like ſentinels, and therefore muſt not quit their poſt until they are relieved. As God is our proprietor, and we are his property,

can

can we doubt whether his providence watches over our welfare?

We cannot, ſaid Cebes.

Would not a bondſman, who lives under the protection of a good maſter, merit puniſhment, if he acted in oppoſition to his deſigns? And if there is a ſpark of rectitude in his boſom, muſt he not feel a ſincere joy when he ſees the wiſhes of his maſter fulfilled through his means, and the more ſo if he is convinced that it is his own intereſt to contribute to their accompliſhment?

Certainly.

Then anſwer me, Cebes. When the uncreated work-maſter made the artificial ſtructure of the human body, and implanted a rational ſoul in it, had he a good or bad deſign in doing ſo?

Undoubtedly a good one.

For he muſt deny his own being, its ſelf-ſubſiſting goodneſs, if he could aſſo-

ciate an evil intention with his own works; what god can renounce his own nature?

A fabulous god only whom the credulous vulgar feign of various forms. I remember very well, Socrates, the arguments with which, on a former occaſion, you combated this deluſive error.

The ſame god, Cebes, who has conſtructed the body, has furniſhed it with powers which ſtrengthen preſerve, and defend it from too premature decay; ſhall we allow that this power of preſervation was given with the moſt benevolent intention?

How can we do otherwiſe?

As faithful ſervants then, it is a ſacred duty incumbent upon us to aſſiſt the views of our ſupreme diſpoſer in their progreſs to maturity, not forcibly to counteract them, but rather to make all our actions tend to their completion.

For this reaſon, dear Cebes, I have ſaid philoſophy is the moſt excellent muſic, as

it

it learns us to direct our thoughts and actions ſo as to make them accord as perfectly as poſſible with the views of our maſter. If muſic is a ſcience which unites the weak with the ſtrong, the harſh with the ſoft, the agreeable with the diſagreeable in harmony, then certainly no muſic can be more admirable and excellent than philoſophy, which teaches us not only to bring our thoughts and actions into perfect and wonderful harmony among themſelves, but alſo to make the conduct of a finite accord with the views of an infinite being, and the ideas of the inhabitants of earth to correſpond with the ſentiments of omniſcience. O, Cebes! ſhould a raſh mortal attempt to deſtroy this complete harmony?

He would deſerve the adhorrence both of gods and men.

But tell me, do not the powers of nature act as ſervants to the deity, and fulfil his commands?

Undoubtedly.

They are alſo augurs which announce to us the will and views of the divinity with more fidelity than the entrails of victims; for the end at which the powers given by the Almighty aim is unqueſtionably the reſult of his decree?

It cannot be denied.

As long as theſe augurs certify to us that the preſervation of our lives is conſiſtent with the views of God, we are bound in duty to direct our free actions accordingly, and have neither right nor reaſon to oppoſe them with violence, or to obſtruct the ſervants of ſupreme wiſdom in the exerciſe of their functions; this is our duty until God, by the ſame augurs, ſends us an expreſs command to reſign this life, as he has done to me this day.

Of that I am fully convinced, ſaid Cebes. But I am now leſs able to comprehend, my dear Socrates, what you ſaid before,

that

that every philoſopher muſt be willing to follow you out of this life; for if it is true, as you have juſt now maintained, that we are the property of God, and that he watches over us, how can ſuch an aſſertion be juſt? Should not a prudent man regret to leave the ſervice of a ſuperior being, who is his beſt and moſt benevolent protector? and if he might hope by death to become free and his own maſter, how can the unexperienced minor flatter himſelf that he will be ſafer when left to his own guidance, than while under the care of an all-wiſe guardian? I ſhould think it a groſs miſunderſtanding to chuſe rather to be totally at liberty, than to ſuffer the beſt of tutors to watch over us. Whoever reaſons juſtly, will contentedly ſubmit to the direction of another, whom he believes to be poſſeſſed of more underſtanding than himſelf. On this account I ſhould draw a concluſion directly contrary to your opi-

nion. The wiſe man, I ſhould ſay, ought to be ſad, and the fool happy at the proſpect of death.

Socrates heard him attentively, and appeared to be pleaſed with his acuteneſs. He then turned towards us, and ſaid, Cebes will give any perſon who oppoſes him in argument enough to do; he has ſo many doubts to be reſolved before he is convinced.

But at preſent, ſaid Simmias, Cebes does not appear to be in the wrong: for what can induce a wiſe man, without any diſcontent to withdraw himſelf from the providence of an all-ſeeing power; and if I am not deceived, Socrates, Cebes directs his objections principally againſt your preſent conduct — You who can with ſo much unconcern not only take leave of all your friends, to whom your death is afflicting, but remove yourſelf alſo from under the ſuperintendance of a governor, who you

have

have taught us to believe is the wiſeſt and moſt benevolent of beings.

I ſee, ſaid Socrates, I am accuſed, and that I muſt defend myſelf in form.

But I will endeavour to do more juſtice to my preſent defence than I did to that which I made before my judges.

Hear Simmias and Cebes. In the firſt place, if I had not hopes where I am going to continue ſtill under the care of the ſame all-kind providence, and to meet the ſpirits of the departed, whoſe ſociety is preferable to any friendſhip we enjoy here upon earth, it would be weakneſs and folly to treat life with ſo much indifference, and run willingly into the arms of death; but I have the moſt comforting aſſurances that I ſhall be deceived in neither of my expectations. The latter I dare not ſo confidently inſiſt on; but that the providence of God will always watch over me, I will maintain as firmly as

ever I have maintained any truth in my life: for that reaſon I am not grieved to die, as I know that at death all is not over with our being; another life ſucceeds, and one, as has been ſaid of old, which will prove happier for the virtuous than the wicked.

How, ſaid Simmias, will you, dear Socrates, carry this comforting perſuaſion to the grave with you, nor deign to favour us with the communication of a doctrine which has ſo much conſolation in it. It is but juſt to ſhare ſo precious a gift with your friends; and if you perſuade us to think as you do, then your defence is made.

I will attempt it; but let us firſt hear Crito, who has ſeemed deſirous for ſome time paſt of ſaying ſomething.

My friend, anſwered Crito, the man who is to bring you the poiſon begs of you not to talk ſo much: he ſays you will heat yourſelf to ſuch a degree that the draft will

not

not operate. He has often been obliged to prepare a ſecond and third cup for thoſe who would not refrain from talking.

In the name of God, ſaid Socrates, let him do his duty: and have a ſecond or a third draft ready, if he thinks proper.

This anſwer I expected, ſaid Crito; but the fellow will not be ſilent.

Heed him not, replied Socrates. A man who has grown grey in the love of wiſdom muſt be chearful at the approach of death, becauſe he can promiſe himſelf the greateſt happineſs after it. On what grounds I ſupport this aſſertion, Simmias and Cebes, I ſhall endeavour to explain.

My friends, there are but few who know, that he who gives himſelf up to the love of wiſdom, employs the whole time of his life in making himſelf familiar with death, that he may learn to die. If this is the caſe, what an abſurdity would it be if he, who points all his efforts here

on

on earth at one ſingle object, were to feel affliction, when the long-wiſhed-for aim was at laſt accompliſhed.

Simmias ſmiled: by Heaven, Socrates, I muſt ſmile, although I am but little diſpoſed to it. What you now ſay may not ſurpriſe the world ſo much as you think it ſhould. The people of Athens in particular could tell you they know well that philoſophers wiſh to learn to die, and for that reaſon they let them experience death as the recompence of their virtues.

Ah, Simmias! their penetration is not deep enough; they do not know what kind of death philoſophers deſire, nor how far they deſerve it. But what are the Athenians at preſent to us. I am now in a diſcourſe with my friends. Is not death ſomething which can be deſcribed and explained?

Certainly, replied Simmias.

But is it any thing elſe than the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body? To die, is

it not, when the ſoul leaves the body, or the body the ſoul, ſo as that they have no more communication with each other, and that each remains by itſelf? Or can you explain more clearly what death is?

No, my friend.

Do you think the true lover of wiſdom is addicted to voluptuous living, and places his greateſt enjoyment in the luxuries of eating and drinking?

Certainly not.

Is he the votary of love?

As little.

And with reſpect to other conveniences of life, does he, in his dreſs, for inſtance, affect pomp and extravagance, or does he content himſelf with what is barely neceſſary, and diſregard ſuperfluities?

Whatever man can diſpenſe with, ſaid Simmias, that the wiſe are never troubled to want.

May we not ſay then, continued Socrates, that the philoſopher endeavours to make himſelf independent of every thing which is ſuperfluous to the body, that he may be able to attend more conſtantly upon his ſoul.

Why not?

He diſtinguiſhes himſelf, therefore, from other men, by keeping his mind free of the fetters which the ſenſual paſſions lay upon it, and endeavouring to wean his ſoul in part from her communication with the body.

Truly ſo.

The greater part of mankind will tell you, Simmias, that he who will not enjoy the pleaſures of life does not deſerve to live. They ſay a man longs after death, who denies himſelf ſenſual enjoyments, and abſtains from all carnal pleaſures.

They do ſo, Socrates.

Does

But does not the body frequently interrupt the ſoul in her meditations? Can the man, then, who loves wiſdom promiſe himſelf much progreſs in it, if he has not learnt to ſubdue the emotions which are occaſioned by external objects? Let me explain this — The impreſſions on our eyes and ears are juſt as they are returned from the objects to us, mere ſimple ſenſations, not truths; for theſe muſt be inferred by the underſtanding — muſt they not?

Certainly.

As ſimple ſenſations alſo, they cannot be truſted to entirely; the poets, therefore, ſing with juſtice, that the ſenſes are deluſive, and do not inform us diſtinctly. What we hear and ſee is full of labyrinth and darkneſs: but if both theſe ſenſes cannot give us a clear idea, the other far leſs accurate ſenſes deſerve not to be mentioned.

Cer-

Certainly not.

How muſt the ſoul proceed, then, if ſhe would arrive at truth? If ſhe depends upon the ſenſes, ſhe is deceived.

Juſt.

She muſt therefore exerciſe the powers of reaſoning and reflection before ſhe can diſcover and penetrate into the reality of things. But at what time is reflection moſt ſucceſsful? Certainly at the time when we are loſt, as it were, to all corporeal feeling of our exiſtence, and the ſenſes are blind to all external objects: then the ſoul loſes her intimacy with the body, quits as much as ſhe can their ſociety, and, collected in herſelf, conſiders not the appearance of things to the ſenſes, but their reality, not the impreſſions which objects make upon us, but that which they truly are.

Juſt.

But let us endeavour to make the matter ſtill more clear. Is the all-perfect excel-

lence

lence a mere idea of the mind without external exiſtence? or does it mean a being whoſe exiſtence is real and independent of us?

Certainly, Socrates, a real, unlimited, and, of us, independent being.

Are ſupreme goodneſs and wiſdom alſo real?

Yes; theſe are the inſeparable attributes of the all-perfect being.

But who has taught us to know this being? With our corporeal eyes we have never ſeen him; nor have we ever heard or felt him. No external ſenſe has led us to any conception of wiſdom, goodneſs, perfection, beauty, power of thinking, &c.; and yet we know that theſe things exiſt without us, and exiſt actually in the higheſt degree. Can nobody explain to us how we came by thoſe conceptions?

The voice of the gods, Socrates: I ſhall once more refer you to them.

How?

How? my friends. If we heard in a neighbouring chamber an exquiſite flute-player, would we not be curious to know who was able to charm our ears ſo much?

When we admire a painting, do we not wiſh to know the maſterly hand who executed it? There is in ourſelves, notwithſtanding the moſt excellent picture which gods or men have ever ſeen, the picture of ſupreme goodneſs, wiſdom, and beauty; and yet we have never enquired after the artiſt who has left this perfect image on our minds.

Cebes replied, I remember once to have heard Philolaus give an explanation, which, I think, applies to this caſe.

Will not Cebes let his friends ſhare this legacy of the happy Philolaus?

The ſoul obtains, Philolaus ſaid, none of her conceptions of incorporeal things from the external ſenſes, but by means of herſelf, while ſhe obſerves her own operations and acquires the knowledge of her own nature

and

and faculties. To make this more clear, I have heard him often put a fictitious caſe. Let us, he uſed to ſay, borrow from Homer the two tuns which ſtand in Jupiter's hall; but at the ſame time let us beg permiſſion to fill them, not with proſperity and adverſity, but the one with real eſſences, the other with defect and non-eſſences. As often as the Almighty Jupiter means to produce a ſpiritual being, he draws out a portion from each tun, caſts a look on eternal fate, and, according to her decree, prepares ſuch a mixture of both as is deſtined to the conſtitution of the future ſpirit. From hence a wonderful reſemblance is found between the whole race of ſpiritual beings, as they are all produced from the ſame tuns, and differ only in the mixture. When our ſoul, therefore, which is nothing elſe than the reſult of ſuch a mixture, contemplates herſelf, ſhe acquires an idea of the nature of

ſpirits, and their limits, of power and want of power, perfection, and imperfection, of underſtanding, wiſdom, ſtrength, deſign, beauty, juſtice, and a thouſand other incorporeal things, concerning which the external ſenſes, would leave her in the utmoſt ignorance.

How incomparable! replies Socrates. Yet how unkind in you, Cebes, while poſſeſſed of ſuch a treaſure, to ſuffer me almoſt to die without ſharing it with you: but let us ſee how we can ſtill enjoy it before the hour of death. Philolaus, ſaid the ſoul, acquires a knowledge of kindred ſpirits, by contemplating herſelf—Does ſhe not?

Exactly.

And ſhe forms conceptions of immaterial things by developing her own faculties, and gives to each a particular name, in order to diſtinguiſh them more clearly from one another.

Certainly.

Certainly.

But if ſhe would conceive a being ſuperior to herſelf, what will ſupply her with this idea?

Cebes was ſilent, and Socrates continued. If I have comprehended Philolaus's meaning well, the ſoul can never form a juſt idea of a being higher than herſelf, or even of faculties ſuperior to thoſe which ſhe herſelf poſſeſſes—but ſhe can in general very well conceive the poſſibility of a being endowed with qualities that ſhe has not, that is, a being more perfect than herſelf; or have you, perhaps, heard Philolaus ſay otherwiſe?

No.

And ſhe has only this glimpſe of thought, this faint conception of the being of the higheſt perfection. She cannot comprehend the nature of eſſence in its full extent, but ſhe thinks of the truth, goodneſs, and the degree of perfection in her own being, ſeparates it in thought from the defects with

which it is mixed, and gains by this means an idea of a being who is all purity, truth, goodneſs, and perfection.

Here Appollodorus, who had hitherto ſpoken every word in a low voice after Socrates, broke into rapture, and repeated aloud, "who is all purity, truth, goodneſs, and "perfection."

Socrates continued. Do you ſee, my friends, how far the man, who loves wiſdom, muſt remove himſelf from the ſenſes and their objects, if he would comprehend the ſupreme and perfect being, the true knowledge of whom conſtitutes happineſs?

In this purſuit of thought he muſt not only cloſe his eyes and ſhut his ears, but baniſh from his mind all recollection of the pains or pleaſures of the ſenſes, and, if poſſible, forget his body entirely, that he may enter ſolitarily into himſelf, and contemplate the faculties of his ſoul and her operations.

The

The body is not only an unneceſſary, but even a very inconvenient companion, to the mind in ſuch enquiries; for ſhe does not any longer ſearch for colours, greatneſs, tones, or motions, but aſpires to the conception of a being, who, in the moſt diſtinct manner, not only conceives but can produce all colours, greatneſs, tones, or motions, and, what is more, all poſſible ſpirits, in every imaginable arrangement or claſſification. What a helpleſs aſſociate is the body in ſuch an effort of the ſoul!

The true philoſophers, ſaid Socrates, who weigh theſe reaſons, cannot avoid being of this opinion, and ſaying to each other, here is a falſe path which leads us more and more out of our way, and fools all our hopes. We are certain that the knowledge of truth is our only wiſh; but as long as we are diſtempered by the groſs appetites of the body, as long as our ſoul is ſtill infected with this terreſtrial contagion, we cannot

poſſibly flatter ourſelves that we ſhall ſee this wiſh entirely fulfilled. We ought to ſearch for truth; but, alas! the body gives us very little leiſure for this important duty. To-day its ſupport requires all our care, to-morrow it is attacked by ſickneſs; then come other avocations of life, ſuch as love, fear, deſires, anxieties, reveries, and follies, which continually diſquiet us, by alluring our ſenſes from one vanity to another, and make us pine in vain after the true object of our wiſhes; that is, wiſdom. What brings on war, ſedition, quarrels, and diſcord, amongſt men, but the body and its inſatiable deſires? For avarice is the mother of all troubles, and our ſoul would never be covetous of worldly poſſeſſions, if ſhe had not always the care of the hungry appetites of the body.

In this way we are occupied almoſt all our time, and have little or no leiſure left for philoſophy. At laſt, ſhould we find

ſome

ſome vacant hours, and prepare ourſelves to embrace wiſdom, the diſturber of our happineſs, the body, comes again in our way, and preſents to us a ſhadow inſtead of truth. The ſenſes ſet before us againſt our will, their deluſive images, and fill the ſoul with confuſion, darkneſs, inactivity, and weakneſs: in this diſturbed ſtate can the ſoul think with ſolidity, and diſcover truth?

Impoſſible.

We muſt wait for thoſe happy moments, when calmneſs without, and quiet within, make us totally inattentive to the body, and allow us to ſearch for truth with the eyes of the ſoul. But how rare and how ſhort are thoſe deſirable moments!

We clearly ſee, therefore, that we cannot reach the aim of our wiſhes, that is, wiſdom, till after death. In the time of life it is in vain to hope for it. As the ſoul cannot, while ſhe reſides in the body, find out truth diſtinctly, we muſt therefore take

one of theſe two things for granted; either we ſhall never be able to diſcover truth, or we ſhall find it after death, when the ſoul leaves the body, and, in all probability, will feel no obſtacles to her progreſs in wiſdom. But if we would prepare ourſelves in this life for that happy knowledge, we muſt not grant more to the body than what is ſufficient for its neceſſities, we muſt reſtrain its deſires, abſtain from ſenſual pleaſures, and as often as poſſible exerciſe ourſelves in meditation, until it ſhall pleaſe the Almighty to ſet us at liberty; then we may hope to be freed from the weakneſs of the body, to behold and contemplate the ſource of truth, the happieſt and moſt complete being with pure and holy ſenſes, while we, perhaps, ſee others near us enjoying the ſame happineſs.

This is the kind of language, my dear Simmias, which the true lovers of knowledge may hold to each other when they converſe

about

about their neareſt concerns; for I ſuppoſe they muſt all have the ſame ſentiments; or do you think otherwiſe?

No otherwiſe, dear Socrates.

Now if this is right, may not one who follows me to-day entertain great hopes, that where we are going we ſhall obtain better than elſewhere that which we have ſo long ſtruggled for in this life,

Certainly.

I can therefore, look with chearfulneſs on my journey to-day, and every lover of truth may do the ſame, when he conſiders that, without purification and preparation, no free entry is permitted into the myſteries of wiſdom.

This cannot be denied, ſaid Simmias.

But purification is nothing elſe than detaching the ſoul from the pleaſures of the ſenſes, and continual meditation on her own nature and faculties; without letting any thing which does not belong to her diſturb her,

her, and, in ſhort, endeavouring in this, as well as in a future life, to looſe her from the chains of the body, that ſhe may conſider herſelf freely, and arrive at the knowledge of truth.

Certainly.

The ſeparation of the body from the ſoul is called death?

Yes.

The true lovers of wiſdom, therefore, take all poſſible pains to familiariſe themſelves with death, that they may learn to die—Do they not?

Certainly.

Would it not be very abſurd, then, if he who has ſtudied nothing all his life but how to die, ſhould be afflicted when death approaches? Would it not be truly inconſiſtent?

Undoubtedly.

Then, Simmias, death is never terrible to a true philoſopher, but always welcome.

The

The company of the body is troubleſome to him on every occaſion; for if he would fulfil the true end of his being, he muſt ſtrive to ſeparate his ſoul from his body, and collect her, as it were, in herſelf. Death is the ſeparation, the long-wiſhed-for deliverance from the ſociety of the body. What abſurdity, therefore, to tremble when that event arrives! We muſt rather ſet out with ſpirits and chearfulneſs for the place where we hope to meet our love, that is, wiſdom, and to get rid of the troubleſome companion who has ſo long been our vexation.

Shall common and ignorant people, when death has robbed them of their miſtreſſes, wives, or children, wiſh for nothing more ardently than to be able to deſcend to the objects of their affection? and yet they who have the certain hopes of meeting their loves no where in brightneſs but in the next life, tremble and be diſmayed when they depart

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on ſuch a journey? There can be nothing more inconſiſtent than a philoſopher who fears death.

Excellent, by heaven, cried Simmias.

To be full of dread and anxiety when death calls us, may it not be taken for a certain mark that we do not love wiſdom, but the body, wealth, and honours?

Moſt certainly.

To whom belongs the virtue, which we call fortitude, more than to philoſophers?

To none more.

And ſhould not ſobriety, the virtue which conſiſts in readineſs to tame his deſires, and in being circumſpect and exemplary in his conduct, be particularly ſtudied by him who does not take care of his body only, but lives according to the precepts of philoſophy?

Neceſſarily ſo.

The fortitude and temperance of all other men,

men, if nearly examined, will appear falſe and equivocal.

How ſo, dear Socrates?

You know that the generality of mankind conſider death to be a very great evil.

I know it well.

If they die with apparent intrepidity, it is from the hope of eſcaping a ſtill greater miſery.

Moſt probably.

All ſuch bravoes, then, are courageous only through fear: but intrepidity produced by fear, is certainly paradoxical.

Is truly abſurd.

So it is with temperance. From intemperance they live ſoberly. This may ſeem to be impoſſible, but nothing is more literally true. They deny themſelves certain pleaſures, that they may enjoy others which they love to a greater exceſs. They maſter one paſſion, becauſe they are ſlaves to another. Queſtion them, and they will tell you,

you, that to yield to the impulſe of our deſires, is intemperance; but the command which they have over certain deſires has been obtained, by making themſelves ſlaves to others ſtill leſs governable. Thus may we not ſay, their temperance is in a manner the effect of intemperance?

Moſt certainly.

Oh, my dear Simmias! To exchange one pleaſure, one pain, or one fear, for another, juſt as we exchange a piece of gold for many pieces of ſilver, is far from being the true road to virtue. The only money which has a true value, and for which we ſhould give all the reſt, is wiſdom — by means of it we can acquire all the other virtues — valour, ſobriety, juſtice, &c. In general wiſdom is the ſource of all the virtues, and gives us the command of our deſires, averſions, and paſſions; but without wiſdom we embrace in exchange for our paſſions only a melancholy ſhadow

of

of virtue which is ſtill ſubſervient to vice, and has nothing in it that is amiable or juſt.

True virtue is a ſanctification of manners, a purification of the heart, no exchange of paſſions. Juſtice, ſobriety, intrepidity, wiſdom, do not conſiſt in the abandonment of one vice for another. Our forefathers, who inſtituted the *Teletes*, or *the feaſts of perfect expiation*, muſt, according to all appearances, have been very wiſe men; for they have given us to underſtand by theſe rites, that he who leaves the world unexpiated and unſanctified muſt ſuffer the ſevereſt puniſhment; but that he who is purified and reconciled will, after his death, dwell amongſt the gods. Thoſe who ſuperintend theſe expiatory myſteries are accuſtomed to ſay, "*there are many Thyrſis bearers, but few are inſpired*;" and, in my opinion, we underſtand by the inſpired, thoſe who have dedicated their life to wiſdom.

dom. I have left nothing undone on my part to become one of that number. Whither my efforts have been fruitleſs, or how far they have ſucceeded, if God is wllling, I ſhall know in a very ſhort time. This is my defence, Simmias and Cebes, and my juſtification why I leave the beſt friends I have on earth without grief, and feel ſo little dread of my approaching departure. I believe I ſhall find where I am going a better life and better friends than thoſe I leave here. If my preſent defence has made a ſtronger impreſſion upon you than that which I uſed before the Judges of Athens, I ſhall die ſatisfied.

Socrates ceaſed ſpeaking, and Cebes began. It is true, Socrates, you have fully juſtified yourſelf; but what you maintain with reſpect to the ſoul muſt ſeem incredible to many; for in general men believe the ſoul cannot exiſt after ſhe has left the body, but is immediately after their ſepa-

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ration diſſolved and annihilated; that ſhe riſes like a vapour out of the body into the air above where ſhe diſſipates, and entirely ceaſes to be. Were it proved that the ſoul was not at all indebted for her being to her union with the body, but could ſeparately exiſt, then the hopes which you entertain would aſſume no little probability; becauſe as certain as it were a better change for us to die, as certainly would the virtuous have juſt ground s to expect a happier life hereafter: but the poſſibility that the ſoul after death can ſtill think, that ſhe can ſtill have a will and reaſoning faculties, is difficult to be comprehended. This, therefore, Socrates, requires to be proved.

You are in the right, Cebes, replied Socrates. But what is to be done? Shall we try whether we can find arguments to eſtabliſh ſuch a proof?

I am very anxious, ſaid Cebes, to know your ſentiments on this ſubject.

At leaſt, replied Socrates, no perſon who hears our converſation, were he even a comic poet, will reproach me for occupying myſelf in trifles, which are uſeleſs or unimportant. The enquiry which we are now to make is rather of ſo ſerious a nature, that every poet will willingly permit us to invoke the aſſiſtance of a Divinity to our undertaking.

Socrates was ſilent, and ſat for ſome time abſorbed in deep thought.

My friends, he ſaid at laſt, an enquiry after truth with a pure heart is the moſt becoming worſhip of the only Deity who can give us aſſiſtance in it. To begin then.

Death, Cebes, is a natural change of human condition; we will therefore enquire what changes happen from it to the body, as well as to the ſoul—Shall we?

Certainly.

Would it not be proper firſt to enquire what

what a natural change is, and how nature effects this change, not only in regard to man, but alſo with reſpect to animals, plants, and inanimate ſubſtances? I think in this way we ſhall come ſooner to our aim.

We muſt therefore firſt look out for an explanation of what change is.

For my part, I think, ſaid Socrates, we ſay a thing has changed when of two oppoſite determinations which belong to it, the one has ceaſed, and the other has actually began to be. For inſtance; beautiful and ugly, juſt and unjuſt, good and bad, day and night, ſleep and waking; are not theſe oppoſite determinations which are poſſible to one and the ſame thing?

Yes.

If a roſe withers and loſes its beautiful form, do we not ſay it has changed?

Certainly.

And if an unjuſt man ſhould change his

conduct, muſt he not aſſume an oppoſite character and become juſt?

Undoubtedly.

Alſo, on the contrary, if by means of a change a thing ſhall begin to exiſt, then it follows that there muſt have been its oppoſite ſtate; ſo it grows day after it has been night, and again night after it has been day. A thing grows beautiful, great, and heavy, after it has been ugly, little, or light; Does it not?

It does.

A change is in general nothing elſe than the ſucceſſive exiſtence of the oppoſite determinations which are poſſible to one thing. Will this explanation be ſufficient? Cebes ſeems to be doubtful.

I have ſome doubt about the word *oppoſite.* I do not conceive that two directly oppoſite ſtates can follow immediately after each other.

Very

Very right, replied Socrates. We ſee that nature, in all her changes, knows how to find an intermediate ſtate, which ſerves her as a paſſage from one ſtate to another, that is oppoſite to it. The night, for inſtance, follows the day by means of the evening twilight, ſo as the day follows the night by means of the morning twilight.

Certainly.

The great in nature becomes little by means of a gradual decreaſe, and the little becomes great by means of a gradual increaſe.

Juſt.

If in certain caſes, alſo, we do not give this intermediate ſtate or paſſage any particular name, yet there is no doubt that it muſt take place, whenever one ſtate makes a change in a natural way to another which is oppoſite to it. For muſt not a change be natural while it is produced by powers that are in nature.

How can it otherwiſe be called natural?

But theſe original powers are always active, always at work; for if they were only to pauſe for one moment, omnipotence alone could wake them to activity again: but that which omnipotence alone can do, ſhall we call that natural?

How can we? ſaid Cebes.

What the natural powers therefore produce now, is the ſubject on which they have been at work from the beginning, for they were never idle, only that their operation has gradually become viſible. The power of nature, for example, which changes the day, is now at work to bring the ſhade of night, after a few hours are paſt, upon our horizon; but ſhe takes her way through midday and evening, which are her intermediate ſteps, from the birth of the day until its departure.

Juſt.

In ſleep itſelf the action of the vital powers

powers tend to occaſion our future waking, as in a waking ſtate they prepare us for returning ſleep.

This is not to be doubted.

And in general, if a ſtate ſhall, in a natural way, follow its oppoſite ſtate, as appears to be the caſe in all natural changes, then the active powers of nature muſt have previouſly been at work, and gradually prepared, though imperceptably, the foregoing ſtate for the change to its ſucceſſive one. Does it not follow from hence, that nature muſt make her paſſage through intermediate ſtates, in changing one ſtate to another, which is oppoſite to it?

Undoubtedly.

Conſider this well, my friend, that afterwards you may not think you granted too much in the beginning. We require, to every natural change, three things: a foregoing ſtate of the thing which is to be changed; one which follows, and is oppo-

ſite to it; and a paſſage, or intermediate ſtate, lying between both, which leads nature the way from the one to the other. Is this granted?

Clearly, ſaid Cebes. I do not imagine any perſon can doubt of theſe truths.

Let us ſee, replied Socrates, if the following propoſitions will appear as undeniable. I think that all changeable things cannot be one moment without changing, and that as time flies forward without ſtopping, and every moment preſſes rapidly on another, it changes at the ſame inſtant, all changeable things, and ſhews them under a rapid ſucceſſion of new forms. Do you not agree with me in this opinion too, Cebes?

It is at leaſt probable.

To me it appears incontrovertible; for every variable thing, if it is a reality, and not a mere idea, muſt be capable of acting, and likewiſe ſuſceptible of external impreſſions. Let it act or ſuffer, in either caſe

change

change will be effected upon it: and as the powers of nature are never at reſt, what could ſtem the ſtream of changes for one moment?

Now I am convinced.

That certain things ſeem for ſome time invariable, is a circumſtance which by no means affects this truth; for does not flame ſeem always the ſame? And yet it is nothing but new ſtreams of fire which iſſue, without intermiſſion, from a burning body, and become inviſible. Colours often appear to us to undergo no variation, and yet new ſtreams of light are inceſſantly iſſuing from the ſun. If we ſearch for truth, however, we muſt conſider things according to their reality, not according to their impreſſion on our ſenſes.

By heaven! replied Cebes, this truth opens to us a new and charming view of the nature of things. My friends, continued Cebes, as he turned towards us, the appli-

cation

cation of this doctrine to the nature of our ſouls, ſeems to promiſe the moſt flattering concluſions.

I have only one other principle to eſtabliſh, ſaid Socrates, before I come to that application. We have granted, that whatever is changeable cannot be one moment without changing: the ſeries of changes, therefore, muſt keep an equal pace with the moments of time.—Now conſider well, Cebes: Does one moment of time follow another in an uninterrupted chain of ſucceſſion, or not?

Your queſtion I do not comprehend, ſaid Cebes.

Examples will make my meaning more clear. The ſurface of a ſtill water ſeems to be one continued thing, and every little particle of water appears to have limits which are common to thoſe that ſurround it; whereas, on the contrary, a hill of ſand conſiſts of many ſeparate grains, every one of

of which has its own particular limits — Is not this clear?

This is to be comprehended.

If I pronounce the word Cebes, does not one ſyllable follow another, between which there is no third to be found?

This is true.

The word Cebes, therefore, is not continued, but conſiſts of two ſyllables, one of which follows the other in an interrupted connection, and each of them has its own limits.

Right.

But are there, in the idea which my mind forms of this word, any parts which have their own limits?

I think not.

And with truth; for the parts of a compound idea are ſo united together, that we can diſtinguiſh no limits between them ſo as to be able to ſay where one finiſhes, and another begins: they make, therefore, altogether one continued whole, as, on the contrary, every

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ſyllable has its diſtinct limits, and two or more of them, which form a word, follow in a diſcontinued ſeries upon each other.

This is perfectly clear.

I aſk, therefore, with reſpect to time. Is it to be compared with a word, or pronounced when with the idea of it? Do its moments follow in a continued, or in a diſcontinued ſeries, upon each other?

In a continued ſeries, replied Cebes.

Certainly, ſaid Simmias: for by the ſucceſſion of our ideas we learn what time is. How is it poſſible, therefore, that the nature of ſequence in time, and in our ideas, ſhould not be the ſame?

The parts of time, rejoined Socrates, exhibit, therefore, a continued ſeries, and have common limits.

Preciſely.

The ſmalleſt portion of time even, is ſuch a ſeries of moments, and may be ſubdivided into ſtill ſmaller portions, which

ſtill preſerve the ſame properties of time—May it not?

So it ſeems.

There are, therefore, no two moments ſo near to each other, between which there cannot be imagined a third.

This follows from what has already been granted.

Do not all the motions, and, in general, all changes in nature, keep an equal pace with time?

They do.

They follow, therefore, like time in a continued ſeries, upon each other.

Very right.

There cannot be, therefore, two ſtates ſo near to each other, between which there cannot be conceived a third?

So it ſeems.

It certainly appears to our ſenſes as if the changes of things went backwards, for our ſenſes do not perceive them but at inter-

vals;

vals; nature, notwithſtanding, never alters her courſe, but changes things gradually, and in a continued ſeries, one after another: the ſmalleſt portion of this ſeries is itſelf a ſeries of changes; and however cloſe the ſucceſſion of one ſtate may ſeem upon another, there is always an intermediate ſtep, or paſſage, between them which links them together, as if it led nature the way from the one to the other.

I comprehend all this very well, ſaid Cebes.

Now, my friends, ſaid Socrates, it is time to draw nearer our aim. We have gathered together arguments to diſpute for our eternity, and I promiſe myſelf a certain victory. But ſhall we not, like generals in war before an engagement, review our forces, that we may know where our ſtrength or weakneſs lies?

Appollodorus begged earneſtly for a ſhort recapitulation.

The propoſitions, ſaid Socrates, the truth of which we no longer doubt, are the following:

In the firſt place, to every natural change, three things are requiſite: Firſt, a ſtate of a variable thing which ſhall ceaſe; ſecondly, another ſtate, which is to occupy its place; thirdly, an intermediate ſtate, or the paſſage by which the variation does not ſuddenly, but gradually follow.

Second, What is changeable does not remain one moment without being actually changed.

Third, Time paſſes in a continued ſeries of parts; and there are not two moments ſo near to each other, between which we cannot conceive a third.

Fourth, The ſucceſſion of changes correſponds with the ſucceſſion of the parts of time, and is therefore ſo continued that no two ſtates are ſo near to each other, between which we cannot imagine a third.

Are

Are we not agreed upon theſe points?

Yes.

Life and death, my dear Cebes, ſaid Socrates, are oppoſite ſtates, are they not?

Certainly.

And dying is the tranſition from life to death?

Exactly.

This great change, probably, concerns the ſoul as well as the body; for in this life they have the moſt intimate connection with each other.

According to all appearances, ſaid Cebes, they have.

What happens to the body after this great revolution, is taught us by obſervation. For what has extenſion continues to be preſent to our ſenſes; but how, where, or what the ſoul may be, after this life, can only be conjectured by reaſon, as the ſoul loſes at death the means of being manifeſt to our ſenſes.

Cer-

Certainly.

Shall we not, my friend, firſt follow what is viſible through all its changes, and afterwards compare it, as far as poſſible, with what is inviſible?

This ſeems to be the beſt method which we can adopt, replied Cebes.

In every animal body there are combinations and ſeparations continually taking place, which contribute partly to the preſervation, partly to the deſtruction of the animal machine. Death and life, at the firſt breath of animals, begin a war with each other.

This daily experience ſhews us.

What appellation do we give to that ſtate, Cebes, in which all changes that happen in the animal machine tend more to the preſervation than the deſtruction of the body? Do we not call it health?

Certainly.

On the contrary, the ſtate in which the changes tend to the deſtruction of the animal machine, do we not call it ſickneſs, or old age, which is natural ſickneſs?

Juſt.

It approaches by imperceptible degrees. At laſt the ſtructure falls to pieces, and diſſolves into the ſmalleſt particles. But what farther change happens? Do theſe particles ceaſe to act and ſuffer? Are they entirely loſt?

Apparently not, ſaid Cebes.

Impoſſible, replied Socrates. If the concluſion which we have juſt now drawn is true: for is there a medium between exiſting and not exiſting?

None at all.

To be, and not to be, therefore, muſt be two ſtates which immediately follow, and are the neareſt to each other: but we have ſeen that nature cannot produce any changes which take place ſuddenly, and without an

inter-

intermediate ſtate. Do you remember this to have been granted?

Very well, ſaid Cebes.

Nature, then can neither create nor annihilate.

Juſt.

By the diſſolution of the animal body, therefore, nothing can be loſt. The parts that have fallen to pieces continue to exiſt, to act, to ſuffer, to increaſe and decreaſe, to be united and ſeparated until they become, by innumerable tranſitions, parts of another compoſition. Some of them become duſt, others moiſture, this riſes in the air, that paſſes into a plant, from the plant to a living animal, and leaves the animal to be the nouriſhment of a worm. Is not this confirmed by experience?

Entirely ſo, anſwered Cebes and Simmias together.

Thus we ſee, my friends, that death and life are not ſo ſeparated in nature as

they appear to the ſenſes: they are members of a continued ſeries of changes which are connected wirh each other in the cloſeſt manner. There is no moment of time at which we could, ſtrictly ſpeaking, ſay, *now the animal dies*; *now it grows ſick*; *now it recovers health*: for although our ſenſes lead us to imagine that theſe changes are ſeparated, as they do not become viſible to us till after a certain interval of time: it is ſufficient, however, for us to know, that they cannot be ſo in fact.

I recollect an example which will throw light upon this argument. Our eyes, which are confined to a certain tract of the earth, diſtinguiſh very clearly morning, midday, evening, and midnight; and theſe portions of time appear ſeparate and diſtinct from each other. But whoever conſiders the whole earth, knows perfectly that the changes of day and night follow each other uninterruptedly, and that all moments of

time

time therefore, morning, midday, evening, and midnight, are joined inſeparably together.

Homer has the liberty, as a poet only, of aſſigning different times of the day to the occupations of his gods; as if the day could appear to any one who is not confined to a ſmall diſtrict of the earth, to be divided into days and nights, and that it was not at all times morning as much as evening. It is permitted to the poets to take appearances for truth: but, according to truth, Aurora, with her roſy fingers, muſt for ever hold the gates of heaven open, and inceſſantly train her yellow cloak from one place to another; ſo that the gods, if they would ſleep in the night time only, are either perpetually, or never aſleep.

Neither can the days of the week, therefore, be diſtinguiſhed from each other; for time, whoſe moments are continued, and coherent together, can only be divided into

ſeparate and diſtinct parts by the imagination and the illuſion of the ſenſes; but the underſtanding ſees very well that we muſt not ſtop where no actual ſeparation or diviſion is to be found. Is this comprehenſible to you, my friend?

Perfectly ſo, replied Simmias.

With reſpect to the life and death of animals and plants, the caſe is not different. In the courſe of the changes which the ſame thing undergoes, our ſenſes make us think an epoch commences at the time when a thing becomes palpable to them, as a plant, or an animal; which we call the growth of the plant, or the birth of the animal. A ſecond period or point of time is when the animal or plant ceaſes, according to our ſenſes, to have any motion which we call death; and a third when the animal or plant at laſt conſumes and grows inviſible, we call the decay and diſſolution of the animal or plant. But in nature all

theſe changes are members of an uninterrupted chain, a gradual developement and envelopement of the ſame thing, as it clothes and unfolds itſelf in forms without number. Is there any thing doubtful here?

Not in the leaſt.

When we ſay, continued Socrates, the ſoul dies, we muſt take one of theſe two things for granted: either her ſtrength and power, her operations and ſufferings, ceaſe all at once; they diſappear in an inſtant: or ſhe ſuſtains like the body, gradual and imperceptible changes, which proceed in a continued ſeries; and in this ſeries there is a period when ſhe is no longer any human ſoul, but becomes ſomething elſe, as the body, after innumerable variations, ceaſes to be a human body, and is changed into duſt, into a plant, or into a part of another animal. Can you imagine any other way in which the ſoul may die?

No otherwiſe, replied Cebes, than ſuddenly, or by degrees.

Well, ſaid Socrates, thoſe who ſtill doubt if the ſoul is mortal, may chuſe whether they would maintain that at death ſhe diſappears ſuddenly, or ceaſes by degrees to be what ſhe was. Will Cebes not ſtand in their place, and take this choice upon him?

The firſt queſtion, ſaid Cebes, is, whether they would be content with ſuch an advocate? My council, therefore, is to conſider both caſes: for if they ſhould not be ſatisfied with my choice, and declare themſelves on the contrary ſide, to-morrow, perhaps, there would be nobody here who could refute them.

My dear Cebes, replied Socrates, Greece is a vaſt empire, and among the Barbarians even, there are many to whom this enquiry muſt be intereſting. Let us, however, examine both caſes. The firſt was, if

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the ſoul periſhes ſuddenly, and diſappears in a moment? this kind of death is poſſible in itſelf; but can it be produced by nature?

By no means, if what before was granted is true, that nature cannot effect any annihilation.

And have we not admitted this with juſtice? ſaid Socrates. Between exiſting and not exiſting there is a terrible chaſm which nature, acting by degrees, cannot at once overleap.

Very right, ſaid Cebes; but may ſhe not be annihilated by the ſupernatural power of the deity?

O my dear friend, exclaimed Socrates, how ſecure and happy might we be, had we nothing to dread but the immediate hand of heaven? What we have to fear is, whether the nature of our ſoul may not make her liable to death in herſelf, and this fear we are now to endeavour to diſpel by reaſon; but

but if God, you ſaid, the all-good creator and preſerver of things, will deſtroy her by a miracle? No, Cebes; let us rather be afraid that the ſun will change us to ice, than fear that the being of all goodneſs will commit one of the worſt actions, annihilation by a miracle.

I did not conſider, ſaid Cebes, that my objection was ſo near a blaſphemy.

The firſt kind of death, therefore, that is a ſudden annihilation, we need not be afraid of, for it is impoſſible in nature. But let us conſider this circumſtance again, my friends. Suppoſe it was not impoſſible, the queſtion then is, when? at what time ſhould the ſoul diſappear? apparently at that time when the body does not any longer want her, in the moment of death.

In all probability, ſaid Cebes.

But we have ſeen that there is no diſtinct moment when we may ſay, Now the animal dies. The diſſolution of the

animal

animal machine has began long before its effects became viſible; for it never wants ſuch animal motions as are operating againſt the preſervation of the whole, only that they increaſe gradually, till at laſt all the motions of the parts ceaſe to be directed to one common aim, but, on the contrary, each has adopted its own particular aim; then the machine is diſſolved.

This happens ſo inſenſibly and in ſo continued a proceſs, that every ſtate may be called a boundary, which is common to the preceding and ſucceeding ſtates; an effect of the preceding, and cauſe of the ſucceeding ſtate. Has not this been already confeſſed?

It has.

If the death of the body, therefore, is alſo the death of the ſoul, we cannot find a moment in which we may ſay, now the ſoul diſappears; but in proportion as the motions of the parts of the body or machine

ceaſe

ceaſe to co-operate towards one aim, the ſoul muſt decreaſe in power and internal activity. Does not this appear to you equally probable?

Entirely ſo.

But attend to the ſtrange turn our enquiry has taken. It ſeems like one of the ſtatues of my great grandfather, Dedalus, to preſent itſelf by means of ſome internal ſpring work, under a new form.

How ſo?

We have taken for granted, that our adverſaries were afraid the ſoul might be annihilated ſuddenly, and we were to enquire whether this fear was well founded or not. We have, therefore, examined in what moment ſhe might be annihilated, and this enquiry has brought us upon the reverſe of the propoſition, namely, that ſhe was not ſuddenly annihilated, but decreaſed gradually in her internal ſtrength and activity.

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So much the better, anſwered Cebes. Our firſt opinion, therefore, apparently refutes itſelf.

We have now, then, only to enquire whether the internal power of the ſoul does not decreaſe as gradually and inſenſibly as the parts of the machine ſeparate themſelves.

Exactly.

Let us follow theſe two companions, the body and ſoul, who are ſaid to have every thing in common, even death, to ſee what becomes of them at laſt. As long as the body continues healthy, as long as the general motions of the machine tend to the well being and preſervation of the whole, the organs of ſenſation retain their juſt nature; the ſoul poſſeſſes alſo her full power, feels, thinks, loves, abhors, conceives, and wills — Does ſhe not?

Undoubtedly.

The body grows ſick. A manifeſt diſcordance takes place among the motions which go on in the machine, as a great many of them do not any longer co-operate towards the preſervation of the whole, but, on the contrary, have different and oppoſite aims.

And the ſoul?

As experience teaches us, grows at the ſame time more weakly, feels diſordered, thinks falſely, and is often made to act againſt her will.

To continue. The body dies; that is to ſay, all its motions appear no longer to tend to the life and preſervation of the whole; but internally a few feeble motions of life may ſtill remain and procure ſome dark ideas to the ſoul; to thoſe, therefore, the power of the ſoul muſt ſtill be confined until it periſhes entirely.

Certainly.

Corruption follows. The parts which

till

till now had one common aim, and made the body a ſingle machine, take now quite different aims, become parts of entirely different machines; and the ſoul, Cebes, what ſhall we do with her? where ſhall we leave her? Her machine is corrupted, is mouldered. The parts of it which are yet exiſting are no more hers, nor any longer form one whole ſuſceptible of animation. There are no longer any members of the ſenſes or organs of ſenſation left, by means of which ſhe could be brought to any kind of feeling. Shall every thing, therefore, be waſte in her? Shall all her ſenſations, thoughts, imagination, deſires, averſions, inclinations, and paſſions, diſappear, and not leave the leaſt trace behind?

Impoſſible, ſaid Cebes. What would this be but total annihilation? and no annihilation, as we have already ſeen, is in the power of nature.

What ſhall we conclude then, my friends? The ſoul cannot be totally loſt; for the laſt ſtep, if we place it as far off as poſſible, would be a leap from exiſtence to nothing: a tranſition which is inconſiſtent with the nature of a ſingle being, or the general ſyſtem of beings. She muſt therefore endure and exiſt for ever: if ſhe exiſts, ſhe muſt act and ſuffer; if ſhe acts and ſuffers, ſhe muſt have conceptions; for to feel, think, and will, are the only actions and ſufferings which can belong to a thinking being. The ideas always take their beginning from the impreſſions on the ſenſes, and from whence ſhall theſe impreſſions ariſe, if there are no members of the ſenſes preſent?

Nothing ſeems more true, ſaid Cebes, than this ſeries of concluſions, and yet they lead to a palpable contradiction.

One of theſe two caſes muſt happen, continued Socrates; either the ſoul muſt

be

be annihilated, or ſhe muſt have conceptions after the decay of the body. Mankind are much inclined to think both caſes impoſſible; yet the firſt or the laſt muſt take place. Let us try to find a way out of this labyrinth. On the one hand, our ſoul cannot be annihilated by natural means. On what is this impoſſibility founded? Do not, my friends, think it laborious to follow me through thorny paths; they will lead us upon one of the moſt charming proſpects that ever delighted the mind of man. Anſwer me. Has not a juſt conception of power and natural change brought us to this concluſion, That nature cannot effect any annihilation?

Certainly.

On this ſide, therefore, there is abſolutely no opening to be expected. We muſt conſequently return. The ſoul cannot periſh; ſhe muſt, after death, endure, act, ſuffer, and conceive. Here the impoſ-

ſibility of our ſoul having ideas without receiving impreſſions from external objects, ſtands in our way. But what voucher have we for this impoſſibility? Is it not our experience alone that, in this life, we were never able to think without theſe impreſſions?

Nothing elſe.

But have we any right to extend experience beyond the borders of this life, and to deny nature the poſſibility of letting our ſoul think without this organized body? Tell me, Simmias, would we not think it ridiculous if a man, who had never left the walls of Athens, ſhould conclude from his own limited experience, that day and night, ſummer and winter, were ſubject to the ſame revolutions over all other parts of the globe as they are with us?

Nothing would be more abſurd.

If a child could think in the mother's womb, do you imagine it would be poſ-

ſible

ſible to perſuade it, that it would one day be diſengaged from its tie there, and enjoy the benign light of the ſun? Would it not rather, in that ſituation, conceive ſuch an event impoſſible?

Moſt probably.

And do we ſhort-ſighted beings judge more conſiſtently, if, while impriſoned in this life, we will decide what is poſſible for nature to do after it? One look into the inexhauſtible variety of her works will convince us of the unreaſonableneſs of ſuch a concluſion. How poor, how weak would ſhe be, if her power was not greater than our experience!

Juſt.

We can therefore with much propriety reject any appeal to our experience, after having oppoſed to it the abſolute impoſſibility of the ſoul being annihilated. Homer, with juſtice, makes his hero exclaim: "Certainly in the houſe of Orcus the ſoul

"ſtill continues to think, although no body "attends it there." The idea which Homer gives us of Orcus, and of the ſhades which deſcend there, ſeems not altogether conſiſtent with truth; but this is certain, my friends; our ſoul triumphs over death and corruption, and leaves the body behind to fulfil, in a thouſand various ways, the views of the Almighty, while ſhe riſes above the duſt, according to other natural, though ſuperterreſtrial laws, to contemplate the works of the Creator, and to form ideas of the virtue and power of an infinite being. But conſider, my friends; if the ſoul lives after the death of the body, and thinks, will ſhe not then, as well as in her former ſtate, ſeek for happineſs?

Moſt probably, ſaid Simmias; but I can no longer truſt to my own conjectures, therefore wiſh to be favoured with your ſentiments.

My

My ſentiments, replied Socrates, are theſe: — If the ſoul is able to think, ſhe muſt have a ſucceſſion of ideas, ſome willingly, others not ſo; that is, ſhe muſt have a will: if ſhe has a will, at what can it aim but at the higheſt degree of welfare and happineſs?

This was admitted by them all.

But, continued Socrates, in what can the well-being of a ſpirit, which has no longer any concern with the body, conſiſt? Meat and drink, love and ſenſual pleaſures, can no longer conſtitute her deſires: what in this life pleaſes the feelings, the palate, the eye, and the ear, will then be below her notice. Perhaps ſhe ſcarcely retains a faint and rueful remembrance of the ſenſual enjoyments of this life. Will ſhe ſtrive after the objects of thoſe paſſions ſhe had when ſhe was attended by the body?

As little as ſenſible men do after the playthings of children.

Will great riches be the object of her wiſhes?

How could that be poſſible in a ſtate where no property can be enjoyed?

Ambition is a paſſion which it would appear may ſtill adhere to the departed ſoul; for it ſeems to have very little connection with the neceſſities of the body: but to what can the ſpirit give that preference which ſhould do it honour? Certainly not to power, riches, or nobleneſs of birth; for it leaves all thoſe follies behind with the body on earth.

Aſſuredly.

There remains nothing, therefore, but wiſdom, the love of virtue, knowledge, and truth, which can diſtinguiſh and elevate her above her fellow creatures. Beſides this noble ambition, ſhe may ſtill taſte the agreeable ſenſations ſhe enjoyed upon earth, from beauty, order, ſymmetry, and perfection; as theſe belong ſo eſſentially to

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the nature of a ſpirit that they never can leave it. He, therefore, who on earth has taken care of his ſoul, who has exerciſed himſelf in the ſtudy of virtue, wiſdom, and true beauty, may entertain the greateſt hopes of continuing in ſuch contemplations after death, and of approaching ſtep by ſtep to the moſt elevated Being, who is the ſource of all wiſdom, the compaſs of all perfection, and pre-eminently beauty itſelf. Call to your memory, my friends, thoſe tranſporting moments which you have enjoyed ſo often while your ſouls were contemplating a heavenly beauty, when you forgot life and its neceſſities, and gave yourſelves up entirely to ſenſations, independent of it. What emotions, what inſpiration aroſe from them! Nothing but the nearer preſence of the divinity could produce thoſe raviſhing feelings. Every idea of ſpiritual excellence, therefore, gives the ſoul a glance of the being of the

deity; every thing beautiful, regular, or perfect, which we remark and admire, is but a weaker impreſſion of him who is ſelf-ſubſiſting beauty, order, and perfection. I remember, on a former occaſion, to have expatiated on ſuch ideas, and ſhall for the preſent, therefore, only draw theſe concluſions from them. If it is true that, after this life, wiſdom and virtue are to be the objects of our ambition, and the ſtudy of ſpiritual beauty, order, and perfection, ſhall conſtitute our happineſs, our exiſtence will be nothing but an uninterrupted contemplation of the deity; a heavenly joy which, however little we now comprehend of it, will amply reward the ſteady efforts of the virtuous. What are all the pains of this life compared to the hope of ſuch an eternity! What is poverty, contempt, or the moſt ignominious death, if we can thereby prepare ourſelves for ſuch a change. No, my friends; he who knows that he is up-

right in his conduct cannot poſſibly be troubled when he ſets out on ſo happy a journey; he only who, in this life, has offended God and man, who ſtudies the gratification of brutal pleaſures, who has received delight from the deified honour of ſacrificing human victims, and rejoiced at their miſeries, may tremble on the threſhold of death, as he can caſt no look on the paſt without repentance, nor any on the future without deſpair. But as I, thank God, have no ſuch reproaches to make myſelf, as I have ſearched for truth unceaſingly through life, and loved virtue above all other things, I am overjoyed to hear the voice of the Almighty, who calls me hence to enjoy in the pure light of heaven, that which I have ſtriven to know in this orb of darkneſs. Conſider well, my friends, the grounds of my hopes; if you think them well founded, congratulate me on my approaching departure,

and

and live ſo as that when death calls he may not ſurpriſe or drag you away by force. Perhaps the deity will aſſemble us again near himſelf, to taſte ſacred and pure friendſhip in each other's arms. Oh, with what tranſport ſhall we then embrace and remember the preſent day!

PART

PART II.

OUR teacher ceaſed ſpeaking, and walked up and down the priſon abſorbed in thought. We all ſat ſilent meditating on his diſcourſe; Cebes and Simmias only were talking in a low voice to each other. Socrates turned round to them, and ſaid, Why ſo ſoftly, my friends? Let us hear whether any part of my reaſoning may not be ſtrengthened; I know very well that the ſubject requires ſtill farther illuſtration before it can be perfectly clear. If you were engaged in any other diſcourſe, let me not interrupt you; but if you were ſtill conſidering the ſubject we have juſt now had under diſcuſſion, declare your objections and doubts, that we may jointly endeavour

deavour either to ſolve them, or doubt with you. Simmias ſaid, I muſt confeſs, Socrates, we have objections, and long ago we preſſed each other to propoſe them to you, as we wiſhed to have them removed. But we are unwilling to be troubleſome to you in your preſent ſituation.

When Socrates heard this he ſmiled, and ſaid, How difficult, O Simmias, will it be to perſuade other men that I do not think my proſpects uncertain when you are not yet convinced of it? and are afraid that I ſhould be leſs patient and communicative now than I have been heretofore. We are told that the ſwans, when they are near their end, ſing more pleaſingly than at any other time of their life. If theſe birds, as it is believed, are conſecrated to Apollo, that God, I would ſay, lets them feel, in the hour of death, a foretaſte of the happineſs of the life to come, and that they ſing from the joy of this ſenſation; the

ſame

ſame cauſe operates upon me. I am a prieſt of the ſame God, and he has impreſſed on my ſoul ſome ſenſation of its happineſs after death, which drives away all melancholy from me, and makes me more tranquil and ſecure at my departing moments than ever I was during my life. Declare, therefore, your doubts and objections without reſerve, and demand all the explanations which you wiſh for, and I can give you, as long as the eleven men permit it.

Well, replied Simmias, I will make a beginning, and Cebes may follow me. I deſire in the firſt place, however, one thing to be remembered, which is, that if I ſpring any doubts of the immortality of the ſoul, I do not mean to apply them againſt the truth of this doctrine at large, but againſt ſuch a proof as the lights of reaſon only afford, or rather againſt that way which you, Socrates, have choſen to convince us of it. In other reſpects I embrace this comfort-

comforting doctrine with all my heart, not only as it has been propoſed by you, but as it has been handed down to us from the eldeſt philoſophers, thoſe falſities, which have been added by the poets and inventors of fables, excepted. Where our ſoul finds no grounds of certainty, ſhe ought to adopt ſuch opinions as elevate and ennoble her nature, and which, like veſſels on the fathomleſs ocean, conduct her with a ſerene ſky ſecurely over the waves of this life.

I feel that I cannot contradict the doctrine of immortality, and the rewards due to virtue after death, without ſtarting innumerable difficulties, and ſeeing every thing I thought good and true robbed of its certainty of nature. If our ſoul is mortal, reaſon is a dream which Jupiter has ſent to deceive a ſet of wretches; and virtue loſes all the ſplendour which makes it godly in our eyes. Then whatever we think beautiful, ſublime, or moral, is no impreſſion of God's

accom-

accompliſhments; for nothing periſhable can imbibe or reflect the ſmalleſt ray of his perfection. Then we are ſent here like the beaſts to look about for food and die. Then, in a few days, it will be the ſame thing whether I have been an ornament or a ſhame to ſociety; whether I have been endeavouring to increaſe the number of the happy or the miſerable. Then the moſt reprobate of mortals has the power of withdrawing himſelf from under the dominion of heavenly power, and a dagger can cut aſunder the chain which links men to God. If our ſpirit is periſhable, the wiſeſt legiſlators of mankind have cheated us, or themſelves: the whole human race have unanimouſly reſolved to ſupport a falſehood, and the impoſtors who invented it: a ſtate of free-thinking beings is nothing more than a herd of ſenſeleſs cattle, and man — I ſhudder at the thought of conſidering him in this point of

degradation—is deprived of the hopes of immortality. This WONDERFUL creature is the moſt miſerable animal on earth; and, tó crown its misfortune, muſt reflect on its condition, fear death, and deſpair. Not an all-good God who delights in the happineſs of his creatures, but a malignant being who enjoys calamity, muſt have endued man with pre-eminences that make him deſerve commiſeration. It is impoſſible to expreſs the keen anguiſh which ſeizes my ſoul, when I put myſelf in the place of thoſe wretched beings who dread annihilation. The perpetual apprehenſion of death muſt ſicken all their pleaſures. If they delight in friendſhip, if they acknowledge truth, if they reſpect virtue, if they honour their Creator, and are charmed with beauty and perfection, that terrible thought annihilation ſtill riſes like a ſpectre before the ſoul, and chequers every ſcene of joy with deſpair. A breath, a beat of the pulſe,

deprives

deprives them of all their glories. The god-admiring being putrifies, moulders, and becomes duſt. I thank the gods for having delivered me from this fear, which, like the ſtings of ſcorpions, would have interrupted all the happineſs of my life.

My ideas of the deity, of virtue, of the worth of man, and of the relation in which he ſtands to God, do not permit me to entertain any farther doubts of my deſtiny. The reliance on a future life ſolves all thoſe difficulties, and brings thoſe truths, of which we are convinced in a manifold manner, again into harmony. It juſtifies the deity, reſtores to virtue its nobility, to beauty its luſtre, to pleaſure its allurements, ſoftens miſery, and makes even the troubles of this life ſacred in our ſight, while we compare the brevity of their duration with the perfect and perpetual felicity to which they lead.—A doctrine which agrees with ſo many known and decided truths, which reconciles ſuch

a number of contradictions to our mind, we can readily adopt, and it hardly wants any farther proofs; for if none of those reasons, taken singly, carries with it the greatest degree of certainty, yet, when combined, they convince us so forcibly, that every doubt and apprehension is removed by them. The difficulty, my dear Socrates, is to have all those proofs constantly present to the mind, that we may distinctly consider their harmony. We want their assistance at all times, and in all circumstances of this life; but all times and circumstances of life do not allow us that calm collected state of the soul, which is necessary to remember them, and feel the truth which results from their united impression: as often as we lose sight of any part of them in our imagination, or that part is but faintly represented, truth loses her strength, and the quiet of our soul is endangered.

But if the way which you, Socrates, point out

out to us leads through a ſimple ſeries of incontrovertible principles to truth, we may hope to ſecure to ourſelves a perpetual proof and conſciouſneſs of it, and always feel it in full force. A chain of diſtinct connected reaſoning is eaſier impreſſed on the memory than that combination or aſſemblage of truths which, in ſome meaſure, require a particular diſpoſition of mind for the recollection of them. For this reaſon I have no objection to ſet before you all the doubts which the moſt ſtrenuous advocates againſt immortality can propoſe.

If I have underſtood you well, your proof was as follows: The ſoul and body exiſt together in the moſt intimate connection; the latter is gradually diſſolved into its parts; the former muſt either be annihilated, or preſerve ideas. By natural powers nothing can be annihilated; our ſoul, therefore, can never ceaſe to have ideas.

But ſuppoſe I ſhould prove, by ſimilar

reaſons, that harmony muſt remain after the lyre which has produced it is broken to pieces, or that the ſymmetry of a building muſt exiſt after the ſtones of it are pulled aſunder and reduced to powder. The harmony, as well as the ſymmetry, I would ſay, is ſomething; nobody will deny that. The firſt is intimately connected with the lyre, the other with the building; neither will any one deny me that. Let us compare the lyre or the building with the body, and the harmony or ſymmetry with the ſoul; it appears we have proved that the harmony muſt endure longer than the ſtrings, the ſymmetry longer than the building. But with reſpect to harmony and ſymmetry, this concluſion is highly abſurd; for as they ſhew the manner and origin of their compoſition, they cannot exiſt longer than the compoſition itſelf.

Of health we may alſo maintain, that it is a property of the organiſed body, but exiſts

exiſts only while the action of its members tend to the preſervation of the whole: it is a quality of the compoſition which vaniſhes when the compoſition is diſſolved into parts. The ſame caſe apparently holds with life. The life of a plant ceaſes whenever the motion of its parts tend to the diſſolution of the whole. A beaſt has pre-eminence over a plant in the organs of the ſenſes and feeling; and man, laſtly, has pre-eminence over beaſts from reaſon. Perhaps the feelings of the beaſt, and reaſon in man, are dependent on the compoſition, like life, health, harmony, &c. which cannot, from their nature, endure longer than the compoſition, from which they are inſeparable. If the art of the ſtructure is ſufficient to give life and health to a plant, then a finer art may give feelings to animals, and reaſon to man. We feeble creatures do not comprehend either the firſt, or the laſt. The texture of the ſmalleſt beaſt ſurpaſſes

all human underſtanding, and involves in it myſteries which will mock the ingenuity and penetration of our lateſt poſterity; yet we would decide what can or cannot be effected by organization. Shall we ſet boundaries to the omnipotence or wiſdom of the Creator? One of theſe we would limit, if we inſignificant beings would maintain that the Almighty could create no power to feel, or to think by the formation of the fineſt matter.

You ſee, my dear Socrates, what is ſtill wanting to give your ſcholars full and perfect conviction. If the ſoul is ſomething which the Almighty has created, independent of the body, though connected with it, then it is certain that the ſoul will continue to endure and have conceptions after death. But who can warrant to us the juſtice of this ſuppoſition? Experience rather inclines us to favour the contrary opinion. The power of thinking is formed with the

body,

body, grows with it, and ſuffers equal changes with it. Every ſickneſs of the body is productive of weakneſs, diſorder, and incapacity, in the ſoul: the functions of the brain, and inteſtines in particular, have ſo cloſe a connection with the operation of the powers of thinking, that we are much inclined to trace both to one ſource; and on that account to explain what is inviſible, by that which is viſible; in the ſame manner as we aſcribe light and heat to the ſame cauſe, becauſe they agree ſo much in their changes.

Simmias was ſilent, and Cebes began to ſpeak. Our friend Simmias, ſaid Cebes, ſeems only to wiſh to ſecure the poſſeſſion of what has been promiſed to him; but I, my dear Socrates, wiſh for more than you have promiſed. Although your proofs remove all our objections, the utmoſt concluſion which can be drawn from them is, that the ſoul continues to exiſt after death, and

to have conceptions. But how does ſhe exiſt? Perhaps in a ſwoon or faint, or as in ſleep. The ſoul of a man aſleep cannot be entirely void of ideas. The objects around him muſt operate in weaker impreſſions on his ſenſes, and excite in his ſoul ſome feeble ſenſations; otherwiſe ſtronger impreſſions could not wake him. But what ſort of conceptions do they yield him? a dark feeling as it were, without knowledge of himſelf, or juſt recollection; a ſtate without reaſoning powers, in which we do not remember the paſt, and which we cannot remember in future. Should our ſoul in ſeparating from the body ſink into a ſtate of ſleep or ſwooning, and not awake again, what would we gain by ſuch a continuation of her exiſtence? A ſtate of being, without reaſoning powers, is very far diſtant from that immortality which you hope for; it is farther removed from it than the happineſs of an animal from the happineſs

of

of a ſpirit, which is able to know God. If that which may happen to our ſoul hereafter gives us a concern, and excites our hopes and fears now whilſt we have knowledge of ourſelves, we muſt retain in another life the ſame ſelf-knowledge, and remember what has paſt here. In order to be capable of judging of the future ſtate of our exiſtence, we muſt be able to compare what we are now, with what we may be then. Beſides, if I have underſtood you well, my dear Socrates, you expect after death a better life, greater powers, and enlightenment of the underſtanding, nobler and more exalted feelings of the mind, than have been the lot of the happieſt being of this earth. On what is this flattering, pleaſing hope founded? The want of a clear knowledge of herſelf is a ſtate which ſeems not impoſſible to our ſoul. Of this we are convinced by daily experience. What if ſuch a ſtate ſhould continue for ever!

It is true you have already ſhewn us that all changeable things muſt inceſſantly be changing; and from that doctrine I gather hopes that my apprehenſions are without foundation: for if the ſeries of changes which are to happen to our ſoul are infinite, then it is highly probable that ſhe is not deſtined to ſink, in her ſpiritual excellence, through all eternity, and to loſe ſtill more and more of her god-like virtue and beauty; but that ſhe will, at leaſt, in time raiſe herſelf up again, reſume that ſtation in which ſhe ſtood before in the creation, and be a contemplator of the works of God. More than a high degree of probability is not neceſſary to ſupport us in the preſumption, that a better life awaits the virtuous. In the mean time, my dear Socrates, I wiſh to hear theſe points touched upon by you, becauſe I know that all the words you will utter to-day muſt imprint themſelves deeply

on

on our minds, and live for ever in our memories.

We all liſtened attentively, and, as we confeſſed to each other afterwards, not without extreme anxiety to hear not only objections ſtarted to a doctrine of which we thought ourſelves ſo much convinced, but doubt and uncertainty thrown over every other truth in nature, which we had hitherto admitted and believed; for we became apprehenſive that we either did not poſſeſs powers ſufficient to diſtinguiſh truth from error, or that they could not be ſeparated from each other.

EXECRATES.

I do not wonder, my dear Phædon, that you were alarmed by the obſervations of Simmias. I have been affected in the ſame manner by hearing your recital of them. The reaſoning made uſe of by Socrates had entirely convinced and inſpired me with confidence that I ſhould never again entertain a doubt on the ſubject; but the objections

tions of Simmias have renewed all my fears and uncertainty. I remember I was formerly of opinion, that the power of thinking was a qualification of the compoſition, and had its origin in the fine organization or harmony of the parts. But tell me, Phædon, what impreſſion thoſe objections made on Socrates: Was he equally diſconcerted by them, or did he hear them with his uſual calmneſs of temper? And did his anſwers reſtore perfect conviction and peace to your minds? All this I wiſh to know from you as particularly as poſſible.

PHÆDON.

If I ever admired Socrates, it was certainly upon this occaſion. That he was prepared to make a reply, was no more than we expected. What won our admiration moſt was, the mild and patient aſpect with which he liſtened to all the arguments and reaſoning of thoſe young people: then how

how quickly he remarked the impreſſion which their objections had made upon us! and haſtened to our relief.

EXECRATES.

How was this?

PHÆDON.

I will tell you. I ſat on his right hand, next the bed, upon a low chair; he ſat a little higher than me. He laid his hand upon my head and ſmoothed down my hair, which was hanging in my neck, as he was accuſtomed to play with my curls. To-morrow, Phædon, he ſaid, you may ſtrew theſe locks over the grave of a friend. —In all probability, I anſwered, I may.— Oh, do it not, he ſaid.—Then why not, I aſked. — To-day, he replied, we muſt both cut off our hair, if our beautiful ſyſtem is overthrown, and it ſhould not be in our power to raiſe it up again. If I were in your place, and any perſon had deſtroyed ſuch a doctrine to me, ſuch a reſting place

for

for my hopes, I would make a vow like the Argive of old, to let my hair grow until I had conquered the objections of Simmias and Cebes.

It is uſually, ſaid I, obſerved, that Hercules himſelf can do nothing againſt two. Then, replied he, while it is yet clear day, call upon me as your Iolaus.—Good, ſaid I: I will call upon you to help me, not, however, as Hercules did Iolaus, but as Iolaus did Hercules.

That is nothing to the matter, he replied. Above all things, we muſt take great care to avoid a certain falſe ſtep.—Which? I aſked.—That we do not become haters of reaſon, ſaid he, as certain people become haters of men. No greater misfortune could befall us. Hatred to reaſon, and hatred to men, take their beginning from ſimilar cauſes. Hatred to man ariſes generally from our having placed a blind confidence in ſome perſon, and regarded him as

a true

a true, juſt, and upright character, whom we experience afterwards to be neither true, juſt, nor upright; particularly if this caſe happens often to us, and more eſpecially with thoſe whom we had conſidered as our ſincereſt and beſt friends. Then we grow diſcontented, look on all the world indiſcriminately with hatred, and no longer believe there is any ſincerity in man. Have you not remarked this?

Very often, I replied.

But is not this ſhameful? and does it not imply that we are willing to derive benefits from human ſociety, without the leaſt knowledge of the human heart? Whoever is capable of reflection, may very eaſily find the middle ſtate where truth lies. Of extremely good, or extremely bad men, there are but few inſtances. The majority of mankind keep between both extremes. With reſpect to other qualifications, what is more rare than a man, a dog, or other

creature that is extremely large or extremely ſmall, very ſwift or very ſlow, uncommonly beautiful, ugly, white, or black? Have you not obſerved, that in all theſe caſes the extremes are exceeding rare? The middle ſtate is found moſt prevailing in them all.

I think ſo.

And alſo, that if a great price were ſet on extreme wickedneſs, very few men would deſerve the price?

Very few.

However, in this point, there is little analogy between reaſon and the human race. I was brought to this digreſſion by your queſtion. But if a perſon, without neceſſary enquiry or inſight into the nature of human reaſon, admits at one time certain concluſions to be juſt and true, and in a ſhort time after thinks the ſame concluſions falſe, whether they are ſo in their own nature or not; particularly if this has

occurred often, and as we ſtated before in the caſe of friendſhip. Such a perſon is then in the ſame condition with thoſe ingenious ſophiſts who will, as long as their audience pleaſes, defend or refute propoſitions, until they believe themſelves the wiſeſt of mortals, and the only perſons who have perceived that human reaſon, like all other earthly things, has nothing certain or ſtable in it; but that every thing in life moves conſtantly to and fro like the waves on the ſea of Euripus, and never reſts a moment in the ſame place.

It is true.

But, my dear Phædon, he continued, ſuppoſe that truth was not only certain and invariable in itſelf, but alſo not totally impenetrable by man, and that any perſon, upon conſidering two oppoſite doctrines, ſupported apparently on equally ſtrong grounds, ſhould conceive ſuch diſguſt and chagrin as not to lay any blame on his own

capacity and diſcernment, but to find fault with reaſon itſelf, and all the remainder of his life to hate, nay, ſhun all exerciſe of reaſon, ſo as to keep truth and knowledge at a diſtance from him: Would his misfortune not be pitiable?

Very pitiable, by heaven.

We muſt therefore beware of this error, endeavour to perſuade ourſelves that truth is not variable or uncertain, though our underſtandings are often too weak to keep hold and be maſter of it. We ſhould conſequently exert our utmoſt ſtrength, and repeat our efforts to this purpoſe until we are ſucceſsful. This we are bound to do, my friends; you on account of the time you have to live; I in conſideration of my approaching death. I am impelled to it by motives which may make me appear, in the eyes of common and ignorant people, more eager to be thought in the right than anxious of being ſo: for when they have

to

to enquire into any point which is doubtful, they do not trouble themſelves to find out its certainty and truth, but are ſatisfied if they maintain their own opinions, and can impoſe them upon others. I ſhall differ from thoſe people in one particular only. To perſuade others is but a ſecondary object with me: my chief care is to convince myſelf, that my opinion is conformable to truth, as I find the utmoſt advantage in it. For, my deareſt friend, thus I argue: If the doctrine which I teach is juſtly founded, I do well in convincing myſelf of it; but if our hopes for thoſe who have departed are viſionary, then I at leaſt gain this conſolation, that I do not before my death become diſagreeable to my friends by complaining. I pleaſe myſelf often with the thought, that every thing which would bring real comfort and advantage to the human race, if it was true, has already a great deal of probability in it of being ſo. If ſceptics alledge

againſt the doctrine of God and virtue, that it is a mere political device, calculated to promote the welfare of human ſociety, then I would ſay to them, "Oh, my friends, contrive a ſyſtem which is equally indiſpenſable to mankind, and I maintain it will prove true." The human race is deſigned for ſociety, as every individual is formed for happineſs. Every thing which will contribute towards this end in a general, ſteady, and conſtant manner, is undoubtedly choſen by the wiſe original of all things as a means to it. Theſe ideas have ſomething extremely conſoling in them, and ſhew us the relation between the creator and man in the moſt ſtriking light: I wiſh for nothing more ſtrongly, therefore, than to be convinced of the truth of them. However, it would be hard if my ignorance in this point would continue much longer. No; I ſhall ſoon be reſolved.

Under this impreſſion, Simmias and Cebes,

bes, I ſhall now ſpeak to your objections. If you take my counſel, you will attend to truth more than to Socrates. If you find me keep to truth, give me your applauſe; if not, oppoſe me without reſerve, that I may not, from too much kindneſs and good will, deceive both you and myſelf, and quit you like a bee that leaves its ſting behind it.

Now, my friends, be attentive, and check me if I overlook or miſtake any part of your arguments. Simmias allowed that our faculty of thinking has either an individual exiſtence in itſelf, or owes its being to the compoſition and ſtructure of the body—Has he not?

Right.

In the firſt caſe, if the ſoul is to be conſidered as an immaterial thing created by itſelf, he will alſo admit the ſeries of concluſions, by which we have proved that the ſoul cannot terminate her exiſtence with

the body, cannot be totally annihilated, otherwiſe than by the Almighty power. Is this granted, or have any of ye objections?

We all readily aſſented to this.

And that the all-good Creator annihilates none of his works; as well as I can remember, nobody had any doubts of this.

Nobody.

But Simmias is afraid, perhaps, that our power to feel and to think is not a thing created by itſelf, but, like harmony, health, the life of plants and animals, is the property of an artificially-formed body — Was it not this which cauſed your fears?

This exactly, Socrates.

Let us ſee then, he ſaid, if that which we know of our ſoul, and can ſo often experience, will not render your apprehenſions groundleſs. What happens in an artificial ſtructure or compoſition? Are not certain things

things brought near together which were before at a diſtance from each other?

Certainly.

They were combined with other things, and now they are combined among themſelves, and form the conſtituent parts of the whole, which we call a compoſition.

Good.

From combination of the parts, according to the way and manner in which the conſtituent parts are united to each other, ariſes firſt a certain order which is more or leſs perfect.

Juſt.

The powers and activity of the conſtituent parts are more or leſs altered in the compoſition, according as they are by action and reaction retarded, advanced, or altered in their direction—Is not this juſt?

So it appears.

The author of ſuch a compoſition looks ſingly and alone upon the approximation of

the parts to each other; as for example, to the arrangement and ſymmetry in architecture, where nothing comes into conſideration but the order of ſetting the parts together: at another time his purpoſe is the varied activity of the conſtituent parts, and the power ariſing from their combination; as in a piece of machinery, or ſpring-work: nay, there are ſome caſes where we ſee diſtinctly that the artiſt has a view to both; to the order of the parts, and to the variation of their acting powers.

Perhaps human artiſts, ſaid Simmias, have theſe joint objects in view but ſeldom; but the author of nature ſeems to have united them always in the moſt perfect manner together.

Admirably obſerved, ſaid Socrates. I ſhall not purſue theſe leſs principal conſiderations any farther: tell me only, Simmias, Can there ariſe from any compoſition a power in the whole which has not its

ſource in the energy of the conſtituent parts?

Explain your meaning, Socrates.

If all the parts of matter were lying together in a dead calm without motion or life, would the artificial ordering and tranſpoſition of them produce in the whole any motion or action?

Apparently none.

An active whole cannot be produced from inactive parts.

Good.

We can take this for granted, therefore. We ſee, however, that harmony and ſymmetry may be found in a whole, of which no conſtituent part has either harmony or ſymmetry in itſelf. How does this happen? No ſingle tone is harmonious, but many tones together make harmony. A well-proportioned building may conſiſt of ſtones, which have neither ſymmetry nor regularity in themſelves. Why can I compoſe a harmo-

harmonious regular whole, from unharmonious irregular parts?

Oh, replied Simmias, this is very comprehenſible; ſymmetry, harmony, regularity, &c. cannot be conceived without variety: for they ſignify the proportions of different impreſſions as they ſtrike us together, and in compariſon with each other. With thoſe ideas, therefore, we conceive the combination of a variety of impreſſions which together form a whole, and we cannot therefore derive ſuch ideas from the ſingle parts.

Continue, my dear Simmias, ſaid Socrates, ſecretly pleaſed at the acuteneſs of his friend. Tell us alſo, if every ſingle tone did not make an impreſſion on our ear, whether harmony could be produced from many tones.

Impoſſible.

It is the ſame with ſymmetry. If that which we call ſymmetry ariſes from the union

union of many parts, every part muſt make an impreſſion on the eye.

Unqueſtionably.

We ſee, therefore, here alſo, that no acting power can be produced in the whole, the ſource of which is not to be found in the conſtituent parts, and that every thing elſe which does not owe its exiſtence to the properties of the elementary and conſtituent parts, as order, ſymmetry, &c. originates alone from the manner of the compoſition — May we not reſt aſſured of this principle?

Entirely ſo.

There are, therefore, two diſtinct things to be conſidered in the moſt artificial compoſition: firſt, the ſucceſſion and order of the conſtituent parts with regard to time and ſpace; and, ſecondly, the combination of the original powers, and the way and manner in which they ſhew themſelves in the compoſition. The operations of the

ſingle powers are certainly limited, directed, and changed, by the order and ſituation of the parts; but an acting power can never be produced in a compoſition, the origin of which was not to have been found in the ſingle parts. I dwell a little on theſe ſubtile firſt grounds of conſideration, as a wager runner frequently exerciſes himſelf in the courſe, that he may at laſt be able to double his ſpeed towards the goal, when the gods have deſtined fortune and glory to the victor.

Conſider with me, my dear Simmias.

If our faculty to feel and to think has not an independent exiſtence, but is a property of the compoſition, muſt it not either, like harmony or ſymmetry, be produced by a certain ſituation and order of the parts; or, like the power of the compoſition, have its origin in the activity of the conſtituent parts?

Certainly,

Certainly, as we have ſeen that no third caſe can exiſt.

With reſpect to harmony, for example, we know that no ſingle tone is harmonious, but that harmony ariſes from the combination and compariſon of different ſounds with each other.

Juſt.

The caſe is ſimilar with the ſymmetry and regularity of a building: it conſiſts in the combination and compariſon of ſeveral irregular parts.

This is not to be denied.

But this power of combining and comparing, can it be any thing elſe than the operation of the faculty of thinking? and is it to be found any where elſe than in a thinking being?

Here Simmias knew not what to anſwer.

In unthinking nature, continued Socrates, ſingle ſounds follow each other, and ſtones appear cloſe together: but in them,

where

where is the harmony, ſymmetry, or regularity? If there is not a thinking being preſent which takes the varied parts together, and compares them, and in this compariſon diſcovers a harmony, I know not where to find it: or can you point out any ſuch thing in unanimated nature?

I muſt confeſs my inability, ſaid Simmias, although I ſee the tendency of your argument.

A happy preſage, ſaid Socrates, if the adverſary foreſees his own defeat. But anſwer me, my friend, without reluctance, for you have not a little part in the victory we are about to gain over you. Can the origin of a thing be traced from its own operations? Will the ſhadow which a tree throws be taken for the means of its growth, or the fine odour of a flower for the cauſe of its exiſtence?

Never.

Order, ſymmetry, harmony, regularity, and,

and, in general, all proportioned objects which require their various parts to be contrasted and compared together, are the effects of the operations of the faculty of thinking. Without the addition of the thinking being, without comparison and combination, the regular edifice is a mere heap of stones, and the voice of the nightingale no more than the screaming of the owl. Nay further, without this operation there cannot exist in nature any whole consisting of parts which exist independent of each other; for those parts have each their own proper existence, and must be combined, compared, and viewed, united together, in order to constitute a whole. The thinking power, and it alone in all nature is able, by means of its internal energy, to make real comparisons, combinations, and contrasts; therefore the origin of all compositions, numbers, greatness, harmony, symmetry, &c. in so far as they require combination

and

and compariſon, muſt only be looked for in the thinking power. As this muſt be taken for granted, the faculty of thinking, the cauſe of all compariſons and contraſts, cannot poſſibly ariſe from theſe its own operations; cannot poſſibly conſiſt in proportion, harmony, ſymmetry, nor in a whole, which is compoſed of parts which exiſt, independent of each other; ſince all theſe things pre-ſuppoſe the operation and action of the thinking being, and could not become real without it.

This is very diſtinct.

As every whole, which conſiſts of parts that exiſt independent of each other, pre-ſuppoſes the combination and compariſon of thoſe parts, this combination and compariſon muſt be the operation of a conceiving power; therefore I cannot place the origin of this conceiving power in the whole that conſiſts of thoſe ſeparately exiſting parts, without making a thing derive its exiſtence

from

from its own operations: for ſuch an abſurdity the poets themſelves, as far as I know, have never ventured to affirm. Nobody yet has traced the origin of a flute from the harmony of its tones, or imagined the light of the ſun proceeded from the hues of the rainbow.

My dear Socrates, the reſt of my doubts appear to be overthrown.

If I do not tire your patience, my friends, by this long enquiry, it deſerves particular conſideration.

Fear not, my friend, cried Crito, to put their patience to the teſt; at leaſt, you did not ſpare mine, when I inſiſted on the execution of a certain propoſal which I made to you——

No more, ſaid Socrates, interrupting him, of a point concerning which we are no longer under any uncertainty. We have at preſent to enquire into matters which ſeem yet to be ſubject to ſome doubt. It is allowed we

are not to ſearch for our power of feeling and thinking in the ſituation, ſtructure, harmony, or order, of the parts of our material frame. This we have rejected as impoſſible, without coming too near to a deciſion on the omnipotence and wiſdom of God. But, perhaps, this faculty of thinking is one of the acting powers of the compoſition, as the power of motion, extenſion, or coheſion, which, though eſſentially different from the ſituation and ſtructure of the parts, are no where to be found but in the compoſition. Is not this the only remaining doubt which we have to conquer?

Juſt.

We ſhall therefore ſuppoſe this to be the caſe, and take it for granted, that our ſoul is a power of the compoſition. We have found that every acting power muſt ariſe from the powers of the conſtituent parts; according to ſuch poſition then, muſt not the conſtituent parts of the thinking body

have

have powers from which, when in compoſition, the power of thinking is derived?

Certainly.

But of what nature and qualities ſhall we ſuppoſe the powers of theſe conſtituent parts? Shall we ſuppoſe them ſimilar or diſſimilar to the thinking power?

This queſtion, anſwered Simmias, I do not comprehend.

A ſingle ſyllable, ſaid Socrates, has this in common with a whole ſentence, that it is to be heard and diſtinguiſhed: a whole ſentence, however, has a meaning, but a ſyllable none.

Juſt.

Although every ſyllable, therefore, makes a diſtinguiſhable, but no intelligent impreſſion, yet, from the union of many, a ſenſe is produced which operates upon our ſoul. Here, therefore, the operation of the whole originates in the powers of the parts which are diſſimilar to it.

This, ſaid Simmias, is perfectly comprehenſible.

With reſpect to harmony, order, and beauty, we have found that the pleaſure which they impart to the ſoul ariſes from the united impreſſion of their conſtituent parts, none of which ſingly can give pleaſure or diſpleaſure.

Good.

This is another example that the active power of the whole originates in the power of the conſtituent parts which are diſſimilar to it.

Allowed.

Perhaps, my friends, I may be going too far; but I conceive, that all acting powers of corporeal things may proceed from powers of ſimple matter which are totally diſſimilar to them. Colour, for example, may proceed from things which have no colour; and motion itſelf may proceed

from original powers which have nothing of motion in them.

This requires a proof, ſaid Simmias.

It is unneceſſary, replied Socrates, to delay ourſelves at preſent on this particular; it is enough that I illuſtrate by example the meaning of my words. The acting power of the whole may ariſe from powers of the conſtituent parts which are diſſimilar to it. Is this more clear?

Perfectly ſo.

According to our ſuppoſition, therefore, the power of the conſtituent parts muſt either be the powers of conception themſelves, and therefore ſimilar to the power of the whole which ſhall ariſe from them, or be of a quite different nature, and therefore diſſimilar. Or is there any third caſe?

None.

But anſwer me, dear Simmias; if there ſhall ariſe from the combination of the ſingle powers another quite different from them,

where is this newly-produced power to be met with?

Except in the thinking being, the power of the whole is nothing elſe than the ſingle powers of the ſimple conſtituent parts, as they change and limit each other by action and re-action. By action and re-action no power can be produced which is diſſimilar to theſe acting and re-acting powers. If, therefore, we would gain in the whole ſomething diſſimilar to the parts, we muſt have recourſe to the thinking being, which views the powers united, and in the different combinations of which they are capable, otherwiſe than it judges of them ſingly, and without combination. We ſee an example of this in colours, as well as in harmony. If two colours are brought into ſo ſmall a ſpace together that they cannot be diſtinguiſhed by the eye, they will, notwithſtanding the impreſſion made upon our ſight, remain two ſeparate and diſtinct colours.

lours. Our ſenſes, however, will compoſe a third colour from them, which has nothing in common with the other two. Taſte, and, if I am not miſtaken, our other ſenſes and feelings in general, have a ſimilar mode of acting: they cannot, from being united and connected together, become different from what they are in their ſingle ſtate; but to the thinking being, which cannot diſtinguiſh them clearly, they ſeem different from what they appear when free of combination.

This may be granted.

Can a thinking being, therefore, have its origin in ſingle powers which cannot think?

Impoſſible; as we have ſeen that the power to think cannot have its origin in a whole which conſiſts of many parts.

Very right, ſaid Socrates: the combination of the ſingle powers, from which a power ariſes which is diſſimilar to them,

pre-ſuppoſes a thinking being, to which they appear otherwiſe when combined than they really are. A thinking being, therefore, cannot poſſibly ſpring from this combination. If, then, feeling and thinking, in a word, the power of conception, is a power of the compoſition, muſt not the power of the conſtituent parts be ſimilar to the power of the whole, and conſequently be powers of conception?

They muſt be ſo, as we cannot imagine a third caſe.

And the parts of thoſe conſtituent parts, as far as their diviſibility will go, muſt have ſimilar powers of conception?

Unqueſtionably, as every conſtituent part is a whole that conſiſts of ſmaller parts, and our concluſions may be carried on until we come upon the elementary ſimple parts.

Tell me, Simmias: Do we not find in our ſouls an almoſt infinite number of ideas, incli-

inclinations, and paſſions, which inceſſantly affect us?

We do.

Are theſe to be found in parts? Are they ſcattered, ſome here, ſome there, without ever being collected? or is there among them a ſingle one which unites and comprehends in itſelf all thoſe affections which occupy our ſoul.

Certainly, one or other of theſe caſes muſt hold true, but the firſt ſeems to me to be impoſſible; for all conceptions and paſſions of our ſoul are ſo intimately united and knit together, that they muſt neceſſarily be ſomewhere inſeparably preſent.

You haſten towards me, my dear Simmias: we ſhould not be able to remember nor reflect, compare nor think; nay, we ſhould not be the ſame perſons now which we were a moment before, if our ideas were divided into parts, and were not found ſomewhere in the cloſeſt and ſtricteſt con-

nection

nection together. We muſt therefore, at leaſt, admit of a ſubſtance which unites all the ideas of the conſtituent parts; but this ſubſtance, can it be compoſed of parts?

Impoſſible, otherwiſe we again ſuppoſe a compoſition and connection by which a whole is formed from parts, and return to the point from whence we ſet out.

It muſt be ſimple, therefore?

Neceſſarily ſo.

Alſo unextended, as extent is diviſible; and whatever is diviſible cannot be ſimple.

Juſt.

There is, at leaſt, then in our bodies a ſingle ſubſtance which is neither extended nor compounded, but is ſimple, has a power of conception, and unites all ideas, deſires, and inclinations, in itſelf. Why may we not call this ſubſtance our ſoul?

It is immaterial what name we give it: it is enough that my objections to it had no foundation, and that your arguments for the

unperiſhability of the thinking being are not to be overthrown.

There is one other conſideration to be attended to, ſaid Socrates: Whether, if there were many of theſe ſubſtances in the human body, nay, if we ſhould imagine all the elementary parts of our body of this nature, would my arguments for their unperiſhability loſe thereby any of their ſtrength? or would not ſuch a ſuppoſition rather make it neceſſary, inſtead of one unperiſhable ſpirit, to admit of many, and therefore to allow more than we required for our purpoſe? as every one of theſe ſubſtances would comprehend in itſelf, as we have before ſeen the whole compaſs of man's conceptions, wiſhes, and deſires; and, therefore, with reſpect to extent of knowledge, their powers would not be more confined than the power of the whole.

They could not poſſibly be more confined.

And with reſpect to clearneſs, truth, and certainty of knowledge? Place ſeveral erroneous, defective, and unclear ideas together; would they produce a more bright, a more clear, or more diſtinct idea?

I ſhould think not.

If a ſpirit does not interpoſe and compare them, and by reflection and conſideration obtain a perfect knowledge from them, they will continue for ever to be erroneous, defective, and indiſtinct ideas.

Juſt.

The conſtituent parts of the thinking matter, therefore, muſt neceſſarily have conceptions which are as clear, as true, and as perfect, as the conceptions of the whole; for from leſs true or leſs clear conceptions, no knowledge could reſult which would be more true or perfect.

This is not to be denied.

Does

Does not this, however, ſay, that inſtead of one reaſoning ſpirit which we would place in every human body, we have, without any neceſſity, an infinite number of them.

Certainly.

But this infinity of thinking ſubſtances will not, moſt probably, be all equally perfect, as ſuch uſeleſs multiplications are not found in this well-ordered world.

The all-ſupreme perfection of its Creator, anſwered Simmias, allows us to infer this with certainty.

Therefore, among theſe ſubſtances which we would place in the human body, one of them muſt be the moſt perfect, and muſt conſequently have the moſt diſtinct and enlightened conceptions.

Moſt undoubtedly.

This ſimple ſubſtance, which is unextended, poſſeſſes a power of imagination, is the moſt perfect among the thinking ſub-

ſtances

ſtances which exiſt within us, and comprehends all ideas, of which we are conſcious with the ſame diſtinctneſs, truth, and certainty. Is not this my ſoul?

Nothing elſe, my dear Socrates.

It is now time, Simmias, to caſt a look behind us on the way we have come. We pre-ſuppoſed that the power of thinking was a property of the compoſition; and yet how wonderful, by this very ſuppoſition, we draw from a ſeries of arguments the direct contrary concluſion, namely, that feeling and thinking muſt be the properties of what is not compoſed, but ſimple. Is not this a ſufficient proof that our ſuppoſition was abſurd, contradictory, and ought therefore to be rejected.

Nobody can entertain a doubt of this.

Extent and motion, continued Socrates, will ſolve every accident which can happen to the compoſition. Extent is the matter and motion, the ſource from whence the

changes

changes ſpring. Both ſhew themſelves in the compoſition under a thouſand various ſhapes, and produce in the material world the endleſs ſeries of wonderful forms, from the ſmalleſt atom to the magnificence of the heavenly ſphere, which the poets have imagined to be the ſeat of the gods. All theſe different conformations agree in this, that their matter is extenſion, and their operation, motion. But to perceive, to compare, to deſire, to will, to feel pleaſure and diſpleaſure, require a quite different capacity from extenſion or motion, another elementary matter, and other ſources of change. Here one ſimple ſubſtance muſt repreſent to itſelf things which are diſtant and ſeparated, collect things which are ſcattered, and compare things which are different. All that is ſpread over the wide ſpace of the corporeal world preſſes itſelf here together, as it were, into a point, to make out a whole; and what is paſt is in

the

the preſent moment brought in contraſt with that which is to come. Here I know neither extenſion nor colour, motion nor reſt, ſpace nor time, but a being internally active, which repreſents to itſelf extenſion and colour, motion and reſt, ſpace and time; combines, ſeparates, compares, ſelects, and poſſeſſes a thouſand other capacities which have no relation to extenſion or motion. Pleaſure and diſpleaſure, deſire and averſion, hope and fear, are no change of place of little atoms. Modeſty, philanthropy, benevolence, the charm of friendſhip, and the ſublime feeling of piety, are ſomething more than the agitation of the blood and the beating of the arteries, with which they are uſually accompanied. Things of ſo different a kind, and of ſuch different qualities, cannot, without extreme inattention, be confounded together.

I am entirely ſatisfied, ſaid Simmias.

One other obſervation I will make, ſaid Socrates,

Socrates, before I come to your objection, Cebes. The firſt thing which we know of the body and its properties is no more than the form and manner in which it preſents itſelf to the diſcernment of our ſenſes; Do you not allow this?

Explain yourſelf a little clearer, Socrates.

Extenſion and motion are the repreſentations which the thinking being forms of external objects.

Granted.

We have the firmeſt grounds to believe, that every thing without us is exactly what it appears to be, when nothing obſtructs our perception of it: but does not this repreſentation always precede, and our aſſurance that the object actually exiſts, follow after?

How can it poſſibly be otherwiſe, while we cannot be informed of the exiſtence of

things but by the impreſſions which they make upon us.

In the acquirement of any knowledge which we make, the thinking being always precedes, and the extended being follows: we firſt experience ideas, and from them infer a conceiving being; then we conclude on the actual exiſtence of the body and its properties. We can convince ourſelves alſo of this truth by obſerving, that our body of itſelf, as we have ſeen before, without having the thinking being to inſtruct it, could not compoſe a whole; and motion even, without compariſon of the paſt with the preſent, would not be motion. In which ever way we view this matter, the ſoul always goes firſt with her inſtruction, and then the body follows with its changes. The conceiving always precedes the merely conceivable.

This idea appears fruitful, my friend, ſaid Cebes.

We

We can divide the univerſal chain of beings, proceeding from what is infinite to the ſmalleſt atom, into three claſſes. The firſt claſs conceives, but cannot be conceived by any other. This is the only one whoſe perfection ſurpaſſes all finite ideas. The created ſpirits and ſouls make the ſecond claſs: they conceive, and can be conceived by others. The corporeal world is the third claſs which cannot itſelf conceive, but is conceivable by others. The objects of this third claſs are not only with reſpect to our progreſs in knowledge, but alſo with reſpect to their exiſtence without us, always the laſt in order, becauſe they neceſſarily pre-ſuppoſe the reality of a conceiving being — Shall we allow this?

We cannot do otherwiſe, ſaid Simmias, as what has gone before muſt be admitted.

The thought of man, however, continued Socrates, takes always the reverſe of this order. The firſt thing which we aſſure

ourſelves of exiſtence is, bodies and their changes. Theſe external objects ſo overmaſter our ſenſes, that we for a long time conſider the material exiſtence as the only one, and every thing elſe as properties of it.

I am rejoiced to hear, you inſinuate, ſaid Simmias, that you have gone this backward way yourſelf.

Certainly, dear Simmias, replied Socrates. The firſt ſentiments of all mortals are ſimilar to each other. This is the port, as it were, from which they all weigh anchor. They wander up and down in ſearch of Truth on the ſea of opinions, until reaſon and reflection, the children of Jupiter, lighten on their ſail, and announce to them a happy landing. Reaſon and reflection lead our ſpirit from the ſenſual impreſſions of the corporeal world back into its own country, into the kingdom of thinking beings; firſt to its equals to created beings,

which,

which, on account of their finiteneſs, can alſo be clearly imagined and conceived by others. From them they raiſe it to that firſt ſource of the conceiving and conceivable, to that all-comprehending, but by all incomprehenſible being, of whom we, to our comfort, know that every thing which, in the corporeal or ſpiritual world, is good, beautiful, or perfect, has all its reality from him, and is maintained by his almighty power. To feel a deep impreſſion, conviction, and conſtant conſciouſneſs of this truth on our minds, is all that is neceſſary for our peace and happineſs in this life or another.

PART III.

AFTER ſome ſilence Socrates turned to Cebes, and ſaid: Dear Cebes, as you have now got more juſt ideas of the nature of immortal beings, what do you think of the poets, who often make a god envious of the merit of a mortal, and an enemy to him from mere malice.

You know, Socrates, what we have learned to think of ſuch teachers, and their inventions.

Hatred and envy, thoſe mean-ſpirited paſſions, are totally incompatible with the character of a deity.

I am convinced of that.

You believe now, therefore, more confidently, that you, we, and all our fellow

creatures, are neither hated, envied, nor perſecuted, by the all-ſacred being who has produced us, but, on the contrary, beloved in the tendereſt manner. In this firm conviction can the ſmalleſt fear attend you, that the ſupreme being will doom you to eternal torment, whether guilty or innocent.

Never, never, cried Appollodorus, to whom the queſtion was not directed, while Cebes was content with giving his aſſent to it in ſilence.

We ſhall, continued Socrates, take this poſition for granted, therefore: "That "God does not deſtine his creatures to per-"petual miſery," as a meaſure of our certainty of knowledge, when we diſcourſe of future things which depend ſolely upon his will. From nature and the properties of created things, nothing in this reſpect can be inferred with certainty; for from them we can only conclude on what is unchange-

changeable in itſelf, and that depends, therefore, not on the will, but is conſiſtent with the knowledge of God. We muſt look to his ſupreme perfection in ſuch caſes, and endeavour to inveſtigate what contradicts or accords with it. When we are convinced that any thing is incompatible with it, we may reject and deem it impoſſible, as if it were contrary to the nature and being of the things in conſideration.

The queſtion, my dear Cebes, which we have now to enquire into, on account of your objection, is ſimilar.

You admit, my friend, that the ſoul is a ſimple being, which exiſts independent of the body, Do you not?

I do.

You admit further, that it is not periſhable.

Of that I am equally convinced.

So far, continued Socrates, our ideas of the nature of extenſion and repreſentation have

have led us. But ſtill ſome doubts diſturb you concerning the future fate of human ſpirits, which, in a certain meaſure, depends ſingly and alone upon the will and pleaſure of the Almighty. Will he allow the ſoul of man to endure for ever in a wakeful ſtate, conſcious of the preſent and the paſt? or has he deſtined it, upon the deceaſe of the body, to ſink into a ſtate like ſleep, and thence never to awaken? Is not this what appeared ſtill uncertain to you?

This exactly, dear Socrates.

That a total deprivation of all conſciouſneſs, of all recollection, is not impoſſible to the ſoul, at leaſt for a ſhort time: ſleep, ſwooning, ecſtaſies, and a thouſand other accidents, teach us. To be ſure the ſoul, in all ſuch inſtances, is ſtill fettered with the body, and muſt ſympathiſe with the affections of the brain, which preſents, at ſuch times, none but faint and tranſitory images. From thence we can form no

idea

idea of the ſtate of the ſoul after her ſeparation from the body, becauſe then the communication with theſe two beings is at an end; the body ceaſes to be the organ of the ſoul, and the ſoul muſt follow laws totally different from thoſe which were preſcribed to her on earth. In the mean time we may be ſatisfied, that the want of clear conſciouſneſs, which ſometimes happens in ſleep, does not diſprove the nature of a ſpirit; as our fears, if this were the caſe, would not be wholly groundleſs. But if we wiſh to diſſipate this terrible apprehenſion, can we deſire more than to be certain that our fears are contrary to the deſign of God, and can be as little intended by him as the eternal miſery of his creatures.

Certainly, ſaid Cebes, if we do not look for a conviction which is inconſiſtent with the nature of the things to which our enquiry is directed. When I ſtated my doubts, my friend, I touched upon ſome

grounds

grounds which were borrowed from the views of the Creator, and made your doctrine very probable. I wiſhed to hear them, however, illuſtrated from your own mouth; and my friends, I know, felt the ſame deſire.

I ſhall try, ſaid Socrates, whether I can fully ſatisfy you. Anſwer me, Cebes: if you are afraid of loſing, with life, all waking conſciouſneſs of yourſelf for ever, do you apprehend that this fate awaits all mankind, or only a part of them? Shall we all be taken away by death, and in the language of the poets, "by him delivered into the "arms of his eldeſt brother, eternal ſleep;" or are ſome of the inhabitants of this earth deſtined to be awakened by the heavenly morning of immortality above? As ſoon as we admit that a part of mankind are deſtined to real immortality, then Cebes does not for a moment doubt that this happineſs

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is reſerved for the righteous, the friends of God and man.

No, my dear Socrates; the gods do not diſpenſe eternal death ſo unjuſtly as the Athenians do the doom which is temporary.

I am of opinion alſo, that, in the very wiſe plan of the creation, ſimilar beings are to meet a ſimilar deſtiny, and conſequently that the ſame fate awaits the whole human race: they either all awake to a ſtate of conſciouſneſs hereafter, and then Anitus and Melitus themſelves cannot doubt that the innocent and oppreſſed may expect a better fate than their perſecutors, or they terminate their being with this life, and return to that ſtate from which they ſprung at their birth; the parts aſſigned them to perform extend no farther than the ſtage of this world; at their laſt ſcene the actors go off, and become what they were before in common nature. I am aſhamed, my dear friend, to carry this ſuppoſition any farther,

farther, as I perceive it would lead me into an obvious abſurdity.

That is nothing to the purpoſe, Cebes. We muſt think for thoſe who would not bluſh ſo eaſily at an abſurd concluſion. Similar beings, you have maintained, muſt, according to the wiſe plan of the creation, have ſimilar deſtinies.

Yes.

All created beings who think and will are ſimilar to each other?

Certainly.

If even one thinks more juſtly, truly, perfectly, and comprehends more objects than another, yet there are no bounding lines which ſeparate, or, as it were, divide them into different claſſes; they riſe in undiſtinguiſhable degrees one above another, and make but one ſingle kind — Do they not?

This muſt be granted.

And if there are ſtill higher ſpirits than

us,

us, which excell each other in different degrees of perfection, and approach gradually to the infinite being, Do they not all, as created beings, belong to one ſingle kind?

Juſt.

As their qualities are not eſſentially different, their deſtinies muſt be eſſentially ſimilar, and only in imperceptible degrees different from each other. As in the great plan of the creation every thing is ordered according to a ſyſtem of complete harmony, the deſtinies of all beings muſt ſtrictly accord with their merits and perfections. Can we poſſibly doubt of this?

Not in the leaſt.

My friends, the queſtion we are now conſidering begins to grow particularly intereſting. Its deciſion concerns not only the human race, but the whole world of thinking beings.

Are they deſtined to real immortality, to an exiſtence of perpetual conſciouſneſs and

ſelf-

ſelf-feeling? or are theſe benefits, after a ſhort enjoyment here below, withdrawn, and ſucceeded by eternal inſenſibility and oblivion?

In the judgement of the ſupreme being this queſtion muſt have been decided in a general manner.

Should we not therefore, in our enquiry, conſider it in a general point of view?

Moſt properly.

But the more general the object, the more abſurd are our apprehenſions. All finite ſpirits have innate qualities which unfold themſelves, and become more perfect by exerciſe. Man improves his natural ſtrength to think and feel with aſtoniſhing rapidity; every ſenſation makes a croud of perceptions ſtream in upon him, which are inexpreſſible by the human tongue; and as he contraſts theſe feelings with each other, compares, conſiders, concludes, chooſes, or rejects, his perceptions are mul-

tiplied to infinity. At the ſame time there is an inceſſant activity of the innate faculties of the ſpirit, which form in him wit, underſtanding, reaſon, invention, ſenſe of beauty and goodneſs, magnanimity, philanthropy, affability, and all thoſe other perfections which no mortal hitherto has been able to avoid acquiring. Allow that we diſcover ſtupidity, folly, ſenſeleſſneſs, meanneſs, and cruelty, in many men; as in compariſon of men with each other, theſe appellations may often be juſt; but there never exiſted a being who had not ſome mark of underſtanding given him; nor a tyrant, whoſe boſom was entirely diveſted of humanity. We all acquire the ſame qualities; the only difference is in their being more or leſs perfect; even the moſt impious of men cannot act directly contrary to his deſtination. He may contend againſt it with the utmoſt obſtinacy, but ſtill the original bent of his genius to

good will at laſt prevail. While man is addicted to a vicious courſe, he continues imperfect and miſerable; but the improvement of his natural good diſpoſition promotes at the ſame time, even without his conſciouſneſs or inclination, the end and intention of his being. No human being has ever lived in benevolent commerce with his fellow creatures, who has not left the world more perfect than he firſt trod it. The ſame caſe applies to the whole ſtate of thinking beings: as long as they have ſelf-feeling, they think, will, deſire, abhor; their innate capacities expand and approach more and more to perfection: the longer they are ſo employed, their powers become the more active, ready, and quick; their action is leſs retarded, they become more capable of diſcerning their real happineſs, in contemplating real beauty and perfection: and yet, my friends, muſt all theſe acquired godly perfections ſuddenly vaniſh, and, like

light froth on the water, or an arrow ſhot through the air, leave no traces behind them that they ever were? The ſmalleſt atom cannot be loſt without the moſt miraculous annihilation; yet ſhall theſe excellencies diſappear for ever? What idea of the creation does this opinion ſuggeſt to us? In the all-wiſe plan, certainly whatever is good is of endleſs uſe; and every perfection of endleſs conſequence, that is, the perfection of ſimple ſpirits, as no actual perfection can be allowed to compound beings, which are changeable and periſhable.

In order to make this clearer, my friends, we muſt again conſider the difference between ſimple and compound beings. Without referring to the ſimple and thinking being, we have ſeen that neither beauty, order, nor harmony, can be attributed to things which are compound; nor could they even be collectively conſidered, in order to make out a whole. Neither are

they intended in the univerſal plan to have any will concerning themſelves; for they are lifeleſs, and unconſcious of their exiſtence, and incapable of any perfection in themſelves. The end of their being is rather to be diſcovered in the living and feeling parts of the creation: the lifeleſs ſubſtance ſerves the living as the inſtrument of feeling, and certifies to it not only the ſenſual feeling of various things, but alſo gives ideas of beauty, order, ſymmetry, and perfection; or, at leaſt, affords the matter for all theſe feelings with which the thinking being is impreſſed, according to the power of its internal activity. In the compound we find nothing exiſting by itſelf, nothing that is durable and ſtable, ſo as that we could ſay in the ſecond moment, it is what it was in the firſt.

While I look at you, my friends, the light of the ſun, which is reflected from your faces, not only varies its ſtream, but your

bodies alſo have, in the ſame interval, undergone innumerable changes in their internal form and texture; all parts of them are altered from what they were. As the wiſe and happy of former times have remarked, corporeal things *are not*, but ſpring up and decay, there is no durability or ſtability in them; they ſuffer an irreſiſtable torrent of changes, by which every compound being is inceſſantly generated and diſſolved. This Homer has ſignified, when he terms Ocean the father, and Thetis the mother, of all things; he has thus intended to demonſtrate, that all bodies in the viſible world ſpring up and periſh by means of a ſeries of continual changes, and as if they were upon a perpetually-agitated ſea, never remain one moment in the ſame ſituation.

If the compound ſubſtance is incapable of any duration in itſelf, how much leſs will it be capable of any perfection which we have obſerved can only be attributed to it

by the thinking being. Hence we ſee, in inanimate nature, beauty fade and bloom; what is perfect, decay, and appear again under another form; apparent irregularity and regularity, harmony and diſcord, agreeable and what is otherwiſe, good and bad, in endleſs variety, alternately ſucceed each other, according as the uſe, advantage, convenience, pleaſure, and happineſs of the living world require, for whoſe benefit they were produced.

The living part of the creation conſiſts of two claſſes; the one capable of feeling only, the other of feeling and thinking: both have this in common, that they are of durable nature; can poſſeſs and enjoy an internal ſelf-ſubſiſting perfection. We obſerve the perceptions, deſires, and natural inſtinct of all animals, which inhabit the earth, accord and correſpond in a moſt wonderful manner with their neceſſities, and tend to their preſervation, happineſs,

and

and increaſe, and, in part, to the benefit of their poſterity. This harmony dwells within them; for all theſe feelings and inſtinct are qualities of the ſimple incorporeal being which is conſcious of them in itſelf, and in other things. They are ſuſceptible, therefore, of a true perfection, which is not derived from external things, but has its ſtability and durability in itſelf. If lifeleſs things are made partly for their ſupport, neceſſities, and convenience, they are conſequently capable of enjoying theſe benefits: of feeling, pleaſure and diſpleaſure, love and hatred, happineſs or the contrary, and of becoming internally perfect or imperfect. If inanimate things have been a means employed by the all-wiſe Creator in his plan, the animals enter into the chain of his deſigns: ſince a part of what is lifeleſs has been produced for them, and they are capable of enjoying, and therefore of becoming in themſelves harmonious and

perfect. But as we view them before us upon the earth, we do not ſee in them any conſtant progreſs towards a higher degree of perfection. They receive, without inſtruction, without reflection, without exerciſe, without intention, or deſire of knowledge, in a manner immediately from the hands of the Creator, thoſe gifts, aptneſs, and inſtinct, which are neceſſary for their preſervation and increaſe. More they never would acquire if they outlived a century, or increaſed and propagated to eternity. They can neither vitiate nor improve what is given them, nor impart it to another, but exerciſe it, according to their natural inſtinct, as long as it is of uſe in their ſituation; after which they appear to forget it. By means of human inſtruction, a few tame animals may be trained to war, or to perform ſome domeſtic offices; but they ſhew ſufficiently by the way and manner in which they muſt be taught, that they are

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not deſtined on earth to make any ſteady progreſs to perfection, but that a certain degree of inſtinct with which they are born is the utmoſt limit of their capacity, and that of themſelves they aim no farther, nor would, from any natural impulſe, make efforts beyond it. This ſtanding ſtill, as it were, this ſtupid content with the narrow bounds of their being, and total abſence of deſire to elevate or raiſe themſelves above it, demonſtrate that they have not been the chief, but are inferior beings in the deſign of the creation, and meant to be aſſiſtant to things of nobler deſtination, in fulfilling the ſupreme views. But the ſource of life and feeling is a ſimple ſelf-ſubſiſting thing, which, under all changes that it ſuffers, has ſomething conſtant and laſting in it; therefore the talents, the properties which it acquires by tuition, or receives immediately from the hand of the Creator, belong pro-

perly

perly to it, and cannot be totally loſt in any natural manner.

As this ſimple being does not ceaſe to be, therefore it does not ceaſe to further the views of the Creator, but becomes fitter and fitter to bring to completion the great end of its original author. This is conſonant to the infinite wiſdom with which the plan of this world has been laid. Every thing in it ſtrives and labours inceſſantly to accompliſh certain views in this plan. To every real ſubſtance an endleſs ſeries of functions is preſcribed, through which it muſt gradually proceed, each ſtage or occupation preparing and making it fitter for that which is to follow. According to theſe principles the ſpiritual being, which inſpires animals, is of infinite duration, and continues perpetually fulfilling the views of God in the ſeries of deſtinations appointed it in the univerſal plan.

That theſe animals, and merely ſenſual

feeling

feeling natures, will in time loſe their inferiority of condition, and, elevated by a look of the Almighty, enter the realm of ſpirits we can with no certainty predict; but I am much inclined to believe.

As rational beings occupy a principal place in the great univerſe, ſo man holds the chief rank upon earth. Nature adorns herſelf for this mimic maſter of the creation in all her maiden beauty. What is animated ſerves not only for his uſe, convenience, food, cloathing, and habitation, but alſo contributes highly to his amuſement, pleaſures, and inſtruction; even the moſt diſtant worlds, the moſt remote ſtars which are ſcarcely diſtinguiſhable by the eye, miniſter to his knowledge, and offer their rays to light him to the ſpheres.

If we would know the deſtination of man upon earth, we muſt obſerve what he does here — He brings with him on this ſtage neither aptneſs nor inſtinct, neither the

means

means of ſhelter nor defence, and appears, at his firſt entrance, more indigent and helpleſs than the irrational beaſt. But an endeavour and capacity to help his condition, thoſe ſublime diſpoſitions of which a created nature is ſuſceptible, ſupply in various ways the want of that animal aptneſs and inſtinct which admit of no improvement. No ſooner does he enjoy the light of the ſun than all Nature labours to make his faculties perfect; one object ſharpens his ſenſe, imagination, and power of memory; another exerciſes his more noble perceptions, cultivates his underſtanding, his judgement, his reaſon, and diſcernment; the beauties of nature form his taſte, and refine his feelings; the ſublime raiſes his admiration, and lifts his conceptions above this tranſitory ſtate. Order, concord, and ſymmetry, ſerve not only for his rational amuſement, but diſpoſe the powers of his mind to that proper harmony which is conducive

ducive to their perfection. Whenever he enters into ſociety to become uſeful to his equals, by proſecuting the means of happineſs, behold! higher perfections are unfolded in him, which were hitherto enveloped as in a bud. He acquires a ſenſe of duties, rights, privileges, and obligations, which raiſe him in the claſs of moral beings: then he gains ideas of juſtice, equity, honour, and reſpect. His affections, which were at firſt engroſſed by his family and kindred, expand now into patriotiſm and philanthropy, and, from the latent ſeed of ſympathy, ſpring up benevolence, charity, and magnanimity.

By degrees ſocial converſe produces affability, exchange of ſentiment, and the maturity of all the moral virtues which kindle the heart to friendſhip, the ſoul to intrepidity, and fire the mind with the love of truth. Jealouſies are excited, love and hatred are rouſed, alternate ſcenes of ſeri-

ouſneſs

ouſneſs and gaiety, chearfulneſs and melancholy, are ſpread over human life, and give it charms which excel all other ſimple and unſocial joys in ſweetneſs. The poſſeſſion, therefore, of all the good things of this world, the enjoyment of the moſt exquiſite pleaſures, would pleaſe but little, if they could be taſted only in ſolitude; for the moſt ſublime and pompous objects in nature delight the ſocial animal, man, not near ſo much as a ſight of his fellow creatures.

At length this rational creature attains, for the firſt time, true ideas of God and his attributes. How bold a ſtep to a higher perfection! From communication with his fellow creatures, he ſteps into communication with his Creator; diſcovers the relation in which he himſelf, the whole human race, all animate and inanimate things, ſtand to the maker and ſupporter of all; the great order of cauſes and effects in nature becomes

comes to him an order of means and views; what he has as yet enjoyed upon earth ſeemed to have been thrown from the clouds: now theſe clouds open and diſcover the friendly donor who has made all thoſe benefits abound to him; the endowments he poſſeſſes of body and mind, he knows to be the gift of the all-good Father. All beauties, all harmony, goodneſs, wiſdom, providence, ways and means, which he has acknowledged hitherto in the viſible and inviſible world, he conſiders as thoughts of the Almighty, which are given him to read in the book of creation, in order to advance him to a higher perfection. To this kind father and tutor, this gracious regent of the world, he conſecrates at the ſame time all virtues of his heart; and they aſſume in his eyes a godly ſplendour, as he knows that, through them alone, he can pleaſe the ſupreme. Virtue alone leads to happineſs, and we cannot pleaſe the Creator

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otherwiſe than by ſtriving after our real happineſs. What a height has man in this ſituation reached upon earth! Conſider him, my friends, the pure-minded ſubject of the kingdom of God, how all his thoughts, wiſhes, inclinations, and paſſions, are harmonized! how they all tend to the real well-being of the creature, and the admiration of the Creator. If the world could only ſhew one example of ſuch perfections, would we heſitate to ſay, this being, this object of divine regard, muſt be the final end of the creation?

Certainly all the features of this picture do not ſtrike men in general, but a few only of noble natures who are the ornaments of the human race, and, perhaps, the line of ſeparation between men and higher ſpirits; they all belong, however, to one claſs. From the loweſt to the higheſt, from the moſt ignorant of men to the moſt accompliſhed of created ſpirits, all have a

deſti-

deſtination, not more becoming the wiſdom of God, than adapted to their own powers and capacity; namely, to make themſelves and others more perfect. This path is traced before them, and the moſt perverſe will cannot entirely avoid purſuing it. Every thing which lives and thinks muſt unavoidably exerciſe its intellectual faculties, and improve and ſtrengthen them, in order to advance with more or leſs ſpeed towards perfection. But when is this aim accompliſhed? Never ſo fully, it would appear, but that the way to further progreſs is ſtill open; for created beings can never attain the ultimate height of perfection. The higher they mount, the more unlimited proſpects they diſcover to ſpur on their ſteps. The conſtancy of their endeavour reſembles time in its continued progreſſion. By imitation of God man may gradually approach to his perfections; and in this approach the happineſs of ſpirits

conſiſts. But the way to them is endleſs, and created beings, therefore, can never reach its term. This endeavour, then, has no limits in man's life. His wiſhes aim always at ſomething infinite. Our deſire of knowledge is inſatiable; our ambition alſo: even the baſe paſſion of avarice torments and diſtreſſes without ever ſatisfying us. The perception of beauty is endleſs: the ſublime charms us by the undiſcoverable nature which adheres to it: pleaſure, as ſoon as we are ſatiated, is painful. Wherever we meet boundaries that are inſurmountable, our imagination lays us in fetters; and the heavens themſelves appear to limit our exiſtence to too narrow a ſphere; therefore we let our imagination willingly range, and conceive ſpace to be interminable and boundleſs. Theſe perpetual efforts, the aim of which is ſtill accompliſhing, but never accompliſhed, are conſiſtent with the nature, the properties, and deſtination of ſpi-

rits; and the wonderful works of infinity certainly preſent objects enow to employ them for ever: the more we penetrate into their myſteries, the larger grows the proſpect which ſtrikes our eager looks; the more we diſcover, the farther we wiſh to enquire; the more we enjoy, the more inexhauſtible appears the ſource of our pleaſures.

Thus, from the irreſiſtible tendency and impulſe in rational beings to attain a ſtate more perfect, we have ample grounds to believe, their perfection is the final end of the creation. We may conclude this world has been produced for the exiſtence of ſpirits, which might elevate themſelves by degrees to perfection, and feel their utmoſt happineſs in their progreſs towards it.

That theſe beings are to be ſtopped, in the midſt of their courſe, not only ſtopped, but all at once thrown back with the whole fruit of their efforts, into the abyſs of anni-

hilation, cannot be the deſign of the Creator. As ſimple beings, they are unperiſhable; as ſubſtances, whoſe exiſtence is independent on other created beings, their perfections muſt be durable, and of conſtant increaſe; as rational beings, their endeavours to acquire ſpiritual beauty are continual, and nature cites their efforts by motives that are ſublime. As the ultimate end of the creation, they cannot be ſubordinate to other ends, nor ſtopped in the improvement or poſſeſſion of their perfections.

Is it conſiſtent with the ſupreme wiſdom to produce a world, in order to make the happineſs of the creatures which inhabit it, ariſe from the contemplation of its beauties, and a moment after deprive them of that enjoyment for ever? Can the divine author have made ſuch a phantom of bliſs, the whole aim of their being? No, my friends: nature has not given us the deſire

of eternal happineſs in vain. Our wiſhes can and will be ſatisfied. The deſign of the creation will ſubſiſt as long as the things created; the admirers of the divine perfections will ſubſiſt as long as the work where thoſe perfections are viſible.

As we fulfil the views of the ſupreme being on earth by developing our intellectual faculties, in like manner we ſhall continue in another life under the guard of divine providence, to exerciſe and perfect ourſelves in virtue, that we may render ourſelves more fit to accompliſh his deſigns, the chain of which extends from us to infinity. To make a pauſe any where in this courſe, is palpably incompatible with God's wiſdom, his goodneſs, or omnipotence; and can as little have been his intention, as extreme miſery to innocent creatures.

How much to be pitied is the fate of a mortal, whom ſophiſtry has robbed of the conſoling proſpect of futurity. His ſtate

in this world muſt be a dream of deſpair. What idea is more grievous to man's ſoul than annihilation! What object more melancholy than a creature who ſees that event rapidly approaching, and in the mournful expectation of it frequently anticipates the moment of calamity? In days of happineſs, this terrible thought ſteals upon his imagination, like a ſerpent through a bed of flowers, and poiſons every enjoyment of life. In days of adverſity it cruſhes him helpleſs to the ground, and takes from him the only hope which can ſweeten miſery, the reliance on a better life. The idea of a ſudden annihilation is ſo oppoſite to the nature of a human ſoul, that we can, in no point of view, reconcile them, or avoid ſeeing a thouſand abſurdities and contradictions in the opinion. What is life, already chequered with miſeries, if its moſt agreeable moments are to be galled beſides with the afflicting foreſight of inevitable annihilation?

lation? What is an exiſtence of yeſterday and to-day which will ceaſe to-morrow? A deſpicable trifle, which rewards us for the pains, labour, and difficulties attending its preſervation, moſt wretchedly indeed: and yet to him who has no other hope before him, this trifle muſt be his all. The conſequence of this opinion muſt be, that the preſent exiſtence is an ineſtimable good which nothing in this world can counterbalance. The moſt painful, the moſt tortured ſtate, muſt be preferable to the entire annihilation of his being. His love to life becomes abſolutely unconquerable. What conſideration can we ſuppoſe powerful enough to tempt him to the ſmalleſt expoſure of it?

Honour and Fame;

Thoſe ſhadows muſt vaniſh when he conſiders other real goods which may come in compariſon with them — the Welfare of his family, his friends, his native country.

Were it the welfare of the whole human race, the pitiful enjoyment of a few moments is his whole conſolation, and therefore of unſpeakable value. How will he dare to mount the breach in a ſiege? What he ventures for, in compariſon with what he wiſhes to preſerve, is a mere nothing, as life, in his eſtimation, is more precious than all other poſſeſſions.

But it may be aſked, are there not heroic ſpirits who would ſacrifice life for the rights of humanity, for liberty, virtue, or truth? Yes; and many have expoſed it from far leſs laudable motives. But the heart certainly, not the underſtanding, has moved them to ſuch a reſolution. By ſuch actions they belie their own principles, without being conſcious of it. He who hopes for a future life, and makes the aim of his preſent exiſtence conſiſt in a gradual advancement to perfection, may ſay to himſelf: Behold, you are ſent here to make yourſelf more perfect by the furtherance of good;

you

you may therefore promote good, even at the expence of your life, if it cannot otherwiſe be effected. If tyranny threatens the ruin of your native country, if juſtice is in danger of violation, virtue of being oppreſſed, or religion and truth perſecuted; then make uſe of your life for the end it was conferred upon you, and preſerve to the human race thoſe means of their happineſs. The merit of advancing virtue with ſo much reſignation gives your being an unſpeakable worth, which at the ſame time will be of infinite duration. Whenever death warrants to me what life cannot, then it is my duty, my vocation, and the moment deſtined for me to die. The worth of life appears, and ought to be compared with other goods only, when it is conſidered as a means to happineſs. As ſoon as we loſe with life all exiſtence, it ceaſes to be a means; then its preſervation becomes the object, the only aim of our wiſhes, the

greateſt

greateſt good we can poſſeſs, and is loved and deſired for itſelf alone: no other good in the world can be equalled, much leſs preferred to it, as it ſurpaſſes all others in magnitude. It is therefore impoſſible for me to believe, that a man who apprehends that his being is for ever terminated with this life, ſhould, according to his principles, ſacrifice himſelf for the welfare of his country, or the human race. I am rather of opinion, that as often as the preſervation of the native country requires an individual to loſe his life, or to be in danger of loſing it, a war muſt enſue between the ſtate and this citizen; and what is ſingular, a war which is juſt on both ſides: for has not the native country a right to demand the ſacrifice of the life of any citizen for the welfare of the whole? But the citizen, whenever life becomes his ſupreme good, has exactly an oppoſite right. He can, he may, nay, according to his principles, he ought to

plot

plot the deſtruction of his country, in order to preſerve his own dearer life for ſome longer enjoyment. On ſuch grounds every moral being has an abſolute right to contrive the deſtruction of the whole world, if it will prolong his own exiſtence. All his fellow creatures have the ſame right. What a general revolt is this! What confuſion and diſtraction muſt it occaſion in the world! A war which is juſt on all ſides; a general war of moral beings, where every one has the right on his ſide; a conteſt which, in itſelf, cannot, even by the moſt upright judges, be decided according to juſtice and equity: What can be more abſurd?

If all the opinions which have engaged mankind in diſpute were appealed at the throne of Truth, do you not believe, my friends, that this goddeſs could inſtantaneouſly decide and eſtabliſh irrevocably which of them were true, and which were falſe?

Unqueſ-

Unqueſtionably.

For in the realm of truth no doubts or uncertainty can exiſt; every thing there is decidedly true or falſe. Nobody will deny, I truſt, that a doctrine, which cannot be maintained without admitting abſolute contradictions, inexplicable doubts, or undecided uncertainties, muſt be falſe, at leaſt in the kingdom of Truth; as in her empire a perfect harmony reigns, which nothing can interrupt or diſturb. The ſame character diſtinguiſhes Juſtice: before her tribunal all differences are adjuſted, and right determined according to immutable rules: there no judicial caſe remains undecided or doubtful: no two moral beings have an equal claim to the ſame thing. All thoſe weakneſſes are the inheritance of man, whoſe feebleneſs of ſight makes him incapable of diſcerning all the reaſons which would determine his judgement in its enquiries after truth, or unable to weigh and appreciate them.

them. All the rights of moral beings, like all truths, accord in perfect harmony, in the underſtanding of the ſupreme being. All duties and obligations which appear at variance with each other, and ſuſpend the judgement and actions of beings of a limited nature, are there reconciled. Two oppoſite, yet equal rights, are as abſurd in the eyes of omniſcience as the affirmatve and negative of the ſame propoſition; as the exiſtence and non-exiſtence of the ſame being. What ſhall we ſay then of an opinion which, from the moſt connected and juſtly-formed concluſions, would lead us to ideas that are ſo inconſiſtent and unmaintainable? Would Truth give them her ſanction?

My friend Crito, a few days ago, attempted to convince me that I was not bound to ſubmit to the laws of the republic, and that I ſhould have been juſtifiable in flying from the ſentence pronounced againſt me. Unleſs I am miſtaken in my judge-

ment

ment of his way of thinking, he maintained that opinion merely becauſe he thought the ſentence of my judges unjuſt. If he was convinced that I was guilty of the crimes that have been laid to my charge, then he would not deny the right of the republic to puniſh me with death, and my obligation to ſuffer it. This right to act invariably implies an obligation to ſuffer: and if the republic, or any other moral agent, has a right to puniſh him who offends with death, if a ſlighter puniſhment is not ſufficient, the offender, according to the rigour of juſtice, is obliged to ſuffer that puniſhment; were this obligation to ſuffer, not binding, the right to puniſh would be ideal and viſionary. As in the phyſical world there cannot be an agent without a patient, ſo in the moral world there cannot be a right on one ſide without an obligation upon the other.

I do not doubt, my friends, that you and

Crito

Crito are of the ſame opinion with myſelf upon this head. But we could not think ſo, if life were our deareſt poſſeſſion: for, in that caſe, the moſt heinous offender would be under no obligation to ſuffer the puniſhment he deſerved; on the contrary, when he had merited death from the republic, he would have a right to deſtroy his native country, which endeavours to deſtroy him. What is paſt cannot be recalled. Life is his ſupreme good: How can he prefer the preſervation of the republic to it? How can nature preſcribe a duty to him which does not contribute to his utmoſt welfare? How can he lie under an obligation to do or ſuffer any thing which ruins his happineſs? It will not only be juſt, therefore, but even a duty in him to lay his country waſte with fire and ſword, if he can ſave his life by it. But how does he acquire this fatal right? Before he committed the offence which deſerved puniſhment, was he not, as a man,

obliged

obliged to ſtudy the welfare of men? As a citizen, to promote the welfare of his fellow citizens? What could free him from this obligation, and give him an oppoſite right to deſtroy every thing around him? What has occaſioned this ſtrange conflict in his duties? Who is able to anſwer? — "*The committed crime itſelf.*"

Another unhappy conſequence of this unnatural opinion is, that its ſupporters are at laſt obliged to deny the providence of God. As, according to their ſyſtem, the life of man is confined between the narrow limits of birth and death, they can overlook its courſe, from its commencement to its termination. They have, therefore, ſufficient knowledge of the ſubject to judge of the ways of Providence, if there is one. In the world at large they are inſenſible that numerous accidents do not at all accord with the ideas which ought to be entertained of the attributes of God. Many

events

events appear contrary to his goodneſs, others contradict his juſtice; ſometimes we are tempted to think, that the fate of men depends upon a cauſe which is pleaſed with doing evil. In the phyſical conſtitution of man, they diſcover great order, beauty, and proportion; the wiſeſt views, and the moſt perfect harmony between the means and end: apparent proofs of the ſupreme wiſdom and goodneſs. But in ſocial and moral life the traces of the divine attributes are often inviſible: it is not uncommon to ſee vice triumphant, guilt ſucceſsful, innocence oppreſſed, and virtue perſecuted; the upright ſuffer as often as offenders; mutiny and ſedition obtain their ends as well as the juſteſt legiſlature; and iniquitous war is as frequently proſperous as the deſtruction of monſters, or any noble aim for the benefit of mankind. Misfortunes await the virtuous and the wicked, without diſtinction or regard to merit. If a wiſe, juſt, and power-

ful being, watched over the fate of mortals, and directed it according to his will, would not the ſame order, which we admire in our phyſical conſtitution, pervade the moral world? Perhaps it might be ſaid, "Theſe complaints are made by ſome diſcontented ſpirits, whom neither men nor gods can ſatisfy. Grant them all their wiſhes, raiſe them to the utmoſt height of human happineſs; they will ſtill find in the dark receſſes of their hearts enough of ſpleen and ill humour to make them complain of their benefactors. In the eyes of a moderate man the goods of this world are not ſo unequally diſtributed as may be imagined. Virtue feels an internal ſatisfaction accompany her, which is a ſweeter recompence than riches or power. Innocence would very ſeldom wiſh herſelf in the place of her oppreſſor; her inward peace would be too dear a price for all the charms and glitter of fortune. Whoever eſtimates the

happineſs of mankind by examining their feelings, not their opinions, will find their condition far leſs unhappy than they uſually repreſent it."

Thus much may be ſaid to vindicate the ways of a wiſe Providence in nature. But this reaſoning will have weight only, provided this life does not terminate our exiſtence and hope. In that caſe it may, nay muſt, be of greater moment to our future happineſs, that we ſtruggle here with misfortune, that we exerciſe ourſelves in patience, conſtancy, and reſolution, and learn ſubmiſſion to the will of God, than if we forget ourſelves in proſperity and affluence. If I ſhould even end my life in torments, what does it ſignify if my ſoul by that means acquires the beauty of ſuffering innocence? She is amply repaid for all her troubles. Her ſufferings are but momentary; her recompence eternal. What, however, can indemnify him who, under theſe tor-

ments, concludes his exiſtence for ever, who loſes with his laſt breath all the virtuous acquirements of his ſoul during her warfare in life. Is not the deſtiny of ſuch a mortal cruel? Can he be juſt who decreed it? And, in the ſuppoſition that the conſciouſneſs of innocence could counterbalance all the painful ſenſations which the innocent ſuffer from their perſecutors, even death itſelf; ſhall the oppreſſor, the violator of the rights of God and men, leave the ſcene of his iniquity, without awaking from his blind dream, without acquiring more juſt ideas of good and evil, and becoming ſenſible that this world is governed by a being who is pleaſed with virtue? If no future life is to be expected, Providence can as little be juſtified with reſpect to the perſecutor as the perſecuted.

Unfortunately, to a great part of mankind, theſe ſeeming difficulties appear irreconcileable with the exiſtence of the ſu-

preme being, who, they imagine, troubles himſelf very little about the deſtiny of the human race, notwithſtanding he has beſtowed ſo much perfection on the phyſical nature of man. Virtue and vice, innocence and guilt, he who worſhips or blaſphemes the univerſal ſpirit, and every pitiable error of mind into which man falls, when he forſakes the path of truth, are, according to their ſyſtem, objects of equal indifference in his eyes.

I think it unneceſſary, my friends, to inſiſt further on the inſolidity of theſe opinions, as we are all aſſured that we live under the immediate protection of Providence, and experience no bleſſing nor evil of life which he does not diſpenſe.

We know a more ſecure and eaſy way out of this labyrinth to our underſtandings. In our eyes the world of moral beings ſpeaks the perfection of its author, as ſtrongly as the world of nature. As tem-

peſts, ſtorms, earthquakes, inundations, peſtilences, &c. produce occaſional diſorder of the parts in the latter, which aſſiſts the preſervation and perfection of the whole; in like manner, in the moral world, the vices and depravities of men give riſe to numberleſs excellencies and virtues, and temporary calamities lead to permanent felicity. In order to view the deſtiny of one ſingle man in its proper light, we ought to conſider it in all its eternity. We cannot examine and judge of the ways of Providence, unleſs we could reduce the eternal duration of a rational being under one point of view, adapted to the weakneſs of our perceptions. But were this poſſible, be aſſured, my friends, we ſhould then neither cenſure, murmur, nor complain, but awed and abaſhed, adore and teſtify our admiration of the infinite wiſdom and goodneſs of the being who governs the univerſe.

From all theſe proofs taken together, I think

think we may draw the moſt poſitive aſſurrance of a future life. The faculty of feeling is not a faculty of the body and its admirable ſtructure, but is the property of an eſſence which is pure and ſimple, and conſequently unperiſhable. The perfection which this ſimple ſubſtance has acquired muſt, in reſpect to itſelf, have an endleſs progreſs, and make it ſtill fitter and fitter to fulfil the views of God in nature. Our ſoul, as a being, which is rational, and aims at perfection, belongs to the claſs of ſpirits who make the object of the creation, and can never ceaſe to be obſervers and admirers of God's works. Their exiſtence commences, as we have ſhewn, with a progreſs from one degree of perfection to another; their being is capable of perpetual growth and expanſion: their propenſities point viſibly at infinity, and nature preſents an inexhauſtible ſource to their inſatiable deſires. They have beſides, as moral beings, a ſyſ-

tem of duties and rights which would appear full of abſurdities and contradictions, if they were to be ſtopped in their way to perfection by obſtacles that were inſurmountable. And finally, the ſeeming diſorder and injuſtice which are inſeparable from the life of man make us revert to a ſeries of conſequences, by which every thing dark and inexplicable in the deſign of things here on earth is rendered clear and conſiſtent. Whoever adheres to the performance of his duties with fortitude and conſtancy of temper, and bears adverſity with patient reſignation to the will of God, will deſerve and enjoy at laſt the recompence of his virtues; whereas, he who has trod in the paths of vice cannot leave this world without acknowledging, in ſome way or other, that evil doing is not the road to happineſs. In ſhort, God would impeach his wiſdom, goodneſs, and juſtice, if he had created rational beings, and ſuffered

them

them to make a progreſs to perfection for a limited term only.

Any one of you might now ſay to me — "Well, Socrates, you have convinced us that there is a future life to man; but tell us alſo where our departed ſpirits ſhall inhabit? In what etherial region will they dwell? How will they be employed? What reward will the virtuous ſouls meet with? And will the vicious be enlightened and reclaimed?"

If any perſon puts theſe queſtions to me, I ſhall ſay to him, "Friend, you aſk me what is beyond my province to anſwer. I have led you through all the windings of the maze, and ſhewn you its outlet; other guides may conduct you farther. Whether the ſouls of the impious and wicked will ſuffer froſt or heat, hunger or thirſt, will ſink in the moraſſes of Acheruſia, paſs their time in gloomy Tartarus, or be toſſed on the flames of Phlegethon until they are purified?

purified? Whether the bleſſed will breathe pure heavenly ether upon a radiant mount of gold and precious ſtones, baſk themſelves in the bluſhes of the ſplendid morning, and enjoy perpetual youth, while they drink inſpiring drafts of nectar? Theſe are queſtions which I am totally unable to anſwer. If our poets and mythologiſts know better than me, let them communicate their inſtruction to others. The cauſe of humanity can receive no hurt from the play of their imagination. With reſpect to myſelf, I am content with feeling a conviction that the eye of heaven is perpetually upon me; that its divine providence and juſtice will watch over me in the next, as it has protected me in this life; and that my real happineſs conſiſts in the beauties and perfections of my ſoul. Theſe perfections are, temperance, juſtice, charity, benevolence, knowledge of the ſupreme being, unceaſing efforts to accompliſh his views, and reſignation

ſignation to his divine will. Theſe are the bleſſed felicities which await me in the futurity which now opens before me. Thither I haſten. More I deſire not to know to make me ſet out chearfully upon my journey. You, Simmias, Cebes, and my other friends, will follow me, each in his turn. I may now uſe the words of the tragic poet, and ſay, "Inexorable fate beckons to me. It is now time to go into the bath. I think it will be more decent to bathe before I take the poiſon, that the women may not have the trouble of waſhing my body after it is dead."

So be it, ſaid Crito, as Socrates gave over ſpeaking. But what have you to leave in charge to your friends or me to do, reſpecting your children and private affairs? How ſhall we live to give you pleaſure?

By living, Crito, as I have long ſince recommended to you. I have nothing farther to add. If you entertain a juſt reſpect

for

for yourſelf, you cannot fail to live agreeably to virtue, and my wiſhes, independent of any promiſe, you may make me. But if you neglect yourſelf, and do not follow the path which I have pointed out to you this day, as well as formerly, it will be to no purpoſe to make me any promiſes at preſent.

My dear Socrates, ſaid Crito, we will uſe our utmoſt efforts to obey you. But how ſhall we do with you after youth death?

As you pleaſe, anſwered Socrates, provided I remain ſtill with you, and do not make my eſcape elſewhere.

At the ſame time he looked at us ſmiling, and ſaid, I cannot, my friends, perſuade Crito, that he who now talks, and has for ſome time paſt been converſing with you, is the true Socrates. He ſtill imagines that Socrates, and the corpſe which he will very ſoon ſee, which at this moment ſerves me as a garment only, are the ſame thing, and

aſks how he ſhall inter me. All the arguments which I have produced hitherto, to prove, that as ſoon as the poiſon has operated I ſhall remain no longer here, but be tranſported to the manſions of the bleſt, appear to him mere inventions, to conſole you for my death. Be ſo kind, my friends, as to act a contrary part to that which Crito has done for me. He was bail for me to my judges, that I ſhould not make my eſcape. You muſt be my guarantees to him, that after death I ſhall take my departure hence; that he may burn my body, or lay it in the earth, without afflicting himſelf by thinking, that the greateſt of all misfortunes has befallen me. Neither muſt he ſay at my interment, They place Socrates upon the bier; they carry Socrates away; they lay Socrates in the grave — For know, my dear Crito, that ſuch obſervations are not only contrary to truth, but offenſive to the departed ſpirit. Inter my

body

body in whatever manner you pleaſe, or the laws ordain; but be comforted in mind to think of the happy region to which I am fled.

Upon ſaying this, Socrates, attended by Crito, went into a neighbouring chamber to waſh himſelf, deſiring us to ſtay till his return.

During his abſence we entered into a recapitulation of the arguments we had heard, in order to preſerve their conviction upon our memories, and ſtrengthen our fortitude for the trial we were about to experience in the fate of our friend; but the weight they bore, or the ſolace they afforded, could not prevent our minds from being deeply agitated by the melancholy event we ſaw approaching: for in Socrates we felt we were to loſe a father, and to become orphans in the world.

After he had bathed, his children were brought to him. He had three; one of

them

them was grown up; the other two were yet in their infancy. The women of his houſe alſo came to take leave of him. He ſpoke to them all in preſence of Crito, gave them his laſt injunctions, and then returned to us.

The ſun was about to ſet, for Socrates had ſtaid ſome time in the bath. He ſat down, but had ſcarcely began to ſpeak when the officer of the eleven men entered, and, going up to him, "Oh, Socrates," he ſaid, "I ſee ſomething in you very different from other men. I have been uſed to meet with ſcornful looks and imprecations when I have announced the commands of juſtice, and bid them prepare to drink their laſt draft; but you are the moſt calm and tranquil man that ever entered theſe walls, and at this moment ſeem ſtill more ſuperiorly ſo. Did your boſom feel any reſentment, I am certain it would not be towards me, but thoſe whom you know.

know.—I believe I need ſay no more: you underſtand the meſſage I have to deliver to you. Farewel; ſuffer with patience the doom awarded you."

At theſe words he turned from Socrates, and retired in tears.

Socrates mildly anſwered him as he went, Friend, adieu; we ſhall do as you deſire. Then addreſſing us: Obſerve, ſaid Socrates, this man; he has frequently viſited and converſed with me; he has a truly kind and compaſſionate heart; ſee how ſincerely he weeps. But, Crito, we muſt obey him: let the poiſon be brought, if it is ready; if not, let it be prepared.

Why in ſuch haſte, my dear Socrates, ſaid Crito: I believe that the ſun ſtill ſhines upon the mountains. Many perſons, before they taſte the cup of death, eat and drink, and dedicate their laſt moments to love.

They who conſider every momentary ſuſpen-

ſuſpenſion of their fate as a gain may do ſo. I have reaſons for obſerving a different conduct. I do not imagine I can gain any thing by delay; and I ſhould appear ridiculous to myſelf if I were to become avaricious of life, when it is no longer mine.

Crito then made a ſign to the ſlave that attended. The ſlave withdrew, and ſometime after the officer returned with a cup of poiſon in his hand, and advanced with it towards Socrates.

The virtuous Socrates met him coming, Execrates, and ſaid, Friend, give it me, and tell me how I am to do; for you muſt know——

Nothing, ſaid the officer, but to walk to and fro after you have drank it until your feet become heavy; then lay yourſelf down, that is all.

Socrates took the cup quietly from him, and, fixing a ſtedfaſt look upon the officer,

aſked him if he thought a few drops might be ſpilled in libation to the gods.

The officer anſwered, there is no more than the neceſſary quantity.

It is enough, ſaid Socrates. A prayer, however, I may ſtill addreſs—"Ye gods "who call me—vouchſafe me a happy "journey."

When he had pronounced theſe words he raiſed the cup to his lips, and emptied it without diſcovering the ſmalleſt emotion.

At that moment our fortitude failed us, and a flood of grief burſt from us all.—I ſunk under my ſorrows, and, in order to give a free paſſage to my tears, covered my face with my mantle.

Crito, who was ſtill leſs able to reſtrain his emotions, roſe, and walked up and down the priſon like a perſon diſordered.

Appollodorus, who had never ceaſed weeping, almoſt during the whole day, began now to utter bitter lamentations.

Socrates

Socrates, who alone continued unmoved, called to us, and ſaid: my friends, be calm; I ſent the women away that I might not be troubled with their weakneſs. I have been told, that a man ſhould endeavour to leave the world amidſt prayers and benedictions; I hope, therefore, you will behave yourſelves like men.

This unſhaken conſtancy of ſoul in Socrates made us aſhamed, and put a pauſe to our grief.

He walked about in the priſon until his feet began to feel heavy, and then laid himſelf down on the bed on his back, as he had been directed. Soon after the officer came to obſerve him; pinched his foot, and aſked him if he felt it.

Socrates anſwered, No.

He did the ſame to his thigh; but immediately turned round to us, and told us it was cold and ſtiff. He felt him again, and ſaid, His lower belly begins to be affected:

as ſoon as the poiſon reaches his heart he will expire.

Socrates, who had been covered by the officer, uncovered himſelf, and ſaid, Crito, do not forget, my friend, to offer a cock to Eſculapius; we owe him a ſacrifice.

Crito replied, it ſhall be done. Have you any thing further to command?

To this no anſwer followed.

A moment after he was convulſed. The officer then uncovered him, but his looks were fixed; upon which Crito ſhut his mouth and eyes.

Such, Execrates, was the end of our friend —a man who, of all men we have known, was certainly the moſt virtuous, wiſe, and juſt.

FINIS.