Of the other philosophies which contributed to form that of Plato, the proper time to speak will be in direct connexion with the doctrines he established to conciliate or to refute them.

Although, as I have already said, we may conclude that we possess all the written works of Plato, it is not certain that we possess all his opinions. Certain ἄγραφα δόγματα are spoken of in the Physics of Aristotle, which have given rise among his votaries to discussions almost as anxious as those which our own age witnesses on the subject of unwritten traditions far more important. Aristotle also collected his διαφέρεις, or Distinctions, which are preserved by Laertius, and some of which are to be found in his writings, but which are of little value in estimating his opinions.

The genuineness, and the chronological order, of his dialogues have been largely debated by modern critics; and the sceptical spirit of the criticism of Germany has shown no more mercy to the "Attic Moses" than to his venerable prototype. Socher denies us four of the most important of the entire collection. Schleiermacher is content with refusing his critical passport to two or three; but the wholesale severity of Ast will not be satisfied unless twelve of our precious relics be sacrificed. The

18 [Phys. iv. 2, 3. Suidas asserts that Aristotle arranged the "unwritten opinions of Plato" in a work of his own περί τέχνης. All the accessible information upon this curious subject may be found in Trendelenburg’s Platonis Doctrinae de Ideis et Numeris, Lips. 1826, and in the treatise of Brandis, De perditis Aristotelis Libris, Bonn, 1823. Ed.]

17 [These "distinctions" are alluded to by Aristotle, De Gen. et Corr. ii. 3; καθάπερ Πλάτων ἔν ταῖς διαφέρεσις. Compare Diog. L. iii. 80: διὰ τινὰ παραπόλεμος, τοῦτον τῶν τρόπων. The author of the 13th Epistle also mentions them: τῶν τε Πλατωνίδων τέμνων σοι καὶ τῶν διαφέρεσιν, p. 360 B. C. F. Hermann, from whom I transcribe these references, calls attention to certain γεγραμμένα διαφέρεις alluded to by Aristotle, de Part. Anim. i. 2 (where the philosopher refers to Politicur init. and possibly toSophista, p. 220 B), as evidence that no separate collection of διαφέρεις was made by Plato himself. (See Gesch. d. Platonischen Philos. t. p. 549, not. 224.) The ἰδιοι or Definitions, which appear in the editions of Plato, are attributed by some editors to Sopseipius, but without sufficient reason. Ed.]

18 [The Purcomides, Sophista, Politicur and Critias. The Theatetus Socher, as well he may, regards as "höchst wahrscheinlich echt." His book, which is not without interest as the work of a clever amateur, is entitled Uber Platonis Schriften. München, 1826. Ed.]

19 [Not twelve, but twenty-one; to wit, the Laws, the Epinomis, the Meno, Euthydemeus, Charmides, Lytis, Alcibiades II., Menexenus, Laches, Hippias i. and ii., Ion, Euthyphron, Apology, Cratylus, Theages, Antistaces, Hipparchus, Minos, Chiton, Epitaxos, besides those already condemned by Diogenes Laertius! Those marked with an asterisk are rejected by the Zurich editors, who condemn the first Alcibiades also, and not without reason. The second is given up even by Stallbaum. The genuineness of the Laws has been called in question by some recent German critics. Its authenticity is ably, and it seems to me conclusively, defended by Professor Jowett in the Introduction to his translation. The Epinomis, the second Alcibiades, the Theages, Antistaces, Hipparchus, Minos, and Chiton have few, if any sup-
reasons upon which this bold decision is founded are totally unsatisfactory. An ideal is formed of the Platonic style, and all which seems to fall below this conception is declared to be the feeble imitation of some ambitious pupil. Some construct this ideal in reference to the perfection of style, others in reference to force of doctrine; some look to the artist, others to the philosopher; but all equally adopt a principle against which the genuineness of none of the more voluminous authors of antiquity could stand. No one is more ready than myself to admit that among the Platonic dialogues are some which appear miserably unworthy of the author of the sixth and seventh books of the Republic; but when I find the Hippias Minor, with its barren paradoxes, authenticated by the express reference of Aristotle, I learn to distrust a priori criticism. Plato's writings were spread over a long and meditative life; they were produced under various influences, and probably under many changes of temper and feeling; the Columbus of the Ideal World could not always steer steadily and exultingly for the land of his discoveries and his reputation; nor can we tell what conjectures may have given pertinency to discussions that now seem arid and unprofitable. The partiality of a writer for early essays may have induced Plato to permit imperfect sketches to shelter their imperfection under the shadow of maturer greatness; and his deep reverence for Socrates may have sometimes induced him to forbear qualifying with his own more finished excellence a few of those paradoxical discussions in which the old master kept his unrivalled powers of casuistry in play, and breathed himself for more momentous except Mr Grote: but most of the remaining dialogues in Ast's list are not only worthy of Plato, but could not have proceeded from an inferior author. The difference of style observable in the Laws is, in the opinion of some critics, satisfactorily accounted for by the questionable tradition that it was left by Plato εν κεφαλαιοις, i.e. that he did not live to write a fair copy. But a certain degeneration of manner is observable in other probably late dialogues of undoubted authenticity; and were the literary merit of the Laws less than it really is, we should have no right to question a work which Aristotle expressly acknowledges to have been written by his master.

[This remark has undoubtedly great force against the sweeping criticisms, or sneer, of Ast. On the other hand, there is an antecedent probability that Plato would find many imitators, and that their imitations would vary in merit. Some of the coarsest forgeries were rejected by the ancients (see the list in Laertius), but the unresisting acquiescence in the genuineness of compositions so open to suspicion as the Platonic Epistles is a proof that the Alexandrine critics are not to be trusted without reserve.

[Metaph. IV. 39, 5, where it is called the Hippias, as if Aristotle knew no other. The same dialogue is referred to in the same terms by Cicero, de Orat. III. 32. This is an argument, so far as it goes, against the genuineness of the First Hippias.

[If this remark has any force, it constitutes a reason against the early date of the Phaedrus, in which Plato's powers both of language and arrangement appear in their most perfect state of development.
ous encounters. By the aid of such considerations as these, there are none of the works of Plato authenticated by fair external evidence, which we may not receive as possible, or probable, products of his mind.

Amid a collection so varied and so extensive it is impossible not to feel some curiosity as to the order of composition. With the exception of the tradition before noticed relative to the priority of the *Phaedrus* and *Lysis*, and a statement in Plutarch's life of Solon, that the completion of the *Critias* was prevented by the author's death, the ancients give us little light on this subject. That some of the dialogues were intended to be mutually connected is unquestionable. Thus, the *Theaetetus*, the *Sophist*, and the *Politics*. The *Republic*, the *Timeus*, and the *Critias*, are expressly conjoined by their author; though it may at first sight seem strange that a treatise of physics should form the middle term between a great political essay and a high-wrought moral romance. If the *Clitophon* were a genuine dialogue it should form the introduction to this series. The usual division is the old classification by tetralogies, which, we are told, Plato himself adopted in imitation of the tragic writers; a proof to you how distinctly he himself, or at least the ancient critics who received these works (if the division by tetralogies began with them), regarded the Platonic dialogues as works of art, as philosophic dramas. Another classification of great antiquity is based upon the style and purpose of the dialogue,—as maieutick, anatreptic, endieictick, and so forth. But all these divisions throw little light upon the literary biography of Plato. As the only remaining resource efforts have been made to arrange the order of production by the internal evidence of the writings themselves. In this enterprise Schleiermacher has displayed especial perseverance, and considerable sagacity. Of his reasonings, depending as they must on minute details, and comparisons of phrases, style, subject, and sentiment, it would, of course, be impossible to present you with any satisfactory account. The general result is thus stated by another able Platonist, who regards it as substantially justified by a close examina-

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[Thrasylus, who lived under the emperor Tiberius, is the authority for this (in Diog. L. iii. 56). He divided the whole series of dialogues into tetralogies, of which Laertius gives a list. It is quite certain that his division was not Plato's; though some of his tetralogies are ascribed with considerable intelligence. The two or three tetralogies projected by the philosopher himself were never finished; thus, in that in which the *Theaetetus* stands first, we are promised a fourth dialogue to follow the *Politics*, but the promise is not fulfilled. Thrasylus completes the tetralogy by prefixing the *Cratylus* to the other three; an expedient for which there is no justification in Plato's text. His selection of the wretched little *Clitophon* to head the series beginning with the *Republic* is another instance of injudicious ingenuity. Ed.]
tion of the writings thus estimated. "He divides the works of Plato into three classes. To the class of the writings of his youth belong the *Phaedrus* and the *Protagoras*, as well as several other minor moral dialogues in the Socratic vein; the second class comprises particularly those works of the higher dialectic which are mutually connected, —the *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Politicus*; finally, the dialogues directly constructive,—the *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Laws*,—form the last class of the writings of Plato." The writer whom I cite adds that the *Gorgias* may mark the transition from the first to the second class; the *Phaedo* and *Philebus*, from the second to the third. A general decision such as this, is, perhaps, the farthest point that criticism can expect to reach without external evidence to assure its advances.

But, whatever may have been the precise order in which the works and the mind of Plato were developed, and whatever may have been the circumstances, now irreparably lost, which determined each successive direction of his thoughts, there is a unity in the whole which speaks the creation of a single mind, and which appears in even the earliest of his disquisitions with a distinctness which proves that the main lines of his philosophy were caught and fixed before he ever wrote a page.

These prominent features, which decide the character of the whole, are to my judgment discoverable from the first, and discoverable in all. And these, felt to be the fundamental notes, are the notes which have found their echo in every age. To be more precise, the teaching of Plato presented a double aspect, and each found its exaggerated likeness in succeeding forms of philosophy. On the one hand, the constant depreciation of the certainty and value of such knowledge as is derived through the channel of the *senses*, was represented in the sceptical, or semi-sceptical, succession of the Academics; on the other, the loftier views of his more abstract tenets were resumed, and too often disfigured, by the Alexandrian mystics. In exhibiting the ultimate forms of his doctrines when separately and exclusively received, these schools afford very valuable instruction to the student of Plato. The double result is highly characteristic of the localities where it manifested itself. The subtle intellect of Greece soon adopted as its favourite that element of Platonism which gave room for endless distinctions, strange paradoxes, and scholastic conflict; the oriental genius of Alexandria found food for its musing quietism in those remote and ethereal speculations which seemed to justify a life of meditative inaction, and even to exhibit, as its reward and inheritance, an imme-
mediate commerce with heaven. No inquiry can be more interesting and profitable to those who desire to grow wise upon recorded error—to erect, as it were, warning beacons upon every perilous passage in the vast sea of human speculation—than that which examines these two developments of Platonism, and traces to their consummate efflorescence the germs which already lay scattered through the old dialogues of the master himself. Every one feels that the danger of the Platonic philosophy, from its earliest hour, was its bias to exclusive contemplativeness; and in these developments you have the inevitable result. Exactly as every one must recognize that one of the most wondrous evidences of divine wisdom in the Christian system, is the perfect proportion in which it exhibits its impulses to the contemplative and active forms of holiness, giving to each its appropriate stimulants; and while chiefly insisting upon the one which man’s position in a world of social duties most requires, yet never allowing to it that absolute supremacy which could make the other wholly forgotten. It is, indeed, well worth notice, how in the very aggregate of writings which divine Providence was pleased to preserve to the Church as the exemplar of practice, this balance seems purposely and carefully held in view; and the characters of the writers, and the portion of inspired precept they record, suited with exquisite accuracy to give the complex impression required. Yet we know that even in Christianity itself, at various ages, the separate elements have obtained disproportionate influence, and the due equilibrium of the New Testament been forgotten; and we may, perhaps, be inclined to indulge to the reputation of Plato results which the caprices and perversities of our nature have introduced more than once into the ethics of Christianity itself. At the same time, I am willing to allow (as subsequent expositions shall evince), that any representation of Platonism would be imperfect, which did not fairly state that the scepticism of the Academy and the dreamy theories of Alexandria were not unnatural results of certain tendencies discoverable in the writings of Plato himself; tendencies for which his own well-balanced intellect, doubtless, provided sufficient counterpoise, but which too closely suited peculiar temperaments not to have been soon exalted into exclusive or predominant principles of speculation.

With such admonitions as these—and they should never be forgotten—the student of the Platonic treatises may prepare to yield himself to a course of philosophical speculation, which, taking all circumstances together, is probably the most ennobling that has yet proceeded from any
human being unaided, directly or indirectly, by the notices of inspiration. How far such a philosophy can expect to obtain the rights of citizenship in these countries under their present habits of thought, it is not easy to say. That its fundamental principles, when stript of unnecessary hypothesis and fanciful decoration (which Plato himself, perhaps, intended for nothing more), are founded on eternal truth, I cannot doubt; but it is unquestionable that they represent a class of truths which, for many years, and from various causes, have been feebly portrayed in the popular philosophy of our language. With all our admiration for the energetic labours of the great naturalists of our day, and for the advances which the physical sciences are receiving through their combined exertions, we cannot refuse to see—and in all quarters the conviction is gaining strength among thoughtful men—that the spiritual world (except as far as practically presented by the preachers of religion) is in proportion eclipsed. It is, as it were, unrepresented in the parliament of philosophy. This huge material universe with all its labyrinth of laws seems to fetter and entangle us; and we are so overwhelmed by weight and motion, that matter and being become equivalent terms, and we cannot allow the existence of a world to which these material attributes are not attached. Now, if it be essential to a right estimation of things, that we should evermore feel that there is that within us which can hold converse with truths that sense has never given and never could give; that these truths are real truths, things far more durable than ever was earthly bond or material law; that they manifest themselves on the stage of our conscious intelligence as the shadows of eternal realities; that these realities converge to one centre, which centre is no other than God Himself; if it be well that amid the dust of our laboratories these things should not be forgotten, then is it well that the high-priest of reason—that Plato—should be heard and known. In truth, it was a wondrous vision that this man saw! Untaught (if he was untaught, if any one moving in such a path can be said to move wholly without the guidance of God, but, for all outward evidence, untaught) by any supernatural instructor, he could look into his own heart and find there the image of eternity, he could see reflected in the human reason the divine, and catch from the mysterious caverns of the soul yet imprisoned in flesh, dim echoes of another world! Whatever be the errors, the fantasies, the failures, of Plato, to have thus seen and heard, to have thus stood forward a witness for the design and destinies of man, places him—if we forget for a moment his less aspiring master—alone among the
uninspired instructors of the earth. And in every age, when the tone of public opinion becomes relaxed, when its ambition becomes envy and its wisdom cunning, and men professedly determine to forget the inner for the outer world—the office of the pulpit is indeed plain and invariable; but, as for the schools, who must speak by book and system, it has been their safety to inscribe the venerable name of Plato upon their standards, and strong in the authority that belongs to recognized greatness when modern names might fail, to restore, under the charm and the power of this august philosophy, the falling fortunes of learning and the muse.
LECTURE VI.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY.  NO. III.

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING, at such length as our present occasion demanded, considered the chief characteristics of the life and writings of Plato, we are now to enter upon a much more difficult task,—that of briefly, but definitely, fixing our views of his philosophical labours. Upon the difficulty of the undertaking, however, I will not insist; as I should be sorry to suggest anything which might deter you from making that personal investigation, to which all my efforts in this place are only meant to be preparatory or auxiliary. Neither shall I (for reasons still more obvious) say anything about my own qualifications to be your assistant in the study. My only claims upon your attention consist in this,—that what I shall offer you is at least the result of patient and conscientious examination of the original documents of this great master of reason; and therefore, that if my conclusions should coincide with those already advanced in your ordinary text-books and treatises, they will possess the value (whatever it may amount to) of independent evidence; if they should differ, they will invite you to the tribunal where alone such differences can be properly decided—the great originals, the fontes integri—themselves. If they effect this, they will procure you a benefit cheaply purchased by the trouble of listening for a while to a tedious or inefficient exposition.

In our present Lecture we shall consider the Philosophy of Plato, generally, and as a whole.

I. The quality which above all others manifests itself to the student of this philosophy is the eminently ethical character of the entire system. It is a contemplative philosophy only for practical purposes. Its ultimate object is the purification of the soul, and science is but the means for the attainment of this object. Thus, its tendency is to rationalize morals, and to moralize reason. Its phrases and definitions perpetually shew this. Wisdom, or σοφία, is expressly declared to belong alone to the Supreme Divi-
nity, who alone can contemplate reality directly, and with whom, indeed, it seems more than once intimated that knowledge and existence coincide: Philosophy is considered as the aspiration of the soul after this perfect and immutable truth—that is, it is connected with perfect wisdom by the medium of a divine affection (that "love" on which Plato so largely dilates); in other words, it is itself essentially moral, no less than merely scientific (Phaedr.). In this spirit he pronounces "philosophy," properly speaking, to belong neither to the gods nor to the ignorant among mankind: the aspiration is below those who possess the reality, and above those who have never learned its value. In establishing the proper object of philosophic science to be the eternal and unchangeable (as far as man can attain it), we find (in conformity with what I have stated) this supreme essence invested with moral attributes; it is alternately τὸ ὑπο and τὸ ἀγαθὸν; and all which can be the material of speculation in the system of the universe is pronounced to be an emanation of goodness. "What," asks one of the interlocutors in the sixth book of the Republic,

"is this science of which you speak as superior to all others, and what is its object?" "You have often heard me say," replies Socrates, "that the Idea of the Good is the object of the sublimest of sciences...if we know not this idea, it will avail us nothing to know all the rest." "As eyes which should be unable to turn from darkness to light without turning the whole body, so the organ of intelligence ought to turn with the entire soul from the sight of that which is generated to the contemplation of that which alone is, and of that which is most luminous in Being; and have we not denounced that the Good?" It is even said that the Good is the cause of things known, and of knowledge. And to render this ultimate ἀγαθὸν yet more definite, it is

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2 [Sympos. p. 204 A: θεῶν οὐδεὶς ὕποφης ἐγώ, ἐπειδὴ μὲν οὖν γενέθηκα, ἀπὶ γὰρ...οὖθ' ἀπὶ δὲ ἀκαθάρτως φιλοσοφοῦμεν, κ.τ.λ. Ed.]
3 [p. 505 A and vii. 518 C. Ed.]
4 [Lec. vi. p. 508 E: τὸν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἱδαν, αἰτίαν ἀκαθάρτως οὖθαν καὶ ἄλλοτεν, κ.τ.λ. So vii. 517 C: ἃ τ. ἀγ. 18...πάντων ὁρθῶν τε καὶ καλῶν αἰτίᾳ,...ἀν πατήσῃ αὐτή κυρία ἄλλες καὶ νοῦν παρασκευάζῃ. Ed.]

* "The Good is the Sun of the Intelligible World; it shines on objects the light of truth, and gives to the soul that knows the faculty of knowing."

"Consider," he proceeds, "this Idea as the principle of science, and of truth, considered as subject to knowledge; and however beautiful be science and truth, you will deceive yourself, if you set not the idea of the Good apart from, and above, them. As in the visible world, we justly believe that sight and light are analogous to the sun, yet are not the sun; so in the intelligible sphere, we regard science and truth as analogous to the Good, but it would be a grievous error to take them for the Good itself, which is far more precious than they."
exhibited with a fixed and individual personality. The object of the particular sciences is said to be “to facilitate the contemplation of the idea of Good,” thus synonymous with reality itself: and this essential Goodness is described as “the happiest of all beings, and whom the soul ought evermore and in every way to contemplate.” Every special science is valuable only so far as it aids to enfranchise the soul for this free flight into the infinite excellence. Accordingly, when Plato is engaged with the discussion of the particular sciences, he resolves them into the science of Good; when engaged with the particular virtues, he resolves them into the virtue of Science. The Laches is a discussion on valour, and it is shewn to be as nothing where not directed by that presiding knowledge which alone can raise it into the sphere of virtue; while, on the other hand, mathematics, music, astronomy, are below the level of the philosopher, where not made strictly subordinate to the art of converse with the supremely good. You will have now perceived that, in Plato, philosophy is only another name for religion;—philosophy is the love of Perfect Wisdom; perfect Wisdom and perfect Goodness are identified; the perfectly Good is God Himself;—philo-

5 [Rep. vii. p. 532 c. τάσσα...ἡ πραγματεία τῶν τεχνῶν...ταύτην ἄρχει τὴν δόξαν καὶ ἐπαναγωγὴν τοῦ βελτίστου ἐν ψυχῇ, πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀριστοτελοῦ ἐν τινὶ οὐδὲ θεῖαν. Ed.]

6 [Ib. vii. 526 e. τὸ εὐδαιμονετατοῦ τοῦ ὄρος, ἡ δὲ αὐτήν (sc. τὴν ψυχήν) παρὶ τρόπῳ ἰδία. The epithet ed. is perhaps explained by Phadr. 350 b, c; μακρῶν διὸν τε καὶ θεῖα...τῶν τελετῶν ἑν θείω λεγέω μακαρωτάτην, where the “blessedness” is the attribute of the spectators, not of the object contemplated. Ed.]

And though this unimaginable Excellence is declared to be superessential—above Being itself—ἐπιτευχείν τὴν ὁμολογία προσβεία καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερβολήντος—(Rep. vi.), it is yet identified with moral entities by manifesting itself in and through them.


8 [Whether Plato really identified the Idea of Good with God is still an undecided question. His ancient interpreters undoubtedly so understood him—Platonists and Neo-platonists alike: and the same is the view of most of his German expositors. The principal exceptions are Stallbaum and C. F. Hermann; the former holding that the Idea of Good is itself, in Plato's view, the creation of the divine Intelligence; the latter, that it is to be regarded as its coeternal object, immutable, uncaused, independent as God is. The opinion adopted in the text is evidently difficult to reconcile with the personality of the divine Essence, and with those passages, in the Timaeus and elsewhere, in which that personality seems to be clearly asserted. Are we to suppose that such passages (which the reader will find quoted abundantly in the notes to subsequent Lectures) are to be taken in an exclusively mythical or popular sense, and that we are to look to the Republic and Philebus as conveying Plato's interior meaning? It does not fall within the province of the Editor of these Lectures to pronounce upon this most obscure, but profoundly interesting question; at the same time it would have been unfair to pass it over in silence. Those who would compare the arguments on both sides are referred to C. F. Hermann's tract, De Idea Boni op. Plat. Marb. 1839, to Stallbaum's Prolegomena to the Philebus, p. xxiv. and those to the Timaeus, p. 46; and, as an able defence of the more generally received opinion, to
sophy, then, is the Love of God. Whatever you may think of the soundness of this reasoning, or the practicability of realizing it, you can at least perceive how susceptible was the language of Platonism of Christian adaptations; and how naturally the Evangelists, in rendering the expressions of their divine Master into the language which Plato spoke, adopted phrases analogous to those which Plato used. Such are those, especially, which speak of the knowledge of God as itself involving a spiritual state of the soul; and which, in like manner, make that spiritual state the path of access to that knowledge. The judicious student of the New Testament will not fail to observe the internal evidence of supernatural guidance which is contained in the very moderation with which phrases are used which may be so easily urged to mysticism, and which, in point of fact, formed the text upon which the extravagances of gnosticism were founded, and by which the impracticable theories of the later Platonists sought to obtain the countenance of antiquity.

Such then is the predominating quality of the Platonic philosophy,—the professed union of the Absolute Goodness with the Absolute Reality, of perfect Truth with perfect Virtue, of human virtue with philosophy. It is thus that Socrates on one occasion describes the votary of this celestial wisdom in language whose purport we shall just now understand more distinctly:—"He who possesses the true love of science, naturally is carried in his aspirations to the real Being; and his love, far from suffering itself to be retarded by this multitude of things whose reality is only apparent, knows no repose until it have arrived at union with the essence of each object by the part of the soul which is akin to the permanent and essential; so that, this divine conjunction having produced intelligence and truth, the knowledge of Being is won, and the true life in the bosom of the sage attained free of the painful throes that accompanied its birth!" "He whose thoughts are really occupied with the high contemplation of the eternal Existence, has no leisure to cast his eyes upon the doings of men, to war with them, and cherish envy and bitterness against them:—his gaze for ever fixed upon objects which preserve the same mutual arrangement and relations, and which, without seeking each other's evil, are all submitted to the law of order and of reason, he makes it his object to image forth in himself their perfect harmony. For how can one be unceasingly in the company of an object that excites

love and admiration without an effort to resemble it?... Thus
the philosopher, by his communion with that which is
divine and subject to the law of order, becomes himself a
subject of order, and divine, as far as it competes to hu-
manity."
I cite such passages as these, partly to establish
the predominating moral complexion of the Platonic
notion of science,—which is, in some measure, the key of
his whole philosophy,—partly, I confess (as the spies of
Sacred Writ), to exhibit some specimen of the productions
of this promised land, and to animate you to penetrate it
for yourselves, undismayed by the reported terrors of those
Anakims of ancient philosophy—Ideas, and Essences, and
Essential Forms.

The philosophy of Plato, then, being, as we have inti-
mated, founded upon the eternal Unity of Goodness, Order,
and Truth; and all the departments of Knowledge being
referred to the Ultimate Reality in which these were con-
sidered to be combined, you will of course expect to find
in the Platonic philosophy an intimate relation of all its
parts to each other, as well as to their common object.
This indeed is in some degree a character of all ancient, as
contrasted with modern, philosophy; but it is more emi-
nently observable in Plato than in any of his contempo-
raries or successors. There is no philosophy the entire of
which so easily resolves itself into a few fundamental ideas.
He is said to have divided his own speculations into three
main departments,—Dialectics, Physics, and Ethics (for,
like every a priori reasoner, Plato had a tendency to take
the entire field of philosophy into his grasp); and it would
not be difficult to shew that all these regions, as Plato re-
garded them, are directly and immediately connected. But,
as we have already laid down the principle, that the ethical
character is that which predominates in all the views of
Plato, it is from this that we set out in exhibiting this
second characteristic of the Platonic philosophy.

II. When Plato examined the Idea of Humanity, he
found its principal character to be the gift of reason. The
rationality of man was his essential attribute; and the
perfection of man must consist in its development. The
proper object of reason is truth,—truth as single, identical,
and immutable as reason itself. The apprehension of truth
is, therefore, that which eminently belongs to man; in
greater or less degrees to all men; in the highest degree of
earthly cultivation, to the sage. As far, then, as man per-
ceives truth—not truth physical and transitory, but truth
unchangeable and eternal—so far is he aiming at the
proper perfection of his nature. But the perfection of man

10 [Repr. vi. p. 500 n. Ed.]
is virtue itself; virtue therefore is evermore identified with the apprehension of truth; and the practical and speculative sciences are thus identified. I need not, to any of you who remember the attempt which I made to illustrate the views of Socrates himself, repeat that this view of thought is pre-eminently Socratic. To such a degree does Plato carry this conviction of the identity of true science with true virtue, that he repeatedly maintains that all vice is ignorance, in other words, is a mistake as to the nature and distinctions of good and evil. The knowledge of good, therefore, of that good which diffuses itself through all inferior goods, and gives them their character, is the main point of philosophical virtue. But how shall man attain to the knowledge of good? By what pathway shall he learn to climb to this dominant citadel of wisdom? Now, to solve this, we must remember that the knowledge of good, as being knowledge, must presuppose an object stable and unchangeable; an object, then, beyond this transitory scene. It must be a science (in the Platonic language) of that which is, and not an opinion (δόξα) of that which appears. The science which thus treats of everlasting existences, and among them, as supreme, of the Ultimate and Absolute Good, this is no other than the Platonic Dialectics.

But again, we have seen how morality itself, in the Platonic estimate, was referred to that Being who is essential order. The world itself is but the image in the sphere of sense of those ideas of order which perpetually inhere in the intellect of that great and central Being. To study the constitution of the world is then to contemplate, in a blurred and distorted reflection, indeed, but still to contemplate, the divine mind; and though the main business of philosophy is to rise above the transitory and phenomenal, yet, while held in its subordinate place, even the world of appearances may minister to the purposes of ethical discipline. At least its study may serve as a relaxation. For (I quote a sentiment which will sound strangely in modern ears) "if any man, with a view to relaxation from higher pursuits, should cease for a while from speculations regarding the eternal, and follow out arguments analogical or conjectural (εἰκότας) regarding the temporal, and by such means find himself in possession of unrepented pleasure (ηδονήν ἀμεταμελητον), he will secure himself a temperate and proper recreation." But the directly moral purpose is still the main one; "God gave us sight," Plato declares in the same dialogue from which I have quoted, "that on surveying the circulations of the heavens, themselves the

[Timaeus, p. 59 D. Ed.]
result of intellect, we may fittingly dispose the revolutions of our own thoughts, which are kindred to these celestial motions; and thus may correct the tumult of our mind by the harmonious progressions of their intellectual periods. And thus it is that the treatise I have cited, which contains the Platonic view of the physical universe, is only the sequel of a lofty exposition of practical and political philosophy. By such ties as these, slender and attenuated, perhaps, to us, but solid and forcible to their illustrious Author, the cultivation of the moral reason was united with the study of Physics.

Once more, the world itself was the imitation of ideas. The science of these archetypal ideas was involved in Dialectics. Physical knowledge was thus reduced under the sway of this all-controlling science; and, in point of fact, became in the hands of Plato a science partly a priori, and partly dependent on the investigation of final causes. But of that which, you have seen, he regarded as a mere relaxation from the proper business of philosophy, it was not to be expected that he should think or discourse much. A single dialogue, the Timaeus, comprehends nearly all which Plato has given us on physical science. The whole does not contain the record of a single experiment; and nearly a third of the entire is occupied with purely metaphysical dissertation.

If we have thus seen the strict connexion of the main regions of the Platonic philosophy, if we have seen that this philosophy is but the idea of the Absolutely and Eternally Good carried into all the regions of thought, morals being the imitation of it, physics the sensible result of it, dialectics the investigation of it, it will be unnecessary for me to direct you to the obvious bond that unites the Politics of Plato with this central notion. The Politics of Plato are the realization of the just; they are that in the social world which his Physics are in the inanimate. His Republic is a republic of philosophers, and could exist with no other inhabitants. "I complain," says the Platonic Socrates on one occasion, "of finding no form of government that suits a philosopher. Thus it is that we see the character itself decaying. Just as a seed sown in a foreign soil loses its raciness and takes the quality of the soil in which it is deposited, so the philosophic character loses in this situation its proper spirit and changes its whole nature. On the contrary, should it but meet a government whose perfection corresponded to its own, then should we see that

11 [Timaeus, p. 47 B. Ed.]
12 [That is to say of the Republic, of which the Timaeus is professedly a continuation. See Tim. init. Ed.]
it involves in it a something essentially divine, and that in all but it—in men, their characters and pursuits—there is nothing but what is miserably human. So that the polity of which Plato presents us the outline is, even confessedly, inapplicable to the ordinary world; it is the prophecy of future possibilities, when individuals were to carry out, each for himself and for the community, that scheme of perfection which God had shadowed forth in the sensible universe. And so completely identified are the Politics of Plato with purely ethical speculation, that many critics have contended that the whole Republic is but an allegorical description of an individual human soul.

We have seen the relationship that combines into one vast aggregate the entire philosophy of Plato. The manner in which he connected, as dependent satellites, all the inferior and special sciences with the central science of divine contemplation, we shall observe presently. It is now time to exhibit (as clearly as I can find and express it) the most general features of that philosophy and philosophical character which Plato had formed to himself as the ideal of science and the ideal of perfect humanity. Particulars and specialities belong to our subsequent analyses.

III. "Those," says Plato, "are to be termed philosophers, and those alone, who attach themselves to the contemplation of the essential principle of things." This sentence is the close of an animated discussion, and comprehends the inference to which that discussion leads. Let us endeavour to represent the substance of this important reasoning. In being the reasoning of Plato, it will (I regret to say) differ from the representations of too many of his professed expositors, whose statements evince very clearly that they have derived them from every source except the original writings.

"Answer me," says Socrates—"when one says that a person loves anything, does one mean that he loves only such or such a part of it, or that he loves it in its totality (πάντος τού εἴδους)? Certainly, in its totality. So of the philosopher, he loves wisdom universally? Unquestionably. And just as a hungry man is not fastidious about peculiarities of diet, so we can scarcely call him philosopher who makes difficulties about peculiar sciences... but

14 [Rep. VI. p. 497 B. Ed.]
15 [As for instance Morgenstern, in his elegant Commentationes de Platonis Republica. 1794. Ed.]
16 [Rep. v. lln.: τοῦ ἀλ καὶ ταύτα ὑπάρκειον ἡκοῦσι διόμενοι ἐφάρμοσθαι. Ed.]
17 [Ib. p. 475 B. The passage is paraphrased, with omissions, to the end of the Book. Ed.]
he who manifests a taste for all kinds of knowledge, who enjoys in learning, and knows no satiety in the acquisition of truths, think you (continues Socrates), does he not merit the name of philosopher? Why" (returns his companion, whom Socrates, with his usual skill, had brought not to learn the point intended, but to discover it for himself—) "at this rate the world would abound with philosophers: for it appears to me that our lovers of brilliant shows (φιλοθεάμονες) are philosophers as far as the pleasure of novel learning is concerned; and our lovers of the gratification of the ear (φιλήκουσιν), very queer philosophers, and who would not very willingly take part in such a discussion as ours; but who seem as if they had hired out their ears to all the choruses at the feasts of Bacchus, missing not one in town or country. Are we to call such as these Philosophers, merely from their ardour for new information? Certainly not," replies the master; "not philosophers, but resemblances of philosophers. But the true who are they? Those sight-lovers alone, who love the sight of Truth*." This calls for explanation, which accordingly Socrates undertakes. "You will grant me, the beautiful and the ugly are distinct†. And if so each is one. It is the same with just and unjust, good and evil, and all other ideas (πάντων τῶν εἴδων); each in itself is one; but in their relations with actions and bodies they assume a thousand forms, that appear to multiply these primary unities...Here then lies the true distinction between these sight-lovers, and art-lovers (φιλοτέχνους), and men of practical skill, and those to whom alone the name of philosophers is fitly given. How, Socrates? The former, curious of sight and sound, love beautiful voices, beautiful colours, beautiful forms, everything that is constructed out of such; but their intelligence (διάνοια) cannot see and embrace the nature of the Beautiful itself....Are not such meî rare indeed, who can advance to this Beautiful itself, and see it in its essence (καθ’ αὐτὸ ὁρᾶν)?...And what is the life of a man who believes in beauteous things (καλὰ πράγματα νομίζων) but is a stranger to the Beautiful itself, and is powerless to follow those who would show it to him? is it a dream or a reality? What is to dream? Is it not—sleeping or waking, I care not—to take the resemblance of a thing for the thing it resembles? Surely it is. What then? he who can contemplate the Beautiful, whether in itself or in that which participates of its essence (καὶ αὐτὸ καὶ τὰ ἐκείνου μετέ-

* The original is beautifully emphatic: Τόδε δὲ ἀληθῶς, ἐφ’ ἄνοιας λέγεις;
Τόδε τίς ἀληθεῖσιν φιλοθέασι τινὰς.
† καλῶν and ἀληθῶν, words of a moral as well as aesthetic purport: our English “fair” is similarly susceptible of a double significance.
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χορτα), without ever confounding the object partaking with
the essence partaken, seems his life a dream or a reality?
Doubtless, a thorough reality." Socrates is then repre-
sented as establishing the distinction between knowledge
(ἐπιστήμη) and opinion (δόξα). "If," he declares, "Science
refer to Being, and Ignorance to Non-Being, we must seek
for that which holds the medium between existence and
non-existence, something intermediate between science and
ignorance." This is no other than opinion, a faculty (δύνα-
μας) distinct from science—opinion, which is the faculty
of judging by appearance (δοξάζειν). It is, then, equally
evident, that we possess the two faculties, and that they
have distinct objects. Opinion cannot rise to know what
science knows, nor science descend to estimate as opinion
estimates. The latter, less luminous than science, less
obscure than ignorance, finds its object in that which,
holding the mean between pure being and pure nothing, at
once is and is not. This object, itself subject to perpetual
variation, contrasts with the world of science, which is ever
one and identical; and the φιλοδοξία, untaught to repose
in the absolute. Beauty, is condemned to hover in a region
of incessant and unsatisfying change. That which in one
point of view presents itself as beautiful and just, in an-
other point of view shall lose these high characteristics;
and it is the same with every attribute that can affect the
objects of the sensible world. Such objects then can hold
their fitting place only between true being and absolute
non-existence. Socrates then proceeds triumphantly to
the close. "We have discovered," he pronounces, "that
this multitude of things to which a multitude of persons
ascribe beauty and the like, hovers between the absolute
reality and total negation. Agreed. But we had settled
beforehand, that of such things as these, we would properly
affirm, that they are the object of the intermediate faculty,
of opinion and not of science (δοξαστῶν ὧν ἐνοποιῶν).
Certainly. As for those, who, gazing on things beautiful,
perceive not the absolute beauty, and are unable to follow
him who would lead them thither; who observe many
just things, but never justice itself; and so of the rest, all
their judgments, we shall say, are opinions, not knowledge.
Certainly. On the contrary, those who contemplate the
unchangeable essences of things (κατὰ ταῦτα ὁσανάτως ὄντα)
possess not opinions but knowledge (γνωστείᾳ ἀλλ' ὃν
δοξάζειν)? Equally certain. Shall we not say then of
both, that they have attachment and love, the one for those
things which are the objects of knowledge, the other party
for those which are the subjects of opinion? Have we not
said that these last are gratified with beautiful things,
sounds, colours, and so forth, but that they will not hear of the Absolute Beauty as something itself real (ὡς τι δια) So we said. Thus we shall do them no wrong if we call them φιλόσοφοι rather than φιλόσοφοι, the aspirants after opinion not after wisdom. Shall they take it ill of us if we style them so? not if they be persuaded by me; for none should take ill the truth itself. Be those then alone deemed ‘philosophers,’ who in each object seize the essential reality.” I know not how many of you will join in the παντάπασι μὲν οὖν, with which the pupil, Glaucon, receives this decision; such however is the notion which Plato had formed of that which constitutes the only veritable philosophy. The reason embraces in its own eternal world coeternal realities; it apprehends these by a power which belongs to it as truly as the power of vision belongs to the natural eye; it apprehends them naturally, for all this transcendental knowledge is the heritage of every human soul; but the vast proportion of mankind die without ever realizing their own calling, and are starving in the midst of plenty. You will have perceived how distinct an apprehension Plato had obtained of all that sphere of physical inquiry upon which modern philosophy vaunts its eminence, and to which it would so often confine the energies of the human spirit. It is that which he here styles τὸ δοξαστέων, elsewhere τὸ φαινόμενον,—and to which he appropriates as its special organ the δόξα διηθής, a phrase, which, in compliance with custom, I have translated opinion, but which scarcely corresponds to our ordinary use of that word. The δόξα of Plato rather answers to the experience, or empirical information, of the modern philosophy of Germany; one instance of the many in which you will find Kant a commentator on Plato.

The same general view of the object of philosophy is presented to the imagination in that exquisite allegory in the opening of the seventh book of the Politieia, which has in all ages been the admiration alike of philosopher and poet. I feel how miserably defective must be any attempt which I can make at exhibiting this beautiful passage; but I also feel that a single sentence of an original author is, for auditors who can themselves reflect, worth a thousand laboured commentaries; more especially where, as in this case, the perspicuity and precision of the original transcends all illustration. The great philosopher, having in the preceding book compared that primary Nature from which Truth and Science flow to the sun of the visible world, proceeds thus: “Now, I resumed,—to conceive our condition when educated and when uneducated,—make this supposition. Imagine a subterranean cave, having its
whole length open to the light; and in this cave men confined from their infancy by fetters which so bind their limbs and necks, that they can neither change their place nor turn their heads round, and can behold only what fronts them. The light comes to them from a fire which is kindled at some distance and pretty high behind them. Between this fire and our captives rises a low wall like those screens that jugglers draw between them and the spectators, and above which their wonders are exhibited. Now conceive that there pass along this wall men carrying objects of all kinds, which appear above the screen, figures of men and animals in wood and stone, and other varieties, some of the bearers, as we may suppose, speaking, others silent. Strange similitude, Socrates! and strange captives these!—Here, nevertheless, is our own condition. In the first place, do you suppose they will see, of themselves and of those at their sides, anything but the shadows traced by the fire-light on the opposite side of their cavern? Certainly not, since you suppose them unable to turn their heads round. And of the objects we have represented as borne along behind their backs, shall they see but the shadow? Unquestionably. Now if these poor prisoners could converse together, do you not think that they would regard as the entire things themselves the shadows they saw passing? And if the prison had an echo, whenever any passer-by spoke, would they not conceive that they heard the shadow itself speak, which alone they saw? In short, would they not attribute a perfect reality to the shadows?...Now let us suppose them freed from their chains and their ignorance, and what would be the result? Take one of these captives, force him suddenly to rise, to turn round his head, to walk forth, and face the light—he will never be able to do this without considerable uneasiness, and the dazzling splendour will prevent him from even discerning the objects with whose shadows he was before so familiar. What would he say, if some friend were to tell him that till then he gazed but on phantoms, that at length nearer to reality he saw more justly, and showing him each object as it passed should oblige him by force of questioning to say what it was,—do you not think he would feel utterly perplexed, and even think his old shadows more real than the objects he now beheld?...Let him look at the fire! His eyes are pained, and he recurs to those shadows which gave him no trouble! He thinks them far more truly visible than all he is now taught to gaze on!... But once more, suppose him snatched from his cavern in spite of all his efforts, dragged by a pathway steep and rugged, to some eminence from which he is to behold the full lustre
of the sun, will he not complain bitterly of this as cruel violence? And when he does come into the blaze of noon-day, shall his eyes, filled with the splendour, be able to see any one of the objects that we call real? No, surely; not at first. It is not without long use that those feeble eyes can get familiar with that upper sphere. First he will easiest discern shadows, then images in the water, and at last objects themselves. Thence he will direct his eyes to the heavens, which he will be able better to bear during moonlight and starlight, than while the sun appears...But at length he will have the power not merely to see the image of the sun in the waters or elsewhere, but to see it where and as it is!...Then shall he learn that that sun was the cause of all he had beheld in his cavern...And when he thinks of what he and his fellows in captivity thought once was wisdom, shall he not deplore their misery, and rejoice in his own emancipation? And if in that cavern-world there were honours and public prizes for the most successful analyst of that shadow-science,—for him who best could tell in what order they pass and combine, and best could predict their recurrence,—think you this freedman would covet their distinctions, even the loftiest? or would not rather say with Homer, that 'twere better be a peasant's hireling in the upper world?...But once again; suppose him to redescend into the cavern, and take his seat in his old place: in this passage from clear day to darkness, shall not his eyes be as it were full of darkness?...And if while he still sees confusedly, not yet accustomed to the darkness, which requires some time, he is called on to give his opinion on the shadows, and dispute with his fettered companions, will there not be a universal laugh at his expense? Will they not be sure to say, that from going to such heights the poor man has lost his sight, that it is clearly not worth while to attempt leaving their place, and that if any one proposes such schemes, he be if possible caught hold of, and dispatched?...Here then, Glauco, is the picture of our condition! The subterranean cave is this visible world; the fire that illumines it is the light of the sun; this captive who escapes to the higher region and contemplates it, is the soul that rises into space intelligible (νοητόν τόπον). Such is my view, since you wish to know it. God alone can say if it be true!...At the utmost bounds of the intellectual world (ἐν τῷ γνωστῷ τελευταίῳ) is the Idea of Good, perceived with difficulty, but which once seen makes itself known as the cause of all that is beautiful and good; which in the visible world produces light, and the orb that gives it; which in the invisible world directly produces Truth and Intelligence (νοῦς)."
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This allegory exhibits, in the forms of the world of imagination, the progressive discipline which it was the object of the Platonic philosophers to realize. With this scope perpetually in view, Plato considered all the particular sciences as valuable only in proportion as they conducted by natural gradations to this master science. In the same work from which I have just quoted he states with great clearness their comparative value in relation to this end. Arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, are specially fitted to guide the reason into this serener sphere of contemplation; both because they are calculated to force upon men the study of essences, and because, by habituating the soul to the calculation and observation of harmonious proportions, they lead to faint conceptions of that infinite perfection which is the fountain of all order. For the full apprehension of these views I must send you to the original; as it would be impossible to represent in any simpler form that progress from thought to thought which, beginning with the conception of mere numbers, eventuates in the "dialectic" of Plato. But to say a brief word of each. From what has been said, firstly, you can perceive the force and spirit of that rule of the Platonic teaching which forbid any unacquainted with geometry to enter the portals of the Academy (μηδεις ἄγεωμέτρητος εἰσέρχῃ). Secondly, assuredly in these days it would seem a strange element of political philosophy, to insist on the knowledge of the science of number, not merely by our chancellors of

18 [In the seventh book of the Republic, p. 531 c—535. E4.]
19 [The authorities for this inscription are Johannes Philoponus in his commentary on Aristotle De Anima, B 61 reverse, line 9 ——. Chilian of Tzetzes.]

as his manner is, without any reference. Sir W. Hamilton, in his Essays on Philosophy (p. 271 note), dates the tradition at least six centuries too late. Philoponus lived ten, not "sixteen centuries subsequent to Plato," and he is not to be suspected of inventing the inscription. Sir William seems to have attributed the fable, as he calls it, to the much-abused Tzetzes, who seems to me as incapable as his laborious namesake of producing so good a story, which may have been a tradition preserved by the voluminous anecdotists of the first or second century B.C. The word ἄγεωμέτρητος is found more than once in Aristotle. Ed.]

"Besides those ἀπερατα κάθαρσις," says one of the most gifted of our English theological Platonists, "by which the souls of men were to be separated from sensuality and purged from fleshly filth, they devised a fourth way of separation more accommodated to the condition of philosophy, which was their mathemata, or mathematical contemplations, whereby the souls of men might farther shake off their dependency on sense, and learn (as it were) to go alone, without the crutch of any sensible or material thing to support them... These were among their ἀναπλάσεις ἐκ τοῦ στυγναλοῦ, steps and ascents out of this miry cave of mortality, before they could set any sure footing with their intellectual part in the land of light and immortal being." (J. Smith's Select Disc. pp. 14, 15.)
the exchequer and their subordinate officers of finance, but by every statesman in high authority; and this, as Plato declares, "not for the purpose of a mere superficial study, but in order to rise by the exercise of intelligence to a contemplation of the essence of numbers; not for low mercantile purposes, but to assist the soul in soaring to that eternal world where alone are reality and truth."

Again, thirdly, as concerns the astronomical discipline for philosophy: "The adornings," declares Plato, "which glorify the vault of heaven are certainly the most splendid of visible objects; yet they are but visible objects, and are therefore far inferior to the true magnificence which belongs to their eternal correlates in the essential world:—the beauty which we contemplate in the heavens is the same symbol of that other and intelligible beauty, which a design of Daedalus is of absolute proportions; for what geometer, however he might admire the artist's statue, would dream of measuring it, in order to discover the abstract relations of figure and space?...We know," he continues, "that astronomy is to the eyes something the same as music to the ears: now, observe our practical musicians! They will waste hours in endeavouring by the keenness of the ear to detect exquisite differences of proximate sounds; some affirming they can appreciate the tone required, others that it is impossible; but all agreeing in preferring the authority of the ear to that of the mind. Our astronomers are not unlike these indefatigable artists; but he who cultivates the study with any other view than to gain clearer apprehensions of the beautiful and the good, wastes his hours in unprofitable toil...Glaucis! all these studies are but preludes to the air that we are to learn; he who studies not the reasons of things has not yet entered upon that better science of which I speak." Need I say that this "air," to which all the special sciences are but preludes, is no other than "Dialectic;" that high philosophy of reality, which though it be altogether the work of reason, I have already typified by the progressive advances of the organ of vision, which at first exercised on the objects of earth, rises at length to the stars, and lastly fixes on the sun itself? So he who advances into this study, soaring by pure intelligence to the essence of things, pauses not until having attained to gaze upon the essential goodness, he beholds the true Sun of the intelligible universe.

[Rep. 1 l. p. 545 C. Ed.]
[Rep. p. 530 D. Ed.]
[κατά ταῦτα προσλημά διότι αὐτῶν τοῦ νόμου δι' ὑμᾶς μαθεῖν, p. 531 D. Ed.]
“Finis coronat opus;” and the “end” that was to crown this “work” of intellectual discipline in the view of Plato, was no other than death. Convinced that death was the emancipation of the purely rational element of human spirits from all its corporeal accompaniments, this event was but the consummation of the very work of the whole philosophic life, that life which is therefore expressly designated as the μελέτη θανάτου. The intellect struggles through life into the intelligible world; death is its peaceful entrance there. So forcibly was Plato impressed with this conviction (that death is the entrance of the reasonable substance into a supra-sensible world), that in the Phædo, where it is peculiarly enforced, he thinks it necessary to guard against a philosophic tendency to suicide. Socrates admits that the very soul of true philosophy (of this “dialectic” of which we have spoken) is the unceasing aspiration after the future world of pure thought; and declines the path of suicide, only because the Deity has an inherent right over our actions, and, by placing us in this world, signifies his pleasure that we should not leave it until he himself has given the signal of release.

We have now seen that the spirit of the Platonic philosophy is the contemplation of, and the tendency to, the Absolute and Eternal Good. We have seen that this spirit pervades all, unites all, and governs all. But this is only a distant and general prospect. We must prepare to examine separately the chambers of the vast edifice. At our next meeting (on Monday) we shall briefly analyse the Dialectic (or Metaphysic) of Plato.

LECTURE VII.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. NO. IV.

GENTLEMEN,

I have promised to give you on this occasion some account of that portion of the Platonic philosophy which its founder was accustomed to call his "Dialectic;" and which answers pretty closely to what, after the spread of the Aristotelian views, was usually known by the title of Metaphysics. At our last meeting, however, we saw in how intimate a union all the divisions of Platonism were combined; and you will be prepared to expect that no department of the entire system can be duly surveyed without occasional intrusions on every other. Thus—to go no farther than our immediate subject—the Dialectic of Plato involves the elementary principles of his Theology, and some of the fundamental notions on which his fanciful structure of physical science was erected. The term Dialectic (assuredly not well chosen) was derived from the Socratic mode of discussion; and a phrase expressive of the accidental form of speculation thus applied to its internal substance. It is, however, characteristic of the peculiar views of Plato, who always represented this highest region of philosophic thought as reached by a course of protracted previous meditation, and of anxious mental conflict. It was not until the partial solutions and petty differences of inferior sciences had been unveiled that this ultimate and reconciling science was felt to be indispensably demanded. Now as this exhaustive process was usually conducted in the form of argumentative disquisition, it was not unnatural to apply to the speculations it produced a title expressive of the conferences by which it produced them. And thus the serenest and most contemplative of sciences bore a name that perpetually attested the pains and crosses that accompanied its birth; and he who was fortunate enough to reach this upper world of repose, could never

1 [Which is described as ὁ ἀπέκτενα τῆς μορφῆς πρὸς αὐτὴν διάλογος ἀνεῖλεν φωνῆς γενόμενος. Soph. 263 D. Comp. Theol. 189 E. Ed.]
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To man, considered as an intellectual being, the great object is the attainment of satisfactory certainty, — certainty as to that which is directly exhibited to his experience; certainty, still more, as to that which transcends experience, and, outlying its whole domain, is of course apprehended by different faculties, or by different applications of them, from those which the world of immediate experience requires. Were a human being to stand alone in the vast solitude of nature, and to be (by whatever means) aroused to the exercise of his rational powers, it will be conceded by all theorists of the mind of man, that certain instinctive principles of belief and of action would, whether gradually or immediately, be developed, sufficient to guide and support him in the ordinary processes of human life. For example, — though prior to direct observation he could not venture the faintest conjecture as to the consequences of any concurrence of events, — though until his eyes had seen the stone fall, or the fuel blaze, he could not conceive these results at all more probable than their opposites, — it is certain, that after experience has once connected them, an innate principle of belief connects them for ever, and he would be astonished to find that not happen which antecedently to observation he had no reason to expect would ever happen. The present moment is thus, by man's mental construction, an index to him, practically infallible, of the past and the future. And were the being we have supposed to be the sole human intellect in the universe, about to pass into annihilation, he might instantly, before ceasing to exist, profess his confident anticipation of the indefinite continuance of a series of events to which he was never to have any direct relation whatever, with which he was thenceforward no more connected than if he had never existed at all.

Here then is a principle which generalizes immediate experience through every moment of time and every point of space, — which declares of that which is, that it may be expected always and everywhere. It is the simplest of practical generalizations, and the foundation of all.

Again; if thus a single connexion of events indicates a connexion fixed for ever, so likewise a connexion thus established extends conviction beyond itself, gives probability (in all its various degrees) to thousands of connexions similar to itself, and thus becomes (in proportion to the reflective habits of the mind) a key to large regions of nature. From believing that the same will happen in
the same circumstances, we pass to believing that the same will happen in similar circumstances, and from thence to confiding that the similar will happen in similar circumstances,—the anticipation varying, of course, with the degree of the similarity. As the former principle reveals to us the stability, so this reveals to us the unity of nature. And this—the principle of analogy—is the source of all discovery in every department of physical science. Here, then, is the second, and the higher, form of the practical generalization of observed events.

These two principles provide for the foundation, and the augmentation, of the knowledge of nature, as obtained through the instrumentality of observation and experiment. And if of that which lies beyond the mere limits of our internal consciousness, and beyond deductions from our own suppositions, that is, beyond mental experience and mathematical demonstration,—if of all the external infinity of existences we have no knowledge, except by the aid of observation and experiment,—then these principles (the principle of the perpetuity of sequences, and the principle of analogy) are sufficient for all the science that man can possess of that which is not himself. If this be the case, it may be well to contemplate the amount of our inheritance: whether in wealth or penury, it is at least useful to know the exact extent and value of our available resources.

Now,—of these principles,—one very obvious character is this, that they are altogether conditionate principles; that is, they assert that if a certain event happen, another may be expected to happen; or, if a certain combination of events happen, a similar combination may be expected in similar circumstances to happen also; but they assert nothing whatever as to whether the events, absolutely considered, shall happen or not. The only certainty they bring is manifestly a hypothetical and dependent certainty.

Another characteristic of these principles is this, that they seem in their nature capable of augmentation or diminution of certainty. I do not mean this of any special instance, but of the principles themselves as attributes of the human mind. It is universally felt to be one of the most striking examples of providential arrangement in the adaptation of man to the world, that the antecedent conviction of the stability of nature is answered by the corresponding stability itself. Now let us suppose that this was not the case; that, the mind remaining unaltered, the series of events in the external world became utterly irregular—a different consequent every instant following
what was known to be the same antecedent; is it not ob-
vous that the mental conviction could not stand against
this outward contradiction, and thus that the principle of
the invariability of sequences, though capable of being
called into play upon the occasion of a single observation,
is not independent of the confirmation of subsequent ex-
perience? While on the other hand, no one, I suppose, will
affirm that we are as vividly assured of the future descent
of bodies to the earth on the first instance perceived in
infancy, as after the unbroken experience of forty or fifty
years. The theory of Hume, who attributed the conviction
altogether to habit, derived its plausibility from the
fact, that though habit cannot originate the belief, it un-
doubtedly tends to corroborate it. It tells us (as it were)
the mind and purpose of Nature, and assures us that it is
fitted to vindicate our anticipations; in much the same
manner as our confidence in a friend grows with the dura-
tion of our acquaintance with his truth, even though we
had originally felt the strongest prepossession in his favour,
or had received irresistible testimonies to his character.

It is also observable of these principles of belief on
which our physical knowledge is ordinarily rested, that
they are eminently practical in their nature; by which I
mean that they are less calculated to be the elementary
principles of satisfactory scientific conviction, than the
indices and guides of practical conduct and operative art.
Perhaps nothing evinces this more forcibly than the expe-
rience which I believe few will deny, that these convictions
are felt to be much stronger as regards the future than as
regards the past (from which the fundamental principle
itself is usually termed “an expectation of the stability
of nature”); and that the expectation itself is felt to
lessen in assured confidence when the period to which it
points retreats into the farther depths of futurity. If there
be any one who, assuredly believing that a stone dis-
charged from the hand will drop to the earth within the
next ten minutes, has the same intensity of conviction with
regard to the same event one hundred millions of years
hence; I can only ascribe the perfect equality of his con-

These remarks (which it would now perhaps be un-
seasonable to extend much farther) may serve to intimate
to you how unsatisfactory the ordinary accounts of phy-
sical knowledge must appear to any one who (whether
rightly or erroneously) conceives that the human mind is
made for the possession of absolute certainty. If it be the whole office of physical science to classify observations, and (by an instinctive but unreasoning faith) to trust to their continued verification, it is obvious that, for the perfectness of absolute certainty, we must have recourse to something which is not physical science. It was for this that Plato struggled in the construction of his "Dialectic," a department of knowledge which was to contain the principles of independent unconditional truth; and in which the highest faculty of man was to be brought in presence of its proper and sufficient counterpart, namely, the supreme existence itself, the absolutely perfect,—and the emanations of that supreme existence dispersed through nature, and of which all nature participated,—the "ideas" of things. If you have been at all engaged in the study of the history of speculation, so similar in all its changes, you will at once recognize that this is but one attempt out of many to solve the problem of the prerogatives of the human reason, to pronounce whether it truly has an office higher than that of enumerating and arranging the products of experience. It was (as I have before intimated) the firm conviction of Plato and his followers, that it has such an office; and that there exists a sphere of being not in any way appreciable by sense or by imagination the minister of sense, of which the Reason of man is the only and the direct organ, and which that Reason by an innate and inalienable right grasps with utter and absolute certainty. But it is this very similarity of the problem and of its solutions in all ages that makes it now necessary for me to endeavour to catch the peculiar point from which Plato viewed it, and the peculiar form of his verdict on the question. I have as yet addressed you as readers fresh from the popular philosophy of the day; we must now descend into the dusky depths of antiquity to discover there the principles of which we have spoken, half-formed, it may be, in that primeval world, and often scarcely disencumbered of their tangled embellishments of allegory and fiction; yet still very discernibly the same principles, and often—to a degree altogether unsuspected by modern readers—the same details.

To stand, then, where Plato stood, and to see what Plato saw, we must consider his philosophy of the human reason as the result of a pertinacious controversy which occupied the literary and speculative circles of his day. On the one side stood the philosophers of Elea (or those who had imbibed their general principles*), whose solution of the general question as to themselves and the universe

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* See Series II. Lect. II. Ed.]
was (as I have more than once shewn you), that all existence was absolutely one, variety being only apparent and illusory; that truth had no reference to anything diverse or multiple; that, therefore, the sole office of reason—the organ of truth—was to recognize this underlying unity, that faculty being incapable of application to that which was more than one single essence, equally indivisible and infinite. By these speculatists, then, the rights of Reason were loudly acknowledged; but its inheritance was impoverished;—they admitted the validity of the title, but the estate itself offered only the solitude of a desert. On the other hand was found a class of thinkers* who denied the title altogether; who refused to allow the existence of any faculty beyond the receptive energy of sense; and who, placing all truth in the perception of the qualities or modifications of its elements, as a very natural consequence affirmed that truth itself altered with the alteration of the senses, or in the language of him whom Plato found the most distinguished champion of these tenets—that “man was the measure of all things.” This latter doctrine is evidently, in its spirit, not confined to mere “sensation;” it is the doctrine of all who, with whatever views as to the constitution of the mind, agree in holding that truth is purely subjective and individual; Plato, however, seems to have found it invariably connected with the theory of mere sensation, and speaks of them both—in the case of Protagoras—as identical.

Now Plato is to be considered as a mediator between these opposing theorists; as holding with the Pythagoreans and Eleatics, that the Reason of man contemplates by direct intuition a sphere of being beyond and above the sensible universe, but as denying that that sphere of being contains no diversity; as holding with the rival party, that there is a world of sensation, the object of a special faculty or set of faculties in the mental constitution, but as denying that science or truth in their proper significance can be at all concerned with that world, can be dependent on its phenomena or affected by its changes.

If I were not relating but investigating, I might enter largely upon the discussion of this general question; and by adding the lights of subsequent philosophy exhibit it in a form perhaps more luminous than the original Platonic one. As, however, my present purpose is to endea-

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* [Comprising, 1. the followers of Heraclitus (as Cratylus in Athené, and in Ephesus the school portrayed in Theaet. p. 179), 2. Protagoras, who is supposed to have learnt in that school—certainly not, as vulgarly stated, under Democritus—and, 3. the Cyrenaics, headed by Plato’s contemporary, Aristippus. Ed.]
Lect. VII.

vour to assist you in seeing with the eyes of Plato, and not with those of Leibnitz or Descartes, I shall content myself, for the present with the humbler office of giving you some account of one remarkable discussion in which—as far as a refutation can establish anything—the first elements of the Platonic theory of science are established; perhaps I might rather say (for the dialogue has no express conclusion) the ground is partly cleared for the future and still distant structure. The Theaetetus has the advantage of being one of the most regularly consecutive of the compositions of Plato; and for this reason probably, more than one expositor has directed attention, in the first instance, to this important dialogue. At the same time, it cannot be denied that it also contains subtleties whose true scope and meaning (though doubtless in their own day intelligible enough) it is now nearly hopeless to attempt adequately to comprehend or to convey: while on the other hand, as if to evince the boundless versatility of the author, it also includes in the pauses and transitions of the metaphysical argument passages (especially one passage) of a sublime and solemn beauty which Plato has never surpassed in any other composition whatever.

On these latter attractions of style we have now no time to rest; nor shall I detain you with any minute account of the scenery, decorations, or dramatis personae of the performance. Theodorus the mathematician, Theaetetus a young Athenian of great promise, and Socrates, are the interlocutors. After some preliminary conversation, Socrates comes upon the question which occupies the dialogue: "What is Science?" His young friend, in the manner so often exemplified by Plato in the argumentative adversaries of Socrates, answers by instancing a variety of sciences; an error which Socrates represses by recalling him at once to the question, which regards the idea or essence of science itself: and you may here observe an instance of that process of definitions customary with Socrates, to which we saw that Aristotle ascribed the origination of the "ideas" of Plato. At length, after many approaches, and many digressions, and many modest excuses, the young student attempts formally to answer the question, and the "business"—as dramatic critics would say—of the dialogue fairly commences.

Three several answers are offered; and all three are successively rejected. We shall briefly sketch the arguments involved by each; requesting you to remember, that, if these arguments seem to your modern apprehensions occasionally deficient in force, and, still more, occasionally...
obscure in purport, they are not at all on that account the less historically interesting. But for my own part, I confess I cannot discover much that even our latest inquiries have added to this ancient refutation of the narrow theories of human knowledge; the theories and their refutations have been reiterated in many ages with little substantial difference; the soil of human nature (to which in its present state truth and error are both indigenous products) remaining the same, these flowers and weeds have risen together in each recurring crop; and the first mingled harvest, as we find it here heaped together, might nearly serve as an image of all that followed it.

The first answer of Theaetetus is, that science consists in sensation (αἰσθήσεις). Now sensation being in its nature variable, altering equally with the alterations of the sentient organ and of the subject perceived, the knowledge which depends on it is likewise subject to perpetual change. If, as Heraclitus and Empedocles held, the whole machinery of sensible perception is in continual flux, never remaining the same for two successive instants, if motion be (as they conceived) the very principle of preservation and rest, of corruption 4, it is obvious that the knowledge which is confined to these ever mutable elements must itself become mutable. If nothing "exists," but all "becomes," science built upon a principle of incessant alteration loses all claim to permanence or stability 5. The colour of an object (for example) has no claim to "existence," it has no determinate properties, it is not the same to another and to me, nay, it is not the same to myself at any two separate observations. It is so with every sensible object; for all such are but aggregates of qualities themselves incessantly variable; and sensation the result of a compound action between the object and the organ 6. Hence it is argued that the assertion 7 that science consists in the simple recep-

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4 [Thl. p. 153: τὸ μὲν εἶναι δοκοῦν καὶ τὸ γρίφεσαι κίνησις παρέχει, τὸ δὲ μὴ εἶναι καὶ ἀπαλλαγμένη ἴσχυς... τῶν σωμάτων διό εἴναι ὑπὸ ἰσχύας μὲν καὶ ἀρχαὶ διαλυόμεναι, ὅπως γνώμαις δὲ καὶ κυμαῖς ὡς ἐκ τῷ πολύ σέβεται; Εὐν.]

5 [Πρ. p. 153 δ: γρίφεσαι τάστα, ἄ δὲ φαμεν εἶραι, οὐκ ἐρῶς προσαγωγοῦσιν· ἄρα μὲν γὰρ, ὑπὸδεκτὸν οὐδὲν ἀληθεύς ἢ τὸ γριφοῦσι. Εὐν.]

6 [Πρ. p. 152 β: ὁδὲν ἀρα ἐνεπιστήμην μᾶλλον ἢ μὴ ἐνεπιστήμην ἀνεκπιστήμην ἐφώτομον τι ἐστι ἐνεπιστήμη. Comp. 183 λ. Εὐκ.]

7 [Πρ. p. 152 ε: δὲ δὴ κακὸς χρῶμα λευκόν, μὴ εἶναι αὐτῷ θηρίῳ τι ἐξῳ τῶν σωμάτων, μηδὲ ἐν τοῖς ομοιόμοις...δῆ γὰρ ἃν εἴη τὰν οṵν τάξει καὶ μὲν εἰ καὶ οὐκ ἢν ἐν γενετικών γένεσι...καὶ δὴ ἐκατόν εὖρο χρῶμα ὡς τὸ πρόσβαλλον οὔτε τὸ προσβάλλοντος ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ μεταξύ τι ἐκάστου τινὸς γεγονός...ἀυτὸ διακαρπάζειν εἰ δὲ οὖν σοὶ φανερόν ἐκατόν χρῶμα τοιῶν καὶ νῦν καὶ ὁμοιόμοι ὅμοιο; Μά Δι' οὐκ ἐγγος. Ἡ 156 λ: κίνησις δῶν εἰσι...δύναμι δὲ τὸ μὲν ποιεῖ ἦγος τὸ δὲ πάτχειν· ἐκ δὲ τῶν τοιῶν ὀμιλίας...γίγνεται ἥγος...δύναμι...τὸ μὲν αἰθητόν, ἢ δὲ οὐκοῦσι, ἄλει συνεπεκτίμωσο καὶ γεγομένη μετὰ τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ. Compare 159 ς, ν: ἐκατόν δὲ κ.τ.λ.—Εὐκ.]

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tion of sensations, or even in the active operations of the faculties upon them, resolves itself into the doctrine of Heraclitus, and leads at once to irrecoverable scepticism. But again, the sensation theory supposes every sensation accurately and completely true, as otherwise sensibility could be no basis for knowledge. Now it would be impossible to prove that any two persons experience the same sensations; while, on the contrary, we have innumerable instances of the difference of the effects produced in the same circumstances upon different men. Above all, he observes, we have the striking instance of the phenomena of dreams and of madness; and must admit the impossibility of proving ourselves at any moment awake, as the evidence of the dreaming and the waking mind is equally peremptory in favour of the reality of the state experienced: knowledge, then, must upon this theory be purely relative, and truth vary with every variation of the mind. This theory of knowledge dependent on sensation, amounts therefore to the doctrine of Protagoras, that “man is the measure of all things,” and that that which he thinks to exist exists, that which he thinks not to exist, is by that very conviction deprived of real existence. I may observe that the whole of this preliminary discussion abounds with very just views of the whole process of sensation and the relation of the conscious being to external nature.

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8 [Ib. 157 E—158 R. Ed.]
9 [Ib. 160 A: ἄναγκη δὲ γὰρ ἐὰν τε τινὰς γλυκεσθαι, δεῖν αἰσθανόμενον γλυκώματι...ἐκεῖνο τε τινὰς γλυκεσθαι, δεῖν γλυκό δὲ πικράν δὲ τι τοιοῦτον γλυκεσθαι... γλυκὸ τά μυθεὶν δὲ γλυκὸ αἴσθανον γλυκεσθαι. Ed.]
10 [Ib. 160 E: εἰς τοῦτον συμπέπτετο κατὰ μέν... Ηρακλείτου... δοὺς ρεθματικοὶ κινεῖσθαι τὰ πάσα, κατὰ δὲ Πρωταγόρα... πάσας χρήματις δεύτερον μέρος εἶναι, κατὰ δὲ Θεατήτου... αἰσθήσεων ἐκπεσθήσας γλυκεσθαι. Ed.]
11 [Plato's theory of perception is that denoted by some modern writers as the "representative theory." Of things as they are in themselves, the senses give us no knowledge: all that in sensation we are conscious of, is a state of mind or feeling (φάσεως); the existence of self or the perceiving subject, and of a something external to self—a perceived object—are revealed to us, not by the senses, but by a higher faculty. The negative portion of this theory Plato holds in common with the Cyrenaics, with Protagoras, and with the later Academics and Sceptics. It was controverted by the Stoics, who maintained that the external world is the object of immediate consciousness (καταληψεως). But all the remaining schools of antiquity,—sceptical, dogmatic, and mystical,—agree with Plato in denying that our sensations reveal to us anything beyond themselves. They are modifications of consciousness, feelings, states,—formatio intimae (as Cicero has it)—and nothing more. (τὰ περὶ ἣν τοιαύτου πώς εἰσαγωγή νόμον ῥήματι ἡμῖν ἔδωκεν, Sext. Emp. de Placitis Cyrenaicorum, Math. § 194.) So far then as regards the theory of sensation, Plato is to be understood, not as refuting, but as explaining, nay, confirming the dictum of Protagoras, "Man (i.e. the conscious individual, whoever he is, ὁ del ἀνθρώποι) is the measure of all." But here an important divergence takes place. After showing that the Protagorean principle pushed to its legitimate consequences, annihilates the reality of the outward world as well as the identity or independent existence of the mind, or conscious subject, (ἐὰν τὸ τίνος γλυκεσθαι... ἐκεῖνο τοῦ τινά... ἐκεῖνο τοῦ τινά... δι’ ταῦτα γλυκό... ἐκ τοιοῦτον γλυκεσθαι. Th. 160 A. Comp. p. 166 c),
SECOND SERIES.

Plato having thus argued the identity in substance of the three theories,—that of sensation alone constituting knowledge, that of the continual flux of all things, and that of man's beliefs being the true measure of existence,—proceeds, upon popular grounds and with great variety of illustration, to refute principally the last of these views as being the most general and the most dangerous of the three, but with constant allusions to the others also. For instance, on what grounds does Protagoras himself, by virtue of his calling as a philosophic instructor, profess to teach knowledge, if, as his principle declares, knowledge belongs equally to every human mind? and the peasant's apprehensions be as truly the measure of real existence as the philosopher's? Again, if the sensible occasion of knowledge be knowledge itself, it would seem that to read or to hear an unknown language, would be completely equivalent to perfectly knowing it; and that every varied circumstance of sensation (as, for example, seeing with one eye or with both) must, by force of this hypothesis, alter the reality of science; a notion so frivolous that even the ingenious audacity of Protagoras himself could scarcely venture to accept it. Nor this alone. If it be involved in "knowledge," that it should be the direct perception of the sensible organ, it would seem that all which is retained by memory is blotted from the treasuries of science, that man hangs upon the ever-varying present, and that all which refers to past or future is absolutely annihilated. But even on his own grounds Protagoras may be convicted. For all experience establishes that some do arrive at a greater degree of knowledge than others (as the physician, the musician, &c.), and all the world implicitly

Plato proceeds, by a bold appeal to the inner consciousness, to establish the reality of both object and subject. See Theaet. p. 184—187; a passage from which it suffices to quote the expressions following: "Περὶ δὲ φωνῆς καὶ περὶ χρώματος ἕνα μηδενὸς οὕτως; "Εγώγε. Ταῦτα δὴ πάντα (sc. οὐσίαν, ὤνωδειτα, ἀρμονία) διὰ τίνος...διανοεῖ...Ἀυτὴ δὲ αὐτής ἡ ψυχή τὰ κακὰ μοι φαίνεται...ἐπισκοπεῖ..."Ἐν μὲν ἄρα τοῖς παθήσασιν οὐκ ἐν ἑπιστήμῃ, ἐν δὲ τῷ περὶ ἱερῶν συναγωγῇ. He had previously drawn Theoctetus into an admission of the unity of the sentient subject: εἰς μίαν τινὶ ἱέλην, εἰς ψυχήν εἰς τὸ δὲ καλὸν, πάντα ταῦτα ἔτυχεν, ἢ διὰ τοῦτον ὡς ὄργανον αἰτιῶσαν ὑπακοθείνη.

Students of the Theoctetus would do well to read with attention the account given by Cicero in the Academics of the controversy between the Stoics and the Academy, renewed in modern times by Reid and Brown, of whom the former held with the Stoics that our knowledge of the external world is intuitive, the latter, with Plato and the majority of philosophers, that it is inferential. Sir W. Hamilton's masterly critique on the various theories of Perception (Essays, p. 38) will be read with profit even by those who are not prepared to accept his conclusions. Ed.]

[p. 163 ξ. ἐπ.]

[p. 164 β: συμβαίνει ἄρα, οὐ τις ἐπιστήμων ἐγένετο, ἦτο μενονεύων αὐτῷ μὴ ἐπίστασθαι, ἑπακοθείνη ὡς ὅμ. ἐπ.]  

B. 23
believe it; so that, if truth be determined by momentary opinion, Protagoras, on his own hypothesis, is overthrown by a vast majority, the only decisive test admitted by his philosophy; nay, he personally subscribes his own error; for all opinion being (as opinion) equally authentic, he pronounces his adversaries to speak true, in the very argument that assails them as mistaken. Another palpable form of self-confutation is built on the doctrine of Heraclitus. If, argues Socrates, everything be in a state of incessant change, it cannot be affirmed of anything that it is, rather than is not. Now this (if worth anything) must be a formula universally applicable, as no reason can be shown why it should be applied to one region of nature rather than to another. Sensations, then, are along with everything else involved in this predicament, and therefore no affirmation can be with certainty made as regards them; consequently, by the conditions of the argument, it may be as reasonably asserted that sensations are not science as that they are. The great object of the doctrine of Protagoras was to unsettle the principles of moral obligation, by denying the permanence of moral distinctions. Accordingly Plato soon proceeds to examine his theory in that light. His argument is simple and convincing. He shows that the universal experience of man establishes that there is a known, assignable difference between the useful and the injurious; this, indeed, is an idea totally distinct from that of the just and the unjust; but as far as concerns Protagoras’s argument, they are completely on a par. Both are beyond the immediate scope of sensation; the calculations of the teacher of gymnastics as to his own art, or of the physician as to the results of medical applications, as much transcend the sphere of pure direct sensation as even the perceptions of right and wrong. But even beyond these objections

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15 [p. 182 E: οἴδας ἄρει ἐπιστήμην μᾶλλον ὡς ἡ ἐπιστήμη ἀπεκδέχεται ἐπιστήμην τῇ ἑαυτῷ ἐπιστήμῃ. Ed.]

16 [Not perhaps the "great object," though certainly a natural consequence. Protagoras is made to admit that he excepts the distinction of good and evil from his general principle of relativity, Theet. p. 166 D sqq. How this distinction was justified we are not informed; but he evidently intended to save morality, according to his own view of it. The speech in the dialogue bearing his name, which excites Mr Grote's admiration, may or may not faithfully represent Protagoras and his opinions; though it is fair to suppose that a sense of dramatic propriety would restrain Plato from misrepresenting him, especially in a way too favourable to his character and abilities. Ed.]

17 [p. 177 C-179 E: τοιοῦτος μᾶλλον ἡ ἢ ἀρνεῖ τὸν δὶς ἀπόφευξεν κατ' ἔσχατον, ἔτοι τοῦτον τὴν θεωμην, ὡσπερ ἐν κτήμα περὶ τή τέλεος, ὡμοιότου διαμέσαν, ὡς καὶ ἡ αἰφνίδια ὁμοιότου τῶν εἰς τὴν ἰδίᾳ θητεῖ καὶ οὕτω... Ed.]
to the theory which makes the variations of sense the judges of scientific truth, is the decisive obstacle to its admission, that, by reducing science under the control of faculties which we share with even the brute creation, it makes every sensitive being equally the judge of truth with man himself; a consequence beyond which the argument can scarcely be carried. From all these considerations, it is evident that the boasted solution of the question of science, which identifies it with simple sensation, is unable to stand examination, its defenders being on every side convicted of palpable inconsistency. Before closing this part of the discussion, Plato, affirming that science is the attribute of the soul, furnishes a most per- spicuous proof of the unity of the thinking principle, and its distinctness from the complicated system of bodily organs whose reports it receives and estimates.

I need now scarcely remind you that the principles here stated and refuted, are substantially the principles of scepticism in every age: and I believe you will find very few forms of reply to these logical perplexities, of which the discussion just analysed does not offer an example. But though this constitutes a very important incidental advantage of such studies, I must remind you that my present object is, simply, to arrive progressively at an estimate of the views of Plato himself, regarding the prerogatives of the human reason and the immutability of the truth it apprehends. Avoiding, therefore, extraneous comment, I continue his own exposition.

Theodorus, who very amusingly describes the logical frenzy of the Heracliteans in supporting their theory of the ceaseless fluxion of the universe, tells us that they are unfixed in their very thoughts and language, as if they were afraid that even there the appearance of fixity would destroy their cause. You will anticipate then that the advocate who in some measure represents their views, should be prepared, on being driven from his first position, to fortify a new one. Unable to find science in pure sensation, he endeavours to discover it in a region higher than sensation, and he pronounces, that science is “right judgment, or opinion” (δόξα ἄληθες). In this part of

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18 [p. 161 C: τεθαμενα δι' αὐτ' ἀλήθειας ἢ πάντων ἄληθεσιν ὑπ' ἡ ἑν χωρετήσων... ED.]
19 [p. 184 C to 186 E. ED.]
20 ["They are living instances of the unrest their books assert," δραμών κατ' τὰ συγγραμμάτα φέροντα, 179 ε. Theodorus speaks of Heracliteans in Ephesus; but the most celebrated representative of these views was the Athenian Cratylus, of whom Aristotle speaks as an advocate of extreme "movement" opinions, Metaph. iii. 5, 18. It was by him that Plato, in his early youth, was initiated into these Ephesian mysteries. Ib. i. 6. ED.]
the dialogue we enter upon a region characterized by all the peculiarities of the ancient logic, and which, therefore, can scarcely be made as familiar to modern readers, as the preceding disquisition. If science be true opinion, what constitutes a false opinion? This question is thus analyzed. We can only judge of what we know or do not know. Four possible cases arise. A man may be in error, by judging that a thing he knows is really some other thing he does not know, or some other thing he does know; or again, by judging that some thing he does not know is some other thing he does know, or some other thing he does not know. All these cases are rejected, as presenting apparent impossibilities. Another method of examination is proposed,—to estimate the matter not in relation to knowledge or ignorance, but in relation to existence or non-existence, that is, as he defines it—judging according to the truth and reality of things. But here he finds as little satisfaction. For he argues, that as he who sees at all must see something which exists, so he who judges must judge what in some sense exists; and that he who judges that which does not exist (whether in real or abstract beings) cannot properly be said to judge at all. Is then "false opinion" the mistake which arises when, taking one real existence for another, we affirm that one is the other? This, again, is shewn to be mentally impossible. Once more, is "false judgment" the erroneous application of an inward conception to an exterior sensation? (exemplified in the view of an object at a distance which we may mistake for another). This is rejected as too limited an account. In this way, by a diversity of examples Plato endeavours to show that a correct conception of "error" has not been presented in

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81 [p. 188 D. "Αρ' οὖν οὐ παρατηρείεται δὴ γνώμης κατὰ τὸ εἰθέναι καὶ μὴ εἰθέναι...Διὰ τὸ τὸ έστι καὶ μὴ; The cases here suggested involve an obvious confusion between "judgment" and "simple apprehension." They are in fact Cynical fallacies. Socrates shows this presently, by distinguishing the mental processes in question, 189 E: τὸ δὲ διανοεῖται ἂρ' ἐπὶ έτείνα καλεῖ; κ.τ.λ. Ed.]
82 [p. 189 B. Ed.]
83 [Ἀλλαδείᾳ γὰρ οὐκ ἐστιν ψευδὶ φάμεν εἴπερ δὲκα. Ib. Ed.]
84 [To make this plain, we are presented with an elaborate examination of the phenomena of judgment (189 E) and memory (191 D), the latter illustrated by a comparison of the receptive faculty to a tablet of wax, more or less retentive of impressions as it varies in purity and consistence. To this part of the dialogue Locke's celebrated chapter on Memory presents a striking parallel. (Essay, B. II. chap. x.) Ed.]
85 [p. 195 C. άλλ' ἂν οὖν διὰ ἀνθρώπου τὸ τὴν ψευδὴ διάτισθαι διαφόρου πρὸς αὐτὸν τὸ παραλλαγματικόν τὸ γαρ τὸι χὴ, οὐκ ἂν τούτῳ ἐν αὐτῷ τούτῳ διαφορ- μανειν ἡμετέρα, i.e. if error consist solely in mistaking a particular sensible image for a particular notion in the mind, every process of pure thought must be exempt from error. Ed.]
any of the ordinary theories; for I have little doubt, that these solutions, which appear at first sight strangely chosen, were actually known as theories of the subject in the popular metaphysic of Plato’s age. Returning from this digression, the philosopher once more demands, Can “true opinion” satisfy the notion of science? and feeling that it cannot rise above the evidence of testimony or analogy, he denies its claims.

A third and last attempt is made to define the notion of that which alone deserves the title of knowledge. Science is pronounced to be, “opinion μετὰ λόγου”—a qualification which seems, from the subsequent tenor of the discussion, to signify, judgment “with explication.” For, it is observed, no primary element is knowable or explicable; it is merely perceptible (you will remember Locke’s undefinable “simple ideas”); whereas compounds are decomposable, and thence definable: of simples, then, there is “just apprehension,” but no genuine “science.” The answer to this preliminary statement is remarkable. Socrates is represented as illustrating his meaning by words, and syllables, and letters: and he replies, that if the syllable consist of the mere letters, it cannot be known (as matter of science) unless they are known; for, assuredly, science cannot be compounded of absolute ignorance; but if the syllable be not the mere total of the letters, but a new and distinct being, then the being itself (or “form”) becomes an indecomposable, and there-

[For a specimen of this “popular metaphysic,” see Phaedo, p. 96 b. πώτερον...δ' ἐγκέφαλος ἔστων δ' ὧν ἀληθεὺς παρέχει...ἐκ τοῦτον δὲ γίγνεται μονήμα καὶ δόξα, ἐκ δὲ μονήματι καὶ δόξῃ, λαμβούς τὸ ἡμείν, καὶ ταῦτα γέγοναν ἐπιστήμην. We can hardly err in conjecturing that the ‘wax-tablet’ before alluded to was borrowed from the museum of the school whose “theory of the human mind” is here sketched. The dove-cote (197 d) may have come from the same or a neighbouring repository. Ed.]

[The refutation of the proposition, “Science or Knowledge is true opinion,” is based on the necessity imposed on its advocates of admitting that of the two terms of every Judgment one at least is given as known; for no judgment, true or false, is conceivable, of which both terms are unknown. Hence the definition in question is faulty; for it means nothing, unless that which it professes to explain—the nature of knowledge,—be assumed to be already known. Πάλαι ἐκεῖνος παρήγαγεν μὴ καθαρῶς διαλέγοντα, μιθαδεῖς γὰρ εἰρήκεται τὸ γνωσκόμενα καὶ τὰ γνωστάματα καὶ τὰ γνωστάματα ἐκ τῶν ἔναντι ἐλλήκοντι ἤ δ' ἢ τοις ἐπιστήμησι ἀγνώσεσι. Theat. p. 196 ε. It is true that a remembered impression is not a “knowledge” in the Platonic sense; but those who hold that right opinion is science, acknowledge no other. See the quotation from the Phaedo in the foregoing note. From a higher point of view the refutation appears sophistical; for it seems to confound two different acts: γνωσκόμεν (cognoscere, kennen) with ἐπιστήμην (scire, wissen). But then this higher point of view is not yet attained, being indeed the very thing sought in the present inquiry. It would not, and could not, be conceded by the empiricists with whom Plato is arguing. The “maieutic” or suggestive purpose of the dialogue is here sufficiently obvious. Ed.]

[Essay, B. III. c. 4, § 4. Ed.]
fore, by the hypothesis, an inexplicable thing. But what does this λογός or additional "explication" really signify? Is it the image of thought by words, simply? In this case every "true judgment" will have explication, and all possessors of right opinions will possess genuine science; for every thinker, not deaf or dumb, can achieve such explication as this. But is it the determination of the whole by the elements that compose it? Even this does not reach the idea of the Platonic "science," which refuses to honour with its name a process of simple decomposition. Shall we declare, then, that "explication" answers to the assignment of a genus and essential difference? and is this what converts a "true opinion" into "science"? But to this it is answered, that (however this differentiation may assist clearness of expression) the perception of the distinguishing qualities must be presupposed in the mere apprehension of the individual object, to make it individual.

It does not appear, then, that any of these accounts of scientific knowledge reach the problem. There is, in the apprehension of truth, as fixed beyond possibility of change, a something which none of them include. When you have arrived at this period in the original Platonic discussion,—a good deal wearied perhaps by subtleties which, even in the most rapid analysis, I can scarcely expect to engage much interest,—you anxiously look out for the luminous conception which is to enlighten the obscurity of this mazy controversy, and by its own contrast to call out the fainter lineaments of the past reasoning in bold and clear relief. But you will expect this in vain. Socrates, after thus dissolving the structures of his brother-teachers, hastily closes the discussion by merely observing, that this removal of errors may clear the soil of his hearer's mind for future fruit; and by the still colder consolation, that it will at least prevent him from idly imagining that he understands the subject when he really knows nothing whatever about it.

But the true object of the whole is, nevertheless, manifest enough. If you have at all maintained your attention to the progress of the reasoning, you will perceive without difficulty that it refers to three great aspects of intellectual philosophy: the theory of mere sensation, the theory of mere judgment upon sensation, and the theory of logical definition—as comprising the office and functions of the human reason in relation to attainable truth. And if you have but slightly contemplated the history of speculation,
you can scarcely fail to perceive that these are three forms of philosophy which, under endless superficial changes, have perpetually reappeared in almost every age of the history of reason. Am I, then, delaying you here upon unprofitable obscurities, when I exhibit to you this great Reasoner, in his own graceful simplicity of dialogue, thus holding forth (as if in prophecy), in the very childhood of philosophy, a mirror which was to reflect the future fortunes of human thought? What is the first of the theories he meets and prostrates, but that very account of human nature, which in language scarcely altered from the phraseology which he furnishes to it here, degraded all France, and from France half Europe, during the greater part of the last century? What is the second of these theories, but that very amelioration of the former, which allowing to man a faculty of apprehending the relations of thoughts, permits that faculty to wander no farther than the experience of receptive sensibility will supply him with materials? What, finally, is the third which Plato consigns to reprobation, but that theory which reduces all the prerogatives of reason to the logical offices of defining, and dividing, and classifying names. And what is that which Plato considered they all equally wanted, without which he deemed them structures fair and artificial, but without foundation,—bodies comely and proportioned, but without life? He believed that they wanted substantial reality, a principle of absolute and ultimate certainty; he conceived that, until the reason of man—by virtue of its inherent power—were brought in contact with the Infinite itself, were considered as an inward attestation of certain unconditional and consummate truths self-supported and independent, that until thus the human intellect was, as it were, incorporated with the very existence of the real universe around it, no anchorage could be found in the fathomless deep of philosophical scepticism. By what bonds he essayed to bind together that mystic Triad—the Creator, the Creation, and the Reason that images both—will form the subject of our next meeting.
LECTURE VIII.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. NO. V.

GENTLEMEN,

We have now seen that the ancient investigators of the principles of human knowledge had largely examined the subject, had submitted reason to its own reflective analysis, and had evolved theories to systematize its processes and operations, not at all dissimilar from those which later efforts have so elaborately presented. Differences of language, differences of habitual associations, differences of historical position, must produce difference in the form of exposition; but truth is limited; and where the facts of the case lie in no very extended compass, we may assuredly anticipate that the faculties of theorists will march in paths not widely separated from each other. Human nature recurs unchanged in every successive generation; its powers, its instincts, its prejudices, remain the same; and when you find that even in the simplest questions, and most palpable determinations of external physical science, philosophical heresies are seen, in spite of demonstration itself, to arise, you can scarcely wonder that the various ages of intellectual history have been found to return the echoes of old errors, to rush with all the ardour of novelty and inexperience into illusions long before exposed, and to mistake, again and again, that for the authentic coinage of eternal truth, which a forgotten antiquity had proved to be the base alloy of prejudice, or the gilded forgeries of a too active imagination.

Such a research as that which I then took occasion to make, will not have failed in one important object, if it have recalled or strengthened your respectful regard for our forefathers in the philosophy of mind; if it have led you to contemplate in these men inquirers whom no age need blush to desire as its own, thoughtful and gifted speculators who possessed all our faculties long before ourselves, and whose very exclusiveness of devotion to these peculiar studies, though it unquestionably lost them the benefit of lights flashed from other points of the intellectual heaven, yet gave them all the advantages of patient
concentration and enthusiastic perseverance in the work of exploring the region of their own peculiar choice. A spirit of most misjudging contempt has for many years become fashionable towards the metaphysical contemplations of the elder ages. Alas! I cannot understand on what principles. Is it, then, a matter to be exulted in, that we have at length discovered, that our faculties are only formed for earth and earthly phenomena? Are we to rejoice at our own limitations, and delight that we can be cogently demonstrated to be prisoners of sense and the facts of sense? In those early struggles after a higher and more perfect knowledge, and in the forgetfulness of every inferior science through the very ardour of the pursuit, there is, at least, a glorious, an irresistible testimony to the loftier destinies of man; and it might almost be pronounced, that, in such a view, their very errors evidence a truth higher than all our discoveries can disclose! When Lord Bacon, with his clear and powerful reasonings, led our thinkers from these regions of ancient thought (then newly opened to the modern world), to the humbler, but more varied and extensive, department of inductive inquiry,—I represent to myself that angel-guide, all light and grace, who is pictured by our great poet as slowly conducting the first of our race from Paradise, to leave him in a world vast indeed and varied, but where thorns and thistles abounded, and food—often uncertain, and often perilous—was to be gained only "by the sweat of the brow," and in the downcast attitude of servile toil!

These haughty prepossessions against the speculative researches of antiquity are nowhere more necessary to be resisted than in approaching the subject of our consideration this day, a subject which has become almost proverbially the type of fantastic hypothesis. On this prejudication I shall make but one remark; but it is a remark worthy your consideration. Whether the IDEAL THEORY of Plato be or be not a system of pompous illusion, you will remember that it was a system chosen and supported by one who had before him nearly every objection your ingenuity could marshal against it. It was not the system of a novice, confident in opinions which he had never learned to contrast with their opposites. Our ordinary estimators of the Platonic philosophy (undertaking, their office upon a careless and defective examination of his writings) exult in exhibiting the extravagance of the ancient realism, and in contrasting with its follies the simplicity, perspicuity, and truth of their own adopted theory. Hume pronounces Nominalism (the system which denies all universal essences whether real or mental) to be one of the most important "disco-
VERIES of modern times, and rejoices in being even a subsidiary labourer in the work of extending and strengthening the influence of this novel solution. Yet we know that this very theory was upheld by the ancient Stoics in opposition to the Platonics, and, as I am strongly inclined to think, was known to the Megarics and Cynics, and therefore to Plato himself. It is, at least, remarkable, that the very objections against Realism, which were supposed to establish the Nominalism of the twelfth century, are by Plato advanced in the Parmenides; and as some of these objections would seem to lie equally (or nearly so) against the theory of universal conceptions, it seems not at all improbable that Plato had this third, or nominalistic, theory within his view, but perhaps considered it not of sufficient force to require special mention and elaborate reply: I mean, not of sufficient force when regarded as an adequate solution of the entire question of the Reason of man;—for (strange as it may appear) I am strongly inclined to think that Plato, in his mere doctrine of abstraction, was nearer to what would now be called nominalism than to any other theory of that mental process. It is certain that he seems frequently to intimate, and to lament, the impossibility of obtaining, while we work on sensible materials, a general notion pure from sensuous admixture; and to insinuate that, if we could, the task would be achieved which death alone can effect—the immediate perception of essences as they exist in the intelligible world. Aristotle, on the contrary, seems to have believed that the νόημα could be thus obtained; and in the spirit of that belief (as well as on other grounds) to have discarded the ulterior speculations of Plato.

The other theory which is opposed to the Platonic idealism, and which is known by the title of "Conceptualism," is in the same dialogue expressly stated and rejected. "Perhaps" (Socrates is represented as urging) "each of these ἐνθα is nothing but a thought (νόημα), and can exist nowhere else than in the souls of men." And so of several

1 Antisthenes not only knew, but seems to have deliberately adopted the Nominalistic theory, though in a somewhat crude form, and encumbered with gratuitous absurdities. Compare Arist. Metaph. IV. 29, 4: 'Ἀντισθέθη ἢ ποτέ ἄλλως μὴ δέχῃς μεταφιστικὰς τροπὰς τῷ ἀληθείᾳ λάθος ἐν αὐτῷ εἶναι; and Th. vii. 3, 7: ὁ Ἀντισθέθης... ἡ τεράτως ὑπ' ἐκείνῳ τοῖς ἐκείνως ὑμάσαις μὲν ἦν ἐν τῷ ὅποιον ὁμοίως; with Plato, Theat. 391 ε.: ἢτο...καὶ ἢτο ἐνόησων ὅν ὁμάσαις μὲν ἦν ἐν τῷ ὅποιον τῶν ἑν τῇ ἐντολῇ ἰδικεῖται καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐντολῇ ὅνομάσαις ἐν τῇ ἐντολῇ: where, however, the reference to the Cynics is doubtful. Ed.]

2 As de Animâ III. c. 8. Aristotle frequently approaches the question involved in the Nominalist controversy, as Categ. c. 2 and 5; Metaph. vi. 13, 2; Phys. ii. 1. All these passages are decidedly anti-realistic: and if they stood alone might be thought to afford ground for claiming Aristotle as a Nominalist. Ed.

3 [Parmenides, 132 b. Ed.]
other objections. I do not mention these facts in order to pronounce any immediate opinion regarding the relative merit of these solutions; but simply to remind you, that, whether right or wrong in his choice, Plato saw these alternatives, deliberately rejected them as insufficient or untrue, and deliberately preferred to follow his own theory. If, when made aware of this, we continue to dismiss his views with contumacious slight, surely we must possess a large measure of confidence in ourselves to prefer deciding that Plato devoted his life to circulating despicable reveries, rather than that we do not perfectly enter into his views and reasonings. Unfortunately, these reasonings are expressed in a form which it requires much patience to penetrate; and though we may be enabled to perceive much that inspires respect and admiration, he would be a bold critic who should affirm that he has left the dialectic of Plato without difficulties. We may enter far enough into the edifice to catch the general grandeur of the design, and the symmetry of the proportions; but to gain that point from which the whole is beheld at a glance, in all its complicated relations, has, I believe, been truly given to few of those who profess to have been so favoured.

I shall now endeavour to give you an outline of the theory of Plato considered in relation to its aim and purport. My object shall be to attempt to seize the spirit of the whole, without departing from his own habits of thought. Detailed accounts of detached dogmas you will find abundantly supplied by many writers and commentators; I must attempt something more systematically connected, because this combination or harmony is that which our learned investigators of particular questions most usually neglect to offer.

We saw that in the ancient world, at the time of Plato, the subject of the nature and the limits of human knowledge had attracted deep and general attention. Had the early inquiries on this great question been calmly and candidly conducted, there might have been agreement, or disagreement without extravagance. But it is one of the many evils of the controversial spirit that it inevitably urges opposition to extremes. The “odium theologicum” is theological, only because theology is to us the most important of speculative questions; the thoughtful ancients, when they did not fear the results, too much despised, or too wholly forgot, the gods of the people to allow their passions to be enlisted in assailing or protecting them; and philosophy became to them what religion is to us,—the theme of incessant disputation, because of the deepest
speculative interest, and therefore of the most passionate
controversial excitement. Accordingly, the primitive dif-
fferences about knowledge, or the relation of reason to the
Universe, gradually widened until they formed into two
theories that may be considered as occupying the opposite
poles of human thought: the theory that reduces all know-
ledge to the accidental receptive quality of the organs of
sense, and the theory that denies the existence (except as
an utter illusion) of the whole sensible world, and refers all
knowledge to the apprehension of the One immutable
essence which it hides behind it. But between these lay
two less extravagant accounts of the nature and limits of
man’s knowledge: the one declaring it to be “right opi-
ion,” but without any further basis of reason, the other
purporting to supply this deficiency by adding to the just
opinion a logical explication by definitions and distinctions.
Now you must conceive Plato as having gradually travelled
from the first of these theories (or that of pure ἀλήθεια)
through the two last which rise higher and higher in the
rational scale, until from the utmost verge of the logical
system of science, he discerns that farthest (or ultra-
rationalist) system of Unity. Arrived at this, the philo-
sopher proceeds to estimate its value, and to determine
whether it can satisfy the problem of the true nature of
science, and the true prerogatives of the human reason.

To make this gradual advance more distinct, you must
remember that there are, by the admission of all reason-
able thinkers, at the least two separable faculties in human
minds,—a faculty of receiving impressions, and a faculty of
conceiving relations. Now the first of the systems I men-
tioned restricted our intellectual energies to the former,
and (considered as an account of knowledge) we have seen
that Plato overwhelmed it with argument and ridicule.
The second and third systems (however mutually different
as accounts of the cognitive powers of man) certainly
agreed in adopting the two faculties—the receptive sensi-
bility, and the power of judgment. But we find, that,
even in the higher form, he was totally dissatisfied with
this representation. And the reason was, doubtless, this:

4 [Comp. Arist. Metaph. 1, 6, 2: “Plato in his youth became familiar with
Cratylus, and through him with the Heraclitic opinions of the flux of sensible
objects, and their consequent unfitness to become objects of science; and this
creed he continued to hold in his later years.” It nowhere appears that at any
period of his life he held “the doctrine of pure sensation,” except in this nega-
tive way. His intolerance of the sceptical state of mind doubtless impelled
him to seek elsewhere for a ground of certainty. So understood, the account
in the text is true; but the formula, “sensation is knowledge,” is evidently
susceptible of a dogmatic sense, alien from the whole spirit of Plato’s specula-
tions, early as well as late. Ed.]
that, carry these theories to the utmost, they yet leave us without (as he conceived) any substantial principle of certainty. Our opinions and our definitions may, as comparisons and distinctions of thoughts, be perfectly correct; they may be consistent with each other, and with the entire scheme of thought; and yet they may be (for aught that these theories involved) absolutely disconnected with reality. Exactly as in mathematics, it is altogether unimportant to the strict cogency of the demonstration, whether beyond the conceiving mind there be a single inch of real space in the world. They comprised general expressions indeed, the names of classes or generae; but these classes were themselves raised out of particular objects of sensuous experience, and if the sensible world was itself changeable, fleeting, and uncertain, how much less claim to fixed reality had these shadowy classifications of shadows? Now if, to the reflective mind, there arise an invincible conviction that it is formed for absolute certainty, and that on many points it possesses a certainty which declares to it the laws and nature of things, as they would be though every subordinate intellect perished,—then no account of human knowledge can be adequate which does not solve the phenomena of these absolute certainties, which does not in some manner bind together the universe beyond the soul and the soul itself.

Under these circumstances you may conceive that Plato approached with a more favourable prepossession the E eclectic system of the mind. For this, at least, purported to connect the reason with the rational element in the universe; that is, it (though, perhaps, indistinctly) admitted that there was, beyond mere sense and mere comparison or inference or generalization or abstraction, a faculty of which the inherent prerogative was this—that it could pronounce, independently of all sensible experience, certain truths regarding the universe; applying itself to that which was rational or intelligible therein, as truly as, but more intimately than, the eye can apply itself to light, or the ear to the pulses that generate a sound. But though an important step was here effected, a stride from the transitory to the permanent, from the temporal to the eternal,—the subsequent result was barren of profit and altogether inadequate to the demands of the question. In various parts of his writings, Plato meets and refutes the

8 [More particularly in the Sophist and Parmenides. Compare the well-known 3rd chapter of Aristotle's Physics, B. I. where Trendelenburg, following Simplicius, traces a reference to the latter as well as the former of these two dialogues. This, if correct, is an answer to those who infer the spuriousness of the Parmenides partly from the absence of any allusion to it in Aristotle. Ed.]
theory which would represent the rational substratum of
the universal system as one in a sense so exclusive as to be
incapable of diversity. Accordingly his own views far
more resemble the earlier doctrines of Pythagoras, whose
arithmetical metaphysics acknowledged this variety, and
attempted to account for it, than the unwarrantable refine-
ment by which the school of Elea professed to prove that
the reason admitted no shadow of diversity in its objective
counterpart. There is, then, an intelligible world as the
Eleatics assert; but that world, though governed by one
grand and presiding unity, is yet diversified by a boundless
variety of intelligible essences.

You can now enter easily into the aim of the theory of
Ideas. That man’s soul is made to contain not merely a
consistent scheme of its own notions, but a direct apprehen-
sion of real and eternal laws beyond it, is not too
absurd to be maintained. That these real and eternal
laws are things intelligible, and not things sepsible, is not
very extravagant either. That these laws impressed upon
creation by its Creator, and apprehended by man, are
something distinct equally from the Creator and from man;
and that the whole mass of them may be fairly termed the
world of things purely intelligible, is surely allowable.
Nay, further, that there are qualities in the supreme and
ultimate Cause of all, which are manifested in His crea-
tion, and not merely manifested, but, in a manner—after
being brought out of His superessential nature into the
stage of being below Him, but next to Him—are then, by the
causative act of creation deposited in things, differencing
them one from the other, so that the things participate
of them (μετέχουσι), communicate with them (κοινονοῦσι);
this likewise seems to present no incredible account of the
relation of the world to its Author. That the intelligence
of man, excited to reflection by the impressions of these
objects thus (though themselves transitory) participant of
a divine quality, should rise to higher conceptions of the
perfections thus faintly exhibited; and inasmuch as these
perfections are unquestionably real existences, and known
to be such in the very act of contemplation,—that this
should be regarded as a direct intellectual apperception of
them,—a union of the reason with the Ideas in that sphere
of being which is common to both,—this is certainly no
preposterous notion in substance, and by those who deeply
study it, will perhaps be judged no unwarrantable form of
phrase. Finally, that the reason, in proportion as it
learns to contemplate the perfect and eternal, desires (ἔφα)
the enjoyment of such contemplations in a more consum-
mate degree, and cannot be fully satisfied except in the
actual fruition of the perfect itself,—this seems not to contradict any received principle of psychology, or any known law of human nature. Yet these suppositions, taken together, constitute the famous THEORY OF IDEAS; and thus stated, may surely be pronounced to form no very appropriate object for the contempt of even the most accomplished of our modern “physiologists of mind”.

It appears, then, that the Ideal Theory, historically considered, is to be regarded as a reaction from the Eleatic Theory of Unity; a return from the doctrine of the absolute simplicity of the rational world to the prior Pythagorean doctrine of Unity in Multiplicity. That the “Numbers” of Pythagoras and the “Ideas” of Plato were closely analogous, cannot be doubted; and much investigation has been lavished on the question of their precise relation to each other. The differences between these philosophers in their elementary principles are noted by Aristotle at great length (in the 1st, 12th, and 13th books of his Metaphysics); but the obscurity of his language, and the difficulty of particular phrases, render it impossible to obtain any tolerable conception of this exposition without careful perusal of the entire original itself. A single sentence may be quoted as, apparently, the most comprehensive; though it will require some meditation to detect its exact purport. He tells us*, that Plato, with the Pythagoreans, held that numbers were the causes of things, and of their essence; but “to make a duality of this unlimited* which they regarded as one, and to compose this unlimited of great and small, was his peculiarity.”

* [The object of this brilliant paragraph being evidently to commend the Platonic scheme to the notice of persons conversant only with the language of modern metaphysics, the author has allowed himself considerable latitude in the use of phrases to which it would be difficult to find a precise counterpart in Plato’s writings. I have therefore abstained from the attempt to support the several positions by quotations; which will be more appropriate to the detailed expositions which follow. Ed.]

† [The question of priority is at least doubtful. It is remarkable that Aristotle nowhere connects the Ideal Theory with the Eleatic doctrine of Unity; while he devotes whole chapters to explaining its relation to the Pythagorean number-theory. But Plato has fortunately left us in no doubt of the fact of the former connexion. See the Parmenides passim; and especially p. 130 fol. Ed.]

‡ [Metaph. I. 6, 6. The “duality” (δύος) is explained in a passage of the Physics, B. III. c. 6, § 11: Πάντων δὲ τωτά ἐν τοῖς ἀκέρατα ἐνοίσειν, ἐν καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀθείῳ δοκεῖ ἀνεβάλλειν καὶ ἐν τῇ καθότερῳ. “Plato represented the unlimited as Two, because it is susceptible of infinite augmentation as well as infinite diminution or division.” Hence there is no material unit; unity is ideal in its very nature: ὅτι δὲ τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρὸν ἐνοίσει, ὅτι δὲ τοῖς ἐν τῇ ὅντι, Metaph. I. 1. The word ἀκέρατος means “matter,” as Prof. Butler states; but matter in its Platonic sense, its predicates rather resembling those of pure space than anything of a corporeal nature. See the following Lecture. Ed.]
Furthermore, Plato (he tells us) held that "these numbers exist out of and beyond sensible things; whereas the Pythagoreans held that the numbers were the things themselves." It is singular that the technical phrases of the two masters would lead to a conclusion directly opposite; for Plato's μεθεύσας, or participation, of ideas suggests an intimate embodying of these essences, while Pythagoras's μένθησις τῶν αριθμῶν rather brings with it the conception of a copy of a distant exemplar. On the whole, I would say that the "Ideas" of Plato were the natural product of a state of thought more advanced than that which the Pythagorean "Numbers" represent. The term "Idea," which must have been from the first more comprehensive in applicability and flexible in use than the αριθμός, evidences that the theory itself had risen to higher generalization in the mind of Plato. He, however, often employs fragments of the Pythagorean phraseology, with the inevitable consequence of obscurity which so forced and mystical a form of expression must involve. It would seem that after Plato's decease the arithmetical nomenclature rose again into fashion; for Xenocrates incorporated it in his fundamental dogmas, and Aristotle identifies it with the Platonic philosophy to a degree not apparently warranted by the writings of Plato himself.

I must now proceed to regard the Theory of Ideas more closely and systematically. Plato believed that there is a perfect science of the reality of things, independent of sensible experience, which he considered (as is most true) incapable of bestowing absolute certainty. In every observation made by the senses, therefore, he considered that the reason might disengage an element exclusively its own, which, until that disengagement, had been mingled and hidden in the complex result. Now that this was no unwarrantable train of thought may perhaps be thus manifested. In the observation of any change whatever, the senses can detect only the terms of the change, that is, the successive phenomena themselves: but it is unquestionable that every such change is accompanied with the irresistible conviction of the absolute necessity of a cause to effect it, in virtue of a principle above and beyond sense, which pronounces the universal truth that "every change requires a causal energy to produce it." Were we then to proceed no farther, it is obvious that every sensible mutation brings the reason of man (which is the organ or depository of necessary principles) in contact with a genuine "Idea;" which if it truly have (as it truly has) an eternal
reality independent of the mind that apprehends it, may be fairly said to belong to a "world or sphere of ideas" the appropriate object of the inner world of reason*. But as yet we have gained only one presiding Idea; let us try if reason will not evidence a more varied inheritance as its property in the ideal world: as otherwise Plato has not been its correct interpreter, his theory assigning (to the endless perplexity of the systematizers of Platonism) ideas to everything that can receive a name,—ideas of relations, of colours, of sounds,—even of artificial instances of mechanism, no less than of beauty, symmetry, and truth. Any account which does not comprehend this universality must therefore fail to catch the spirit of the Platonistic reasoning. Now—as we saw in a former Lecture—that the Good is the cardinal point of the philosophy of Plato, and by him enthroned in majesty supreme at the summit of the whole universe, you must learn with him to regard the sensible world as a development of supreme perfection in an inferior and transitory form. From whatever cause (for this inscrutable difficulty with all other philosophers he evades), this manifestation of excellence, acting upon a subject that limits and embarrasses it, is in the world of sense necessarily imperfect; but, by a still nobler necessity, it is also as perfect as circumstances will admit. If this be granted, it will follow that in every phenomenon there may be contemplated an instance of absolute perfection in partial development; and as surely as sense cannot be explained without something beyond sense, so surely does there exist in the eternal

10 [ mixin στόχος, Ref. vii. 517 B, al. Ed.]

* For what constitutes a distinct sphere of being in any sense, but independent reality,—the qualities of time and space being here obviously inapplicable?

11 [Arist. Metaph. 1. 9, 1: καθ' έκαστον...διωκόμον τι εστι, κ.τ.λ. (speaking of the ideas). Plat. Ref. x. 596 A: εύθω...ον έκαστον ειδηθεμεν ιδεσθαι περι έκαστα τι πολλα οις ταθν ιομεν εκεφερθημεν. Ed.]

12 [Of the "relations" to which ideas may be assigned, specimens may be found in Republic. v. 479 B. Comp. Phade, 190 B. If I rightly understand Arist. Metaph. 1. 9, 3, the propriety of this assignment was contested by some of Plato's followers. Ed.]

13 [Cratyl. 433 E: αντί τη χρώματι και τη φωνή οδο δοσι ται ουδε της αυτος ταξιν και τοις άλλοις ταξιν, δομηξαντας της προφητευς του ελλην. Ed.]

14 [As of chairs and tables, Ref. x. 596 B: πολλας οις κλήνες και τρέχεις... αλλ' ίδεις γε του περι ταστα τα σχεδία δομ, μα μεν κλήνες, μα μεν πρακτές. Τοι αυτοί έχονται και ουδεμεν άπροφητευτοι. Ed.]


16 [Timaeus, 39 D: Άγγελοι τ' θ' των ανθρών γένεσιν τε και τ' άθικου τέλος εύσηστω εμπόστησιν, άγαθος τ' άγαθον δε ουδεςι...ταχρόνοι τοιούτου δ' έκτις έστω ταστα δι' άμαστα της γενεσιν έβουλήθη παραστάσις έναυτ'... Ed.]

B.
world a special reason (consistent with the laws of beauty, goodness, and truth) for every separate apparition in the sensible world: a reason antecedent to the sensible manifestation, but embodied in it, and to which therefore the sensible manifestation serves to guide the human intelligence. Nor is it a satisfactory account of this matter to identify these reasons with the very essence of God; and thus to pronounce that there is no medium between Him and the transitory world of sense. The Divine Nature (which only by faint analogy we describe by what we can best conceive of excellence when we term it The Good) is as far above the world of ideas as ideas above sense; a truth which seems manifest from the fact that reason, the apprehender of ideas, can form so indistinct and unsatisfactory a conception of the uncaused, illimitable, and all-containing God. Through ideas, however, we may hope to rise in perpetual progress towards this supreme idea; as from sense the reflective mind struggles into the sphere of idea.

Now we know that there is a faculty in the mind of man which generalizes the facts of sense, or abstracts them; and to the result applies a common name. On the other hand, we have already laid down that there is a faculty altogether distinct and above it, which exists antecedently to all experience, and is the highest element of the rational soul; distinct,—for no generalization can pronounce with certainty the universal, necessary, and absolute; antecedent,—for though gradually evoked into activity by the stimulus of observation, its dormant properties existed before they awoke. Here, then, are two faculties,—*logical abstraction* and *substantial reason*; the one the organ of general conceptions, or general names, the other the higher apprehender of eternal realities: the one gradually rising towards the universal, the other descending from above to meet it. Now as the former in proportion to our increase of reflection perpetually swells to nearer and nearer approximation to the latter, general conceptions becoming more and more fitted to represent eternal reasons; it is natural that Plato should regard them as a kind of *idea* *umbratiles*, shadowy assimilations of those everlasting Ideas which form the property of the pure reason when wholly emancipated from sensual confines; nor are we to wonder that innumerable critics of Plato, mistaking the true purport of his philosophy of the reason, should have estimated him by modern standards, and because they found little acknowledgment of any faculty for apprehending the absolute in our ordinary treatises, but abundance concerning the faculty of abstracting and generalizing,
should have conceived this alone intended in the realism of Plato, and thus exulted in detecting in the teacher of ages the preposterous absurdity, that the conceptions formed by abstraction had themselves as abstractions a distinct external existence. Yet I can scarcely point to a single one among the slighting and cursory notices of the realism of Plato, contained in the works of the Scottish school, in which this imputed absurdity is not ascribed to the founder of the ideal philosophy.

An opposite error—even more manifestly contradicted by the writings of Plato—has often been advanced for the purpose of vindicating the philosopher’s reputation from the charge of supposed extravagancies. I allude to the attempt which Plutarch, and others in various ages, have made to demonstrate that the “Ideas” of Plato were not meant as distinct realities at all, but simply as models conceived in the mind of God, in the same manner as models are imagined in the mind of man. The operation of the Deity is thus conformable to Ideas, in being the shadowing in the world of sense of His own conceptions of order. This carries with it the attraction of simplicity, but it is utterly inconsistent with the assertions of Plato, which everywhere, and in every form, distinguish between the reality of eternal forms and the mere conceptions of a mind. Holding that the “ideas” are intimately incorporated in creation, being its very life and substance, Plato could not, without identifying the Deity with His work, regard them as in any sense a portion of the divine nature itself. These “forms” or eternal laws of things are above us, but they are below God; and though they point to us the character of that Supreme Essence of Essences, they are not to be worshipped as Him. God is not the aggregate of laws, nor are those laws only existent in His Intellect—for then where were “creation”?—but He is the Cause, and Sustainer, and Substance of Laws. The theory which would represent the Ideas of Plato as simply divine conceptions of order, would altogether misconceive the spirit of his views regarding the connexion of God and the universe. In Plato’s view, the true universe was itself ideal, an aggregate of ordered laws accidentally, not essentially, embodied in matter; and consequently the version of his philosophy which I am opposing, would imply in strict con-

[This view was adopted by some of the later Platonists. See the next Lecture, note (1). It is unjustly attributed to Plutarch, whose account of the ideas in his *Platonic Questions* (p. 1001) is derived from good sources, and differs entirely from the superficial statement of the Pseudo-Plutarch in the *Placita Philosopharum* (Llib. I. c. 3). It is to this latter, doubtless, that Prof. Butler refers. En.]
sistency that, according to Plato, the whole reality of the universe was merely the mental reality of a Conception in the Divine Intelligence. The error of these representations is irresistibly established by the authority of Aristotle; who through the whole of his detailed examination of the Platonic Theory, never once regards the Ideas as being other than true, and real, and distinct existences.

The Theory of Ideas, as a solution, or rather a systematic statement, of the intercourse between reason and reality, requires, as I apprehend, a distinct discussion of three separate points,—the relation of Ideas to God, of Ideas to the universe, and of Ideas to man: it being evident that unless these three connexions are granted, the theory is inadequate. But this subject is too extensive for the present occasion; and I shall therefore devote the remainder of our time to a very necessary point,—the peculiar phraseology of the Ideal Theory.

It has been thought by some critics, that Plato insinuates a distinction between the εἴδος and the ἴδεα; the εἴδος being the mental apprehension, and the ἴδεα its counterpart in nature; εἴδος τῆς ἀρετῆς being equivalent to ἀρετῆ καθότου,—κατ' εἶδη σκοπεῖν το κατά γένος σκοπεῖν. But though this distinction may appear sometimes maintained, it assuredly cannot be verified by larger examinations: and in the writings of Aristotle on the ideal controversy, we may observe in a single page the phrases used indiscriminately. This seems at first sight an unhappy

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18 [The word ἴδεα, in its strictly Platonic or transcendental sense, as distinguished from the merely popular or logical meanings, "form," "kind," "genus," which are common to Plato and other writers, occurs but in four or five dialogues. Its appearance is the signal of the completion of the ideal theory in the mind of its author: and the dialogues in which it is found are accordingly reckoned among his mature productions (Brandis, Handb. II. p. 241). They are, the Parmenides, Philebus, Phaedo, Republic, and Timaeus. Passages may be quoted from one or two others in which the word may, but never (so far as I know) in which it must, bear this signification. Etymologically, indeed, ἴδεα is but another form of εἴδος, and Plato as well as Aristotle uses the latter word in meanings parallel to all the senses of ἴδεα, including the highest. I apprehend, however, that Plato will be found to prefer ἴδεα in those cases in which especial accuracy is required: as where he may wish to exclude the merely logical sense, or to present the "idea" under its aspect of a μορφή or pattern. See República, x. 596 B, where this sense is brought out. Éidos had been used just before, where the sense of "genus" is uppermost. So Aristotle, though in his critique on Plato he uses ἴδεα and ἴδεα interchangeably, preferred to essay his monograph on the subject (now lost) μετὰ τῆς ἴδεας. For a like reason he never uses the word ἴδεα in developing the theory of ἴδην which forms so important an integral part of his own metaphysical system. And Aristotle's commentators e\'vice a still more decided preference for ἴδεα, as the distinguishing characteristic of Platonism. These nuances are not without interest to the accurate student: I have therefore thought it worth while to qualify the generally true observations in the text, though at the risk of appearing enamoured of a distinction without a difference. Ed.]
instance of verbal confusion; but it was probably the result of deeper design in the original construction of this celebrated phraseology. We shall hereafter see how the theory of the connexion of the idea external to man with the idea internal of the reason, purported to illustrate the absolute certainty of the convictions of scientific intelligence; and I have no doubt that it was the object of Plato to bring these antithetical essences as nearly as possible into the position of mutual absorption and identity, without wholly doing so. Now, for this purpose, the very indifference of the names would be one of the most obvious means of producing the impression required. When he uses the expression εἴδους αὐτῷ καθ' αὐτῷ, however, he seems invariably to intend the Divine Idea itself, resident in the Divine Reason, not indeed as conception in man, but with a distinct individual existence.

The usual phrases by which Plato endeavours to intimate the connexion between the ideas and sensible phenomena, are such as these:—παρουσία, κοινωνία, μέθεξις (presence, communication, participation) of ideas. Sometimes he affirms that things in this world are ὁμοιόματα τῶν ἑκατον, and that the phenomenon of sense is τοῦ ὅλου τὸ ὅν (something such as is the real). Of all terms expressive of the original idea, none is more constantly used than παραδείγμα, an exemplar, to which corresponds εἰκὼν, a copy, and no relation between the real and sensible more ordinarily attributed than that of similarity. The phrase which Aristotle has usually employed—μορφή or form—occurs more than once in the genuine writings of Plato. It would likewise appear, that in the ideal world itself he conceived that there were distinctions of rank and precedence; for while to the ideas in general an eternity and incorruptibility is uniformly ascribed, he also speaks of certain γεννητὰ παραδείγματα, which shared in some measure in the temporal and inferior character of the sensible world itself. These occasional inconsistencies (for such they certainly seem) break the symmetry and precision of the theory; but we feel them to be only occasional; and if we were in possession of the oral discourses and

10 Κοινωνία is rather said of the relations of ideas to each other than of their relation to sensibles. See Sophist, 257 A. ἔχει κοινωνίαν ἄλλην δὲ τῶν γένων φύσις. But in one passage of the Phaedo, 100 D, we read: ἔχειν τά ἐκείνου τοῦ καλοῦ ἐντὸς παραπομπής καὶ κοινωνίας. μέθεξις is used passim. Ed.

20 [Phaedrus, 250 A. Ed.]


22 [As in Phædo, 103 E, 104 D. But these instances are rare and perhaps ambiguous. Plato would probably not have spoken of τὰ εἴδη καὶ τὸ μορφαὶ as synonymous, as Aristotle does, Metaph. vii. C. 5. Ed.]

53 [Timæus, 28 B. Ed.]
traditionary doctrines of Plato, probably even these minor discrepancies would be resolved into more general formulas explanatory and even confirmatory of the main theory itself. Of the real world which is intercepted, and yet suggested, by the sensible, such phrases as these are customary, and are familiar to every reader of Plato: it is τὸ δὲ ἄει, γενέσων οὐκ ἔχον 34,—it is τὸ ὑπὸς ὅν,—it is ἄει κατὰ ταύτα δὲ,—οὐσάντως ἔχον,—τὸ ἄδικον; and, in reference to the special faculties by which it is apprehended, it is νοῆσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν, λόγῳ καὶ φρονήσει περιληπτόν, μετὰ νοῦ καταφανείς, τὸ νοητὸν καὶ τὸ νοηστὸν, while οὐσία or essence is met by ἀλήθεια or truth, and γένεσις or generation in time by πίστις or faith 35. On the other hand, the fleeting world of sense is characterized as τὸ γνώμονα ἄει δὲ οὐδετερό,—as γνώμονα καὶ ἀπολυμένον,—as ὑπὸ αἰτίον τινὸς γνώμομον; and, in relation to the mental faculties that perceive it,—as δόξῃ μετ᾽ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου περιληπτόν 36,—as δοξάστον,—as αἰσθητόν. Many other forms of expression similar to these are scattered through the Platonic expositions; but the general purport of them all is the same, to contrast the seen and temporary with the known and eternal.

It would, perhaps, have been well for the perspicuity, though scarcely for the popularity, of the Platonic philosophy, if its Founder had always restricted himself to phrases such as these, distinct in their purport, and illumined by mutual contrast. But this is, indeed, far from being the case. The richest effusions of lyric poetry have never surpassed the profusion of imaginative decoration with which Plato delights to adorn these cold and feelingless forms of the pure reason. It would seem as if, convinced that the imagination and senses were to cease to be ours beyond the grave, he was determined to tax them in this life to the utmost, for the adorning of the philosophy of the eternal world. To the conception of Plato this life was itself a kind of perpetual allegory, an image in the language of fancy of truths infinitely beyond it; and his discourses are thus a picture, in the spirit of the Picture that evermore surrounded him. But in the midst of all this lavish ornament, and these constant appeals to the lovely scenery of sense, it is remarkable how little he suffered the seductions of sense to affect the substance of his teaching. Though there never were discourses more beautifully imaginative, there never was philosopher who

34 [Timæus, 27 D. For the remaining phrases, see Republic, esp. vi. and vii. passim. Ed.]
35 [Ibid. 29 C. Ed.]
36 [Ibid. 28 A. Ed.]
more steadily discountenanced the subjection for an instant of moral or metaphysical truth to the perilous despotism of sense in any of its forms: and they are grievously mistaken who (judging from some misunderstood phrases) habitually endeavour to justify the refined immoralities and false sensibility of so much of our popular literature by reference to the teaching or opinions of Plato. Nothing can impress more strongly the truth of this superiority, than the well-known opinion of the most poetical of philosophic expositors with regard to the exclusion of poetry in its usual forms from his ideal republic; and even when he speaks in the course of argument or illustration of that exquisite art which possesses so mysterious a control over the affections, and which forms, as it were, the link between the worlds of external sensation and inward emotion, the art of Music, it is with little respect for its pleasurable or exalting influences (except as a useful practical fact), and altogether with regard to any powers it may possess of suggesting by its sensible harmonies the harmony of that world of order where its charms are absent and forgotten.

If I am not mistaken in the views which I have this day presented of the scope of the ideal theory of Plato, you will now, I trust, have perceived in it a mighty substance of imperishable truth. I am not prepared to defend, I shall have at our next meeting to criticise, many of its details; but many fallacies should indeed be accumulated around it to obscure to any candid mind the dignity and symmetry of the structure itself. It may here and there betray feeble and unsightly additions, but for the most part they detach without much difficulty from the body of the edifice; it may seem to impatient pursuers of unadorned truth too profusely overlaid with flowers, but remove the flowers and the pillars are disclosed unshaken. As an effort to exhibit the eternal existence of the laws which the reason apprehends in the universe,—their reality, independence, and truth,—the theory of Plato is noble in its aspirations, and (as I believe) unimpeachable in the justness of its ultimate object; though, as we shall see at our next meeting, in the details there may be difficulties into which he (and in him human nature itself represented) could, and can, scarcely expect ever thoroughly to penetrate.
LEcTure IX.

Platonic Philosophy. No. VI.

Gentlemen,

I endeavoured in the last lecture to convey a general idea of what I conceive to be the substance of the Platonic theory of Ideas, when, disembarrassed of mythological and imaginative decorations, it is exposed to the scrutiny of reason. I attempted to shew you, that this theory purports to affirm, that there is in every sensible phenomenon a rational element, discernible by the intellect alone; which rational element determines the entire sensible apparition, and may therefore be regarded as standing to it in the relation of a cause and reason, or even, with some plausibility, may be considered its model or exemplar: that this rational element, being from its nature eternal, must be considered as antecedent to the sensible image, as independent of it, and therefore as belonging to a region of being essentially different from the sensible; while again, being united to the sensible world so as to form its true basis and reality, it cannot merely be regarded as a conception in the intelligence of the great Architect of the world, but as truly existing, distinctly from Him, yet bound to Him in the strictest bonds of coeternal existence. When in this manner you have gained a view of the Ideas of Plato, you at once perceive that they are no other than those eternal Laws and Reasons of things which even the most cursory examination cannot (I should suppose) deny to be a necessary element in every metaphysical estimate of the universe: and which equally applying to every existence whatever, to the least as to the loftiest, to the artificial as to the natural, are justly represented in those "Ideas" which, we have already seen, are in the theory of Plato ascribed to everything that has actual being. This universality of the ideal reasons, which from an imperfect apprehension of metaphysical truth many of the later Platonists denied⁴, Plato under-

⁴ [As Alcinous, de Plat. Dogm. c. 9: "Few of Plato's followers will admit
stood the scope of his own reasoning too well not constantly to enforce. Thus, in a remarkable passage near the beginning of the Parmenides; "Socrates!" says Parmenides\(^9\), (who, now the aged patriarch of the philosophical world, is introduced conversing with Socrates just commencing his career of inquiry)—"Socrates, how admirable is your earnestness in the pursuit of speculation! But tell me, have you indeed distinguished as you say, on the one side these ideas themselves, on the other their participant objects (τὰ μετέχουσα)?: And does similitude itself (αὐτὸ διοικητις) seem to you to be really anything beyond that similitude which we possess; and in like manner unity, and multiplicity, and the rest, which you have heard from Zeno? Certainly (replied Socrates). And probably (said Parmenides) it is so with the idea in itself (εἴδως αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ) of the just, the fair, the good, and such like? Assuredly. What? an idea of man apart from us and all such as we are,—an independent idea of man, or fire, or water? In truth, replied Socrates, I have often hesitated, Parmenides, about these; whether we ought to speak of them just as of the others, or differently. And does your doubt extend, Socrates, to things apparently ridiculous, as hair, mud, filth, and everything else that is worthless and vile,—do you hesitate whether we ought to pronounce that of each of these also there is an idea apart, distinguishable from what we handle? By no means, said Socrates. These are nothing more than just what we see them: to imagine an idea of these would be quite extravagant. Yet, I admit, it has often perplexed me whether the same thing does not take place with respect to every actual existence: but after standing for a while to this, I have fled the thought, for fear of falling into an unfathomable abyss of absurdities: and, returning to those particulars for which we have admitted that ideas do exist, I devote myself wholly to contemplating them. Ah, Socrates, replied Parmenides, you are yet young, and philosophy has not yet got possession of you, as I think she will one day do—when you will have learned to find nothing truly despicable in any of these things. But now your youth inclines you to regard the opinions of men."

It is, indeed, quite manifest that the reasoning on which

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\(^9\) [Plat. Parm. p. 130 B. Ed.]
Plato built his theory applies with equal force to every positive being whatever. In short, if I may venture to present the essence of the theory in a yet simpler form, the whole conceivable universe is metaphysically divisible into Facts and Reasons, the objects of experience, and the objects of intellect; with—as equally the ultimate point of both—that Supreme Essence, who is at once the greatest of facts, and the most perfect of reasons, holding in Himself the solution of His own existence. Now this statement, though not perhaps adequate to Plato's entire meaning, yet marks with a line of light the distributions of his whole philosophical picture: presenting at once the essentially successive nature of the actual, the eternity of the rational; the equal subordination of every positive existence to its own special correlative in the sphere of reason; the complete generial distinctness of the two, yet the participation of the sensible in the intelligible through every part of its being, as qualified, differentiated, and determined, by it. Thus the object of Plato was, to trace all that is offered by the senses throughout this wondrous world, down to its root in a deeper and invisible world; and to pronounce that the notion of perfect science is a delusion when it does not penetrate to this profounder reality. And I have already professed my own entire coincidence with the general principles of such a philosophy; and expressed, in language which they alone who depend on the vulgar representations of Platonism will regard as exaggerated, my admiration of the first full and systematic teacher of such views, as standing almost alone among the uninspired instructors of man.

But while the general spirit of the Platonic theory is thus true and thus admirable, I do not affirm that we must not make occasional abatements in considering its details. Unquestionably, extrinsic influences so far affected the mind of Plato as to lead him to encumber his system with additions altogether superfluous and often deforming. These will offer themselves to you naturally in the sequel.

I stated at the last lecture, that it would be necessary to consider the ideal theory of Plato in three aspects, the relation of ideas to the reason of man, to the sensible universe, and to the Supreme Being. Central between these three terms, ideas were supposed to embody the substance of truth, and to present it in different modes of communication to them all. I must demand your attention in this matter; you can scarcely expect that a subject so profound can be exhibited in a very popular form. I
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will however dismear it of every avoidable perplexity, and systematize the whole.

I. First, then, as to the relation of ideas to the human reason. It is certain that the human reason possesses an assured conviction with regard to the absolute truth of that great metaphysical law of the universe, that all which exists has beneath it a foundation in the reason of things, and exists only in virtue of that relation to the intellectual system of Being. Such a reason of existence is itself a mental essence, distinct indeed from the human mind which apprehends it, yet, as being mental, unquestionably of the same nature. The human intelligence knows that there is the ideal substratum, knows that it must be different for every different kind of perceived objects, yet cannot pretend to apprehend it with the plenitude of perfect vision. But though this fulness of direct apprehension belongs to a better—as Plato believed, to a simply incorporeal state—a there is, as I have shewn, a contact sufficiently intimate between the soul of man and the ideal reason, to convince that soul of the reality of its possession; to assure it that it holds the treasure in its grasp, though it cannot pronounce its weight, or form, or value. If any one questions whether this is conceivable, he may be referred to the analogous argument for a Dcity; where from the irresistible law of causality and intelligent ordination the existence is demonstrated of a Being whose mode of existence our minds are totally inadequate to comprehend. A connexion, then, is admissible between the human reason and the ideal forms, which, though manifestly in this state partial and imperfect, yet evinces a substantial homogeneity between the two. And thus on the one hand ideas are said to reside in the universal mind, and, on the other, the mind itself is designated as an idea:* forms of phrase that attest the conviction of a substantial sameness in the nature of

* [Phado, 66 D: εν μέλλουσι ποτὲ καθαρά τι εὑρεθαι, ἀπαλλακτών (τοῦ σώματος) καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς ψυχῆς θεϊκῶν αὑτά τὰ πράγματα, κ.τ.λ. ἐπι.]  
* [Phaed, 164 D: εἰς μέλλει τὸν ἱδέαν, ἑτερωρίων ἐστε μικρὸν ἑστε δὲ τοῖς καλέστιν, πάντα ταῦτα διάσωμεν. This however is one of the numerous passages in which ἱδέα is to be taken in a popular sense, as = φῶς τοῦ ντόπιον. A passage in the Phado (163 E, fol.) is apparently incompatible with the assertion that Plato regarded the soul as an "idea;" at any rate the argument, a very subtle one, in favour of the soul's immortality, loses its force on this supposition. The error, if error it is, is Ritter's, and Brandis seems to countenance it (Handb. 11. p. 261, ann.) Plato's real opinion, at least at the time when he wrote, is adumbrated in the figurative passage of the Republic, which sets forth the relation of the Soul to the Ideas as of that of the ἡμετέροις to the ἡμων, the sunlike to the sun (p. 503 fol.). The ideas are rational, the reason ideal in its nature; but neither are the ideas Reason, nor is the Reason an idea. It will be seen that the general tenor of the remarks in the text is not affected by this correction. It does not appear in what sense Aristotle pronounced the soul to
both. I need not add how such views were fortified in the ancient philosophy by the belief which in former lectures I shewed to be nearly universal, of the essential divinity of the rational spirit in man. To this community of nature between the soul and its objects, belongs that very celebrated portion of the doctrine of Plato, the love of ideal existence, which has since held so prominent a position in the romantic and fictitious literature, no less than in the theological speculations, of most countries. The theory of the Platonic love belongs more properly to another—the ethical—department of the present investigation; but its immediate relation to the argument before us requires a brief notice of its bearing here. Holding, as we have seen, an affinity between reason in man and the forms of reason in the universe, Plato found a strong confirmation of this doctrine in the process which in minds at all raised beyond a merely sensible existence he perceived to take place in the contemplation of objects characterized by beauty, order, and proportion. The mind, in such cases, instinctively refers the object to a standard of higher perfection which the object itself suggests. Pronouncing the visible phenomenon excellent in proportion as it approaches this higher standard, it yet is forced to avow that nothing earthly realizes it. This however is certain, that even the earthy object is, by virtue of its partial exhibition of perfection, capable of awakening a tendency to itself, varying in intensity according to the measure of the absolute beauty it manifests: and Plato, unquestionably taking advantage often of very ambiguous instances, attributed the admiration excited to the innate affection of the eternal spirit of man for that kindred exemplar of beauty which the object shadowed forth on the cloudy screen of the sensible world. Into the consequences of this theory (which you will find largely exhibited in the Symposium and Phaedrus) I am not now about to enter; my object at present being merely to adduce it as an illustration of the intimate affinity which Plato maintained to exist between the soul and the intelligible essences. For this doctrine and the former, taken together, exhibit both regions of the soul—the intellect and the emotions—as equally attracted by congeniality of nature to the ideal world. It is easy to exemplify the two tendencies in a

be elli 74, as Simplicius de Anim. p. 62 a assures us he did in his dialogue Eudemus; whether as the formative principle of organic matter or otherwise. There are passages in the Sophistes of Plato which, if not representing the soul as an elli, allow to the elli inherent vitality. Whether this makes in favour of Professor Jowett’s opinion as to the late date of this dialogue, it is not now the time to enquire. En.]
single instance. An act of virtue receives its name from its embodying the eternal "idea" of virtue in a transient shape, which "idea" the reason apprehends directly as its own appropriate object,—as the law of the intelligible world which forms the basis, modifies the quality, and fixes the whole character, of the act thus wrought out in the world of time and sense. At the same time, the soul, urged by this observed instance, rises from admiration of the fact to admiration of the law; and feeling that even in the noblest exhibition of that law by man the reason finds something to desire, yearns for that blissful country of the soul where alone absolute perfection exists, and where the essence, whatever it be, (for something it surely is,) of unclouded virtue shall be disclosed to the intellectual eye;—where, as it were, virtue and the soul shall unveil to each other, and one shall be seen, and the other shall see, both alike disenshrouded of the impeding embarrassments of their earthly and material organisms.

In the processes just mentioned, it is evident, as I stated in the last lecture, that Plato necessarily regarded the faculty of abstraction as the threshold of the temple of philosophic contemplation; but it is also evident (contrary to the representations of so many of the modern censurers of the philosopher) that he was far from regarding it as ensuring (except in a very subordinate sense) a position within the temple itself. The "Ideas" of Plato, those ideas to which he assigned a distinct existence in a distinct world, I must again repeat, were not the 'abstract ideas' of the modern philosophy. They were designated by the same name, the "justice," of which experience instructs us to speak as an abstraction from observed facts, and the "just in itself," which forms its exemplar in the sphere of reason; because from the deficiency of our present faculties we are unable to rise above the abstraction, and therefore give to the higher essence, whose existence alone we can be properly said to know directly, the name of that which is most worthy to represent it. But while the common name is thus from necessity assigned to both, Plato is careful to distinguish them in nature; and I know no single passage in his writings in which an abstract idea is said to have an existence outside the mind that conceives it. The faculty of abstraction is unquestionably represented as requisite in order to bring the reason into a position to hold such imperfect communion as it can in this embodied state attain, with the Eternal Ideas; but the best conceptions it can form are still represented, however they may refine the products of sensible experience, to be yet deficient in that independent reality which forms
the great prerogative of the ideas to which they struggle.
It seems to me, that in such passages as the following
from the Philebus, the two are not improbably distin-
guished from each other. "Whatever faculty we possess
stable, and pure, and true, and as we say sincere (εἰλικρινῆ)
belongs to things which remain unmixed and for ever im-
mutable; or, next to them, to those which are most kindred
(συγγενῆ) to them." When Plato reflected on the objective
reality of the universal and necessary truths which the
reason discerns to be the governing principles of the
universe, he might pronounce that in the apperception of
them the reason held a direct communion with ideas,
manifestly by a faculty altogether distinct from abstraction;
when by the exercise of abstraction he obtained a general
name, or conception, of the geometrical figure, the moral
virtue, the physical quality—and along with this had,
by the independent exercise of reason, pronounced that these
characters of things thus common to many, must have
their ultimate reason, their model, their consummation, in
the farther and invisible system, he might affirm that by
this act of the reason he had cast a bridge across the abyss
that divides the sensible and intelligible, while by the
previous act of abstraction he had brought the sensible
objects to the utmost verge of their own sensible territory.
But I do not believe that Plato ever held that the abstrac-
tion itself could bridge the abyss, or transfer the seen to
the unseen, the temporal to the eternal.

But what relation, then, had the generalizing process to
the apperception of ideas? This. The world of sense
pictures the world of reason. Now the sensible world is
made up of a vast complication of qualities and of laws,
which in the world of reason are presented in distinctness
and simplicity. To represent this latter scene, therefore,
the philosopher must study to disentangle complexity, and
separate accidental concomitants. To do this is to ab-
stract. But the necessity also arose (in Plato's estimate)
from the perversity and hostility of the sensible subject-
matter itself; which, debasing the ideal perfection in every
instance, obliged the aspirant after the better world to
abstract these unhappy accompaniments in order to obtain
that which truly found its model in the sphere of ideas.
In this relation of the abstract to the eternal ideas, you
will find sufficient reason for Plato's constant admiration
of the abstractive habit, and his reverence for language
which is its creature. But that he did not urge its claims
beyond the bounds I have assigned, seems eminently
manifest from this consideration. The mathematical

[59 C. Ed.]
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科学 by the palmary instance of the abstractive faculty; and to Plato the favourite one. Yet we know from Aristotle, that the μάθημα was τον μεταξύ λογο- μενος, only intermediaries between sense and reason, having gained even this advance from causes not now worth investigating; and we know that Plato himself considered them the mere preliminaries to the philosophy of essences. 

Ideas and the “pure reason” (the phrase is Plato’s own, λόγος εἰδουρυξις or καθαρος, though since appropriated) being thus essentially kindred although unhappily separated, knowledge being the conjoint result of both, and demanding both, it was not unnatural that Plato should have united them in a common eternity of nature. He usually argues the essential eternity of the soul from its faculty of self-activity; but from various hints and trains of thought, I cannot but think that the view I have stated strongly influenced his mind. The rational element in the human soul, that which addresses itself to the absolute, the necessary, the essentially true, is inherently eternal; because even in its incorporate state not truly dwelling in time or space, to whose laws or conditions it is in no sense amenable. It is not to wait for an hereafter, it now lives in eternity. Its spiritual vehicle, the portion of the mind which, operating in time, ministers to the imagination (and thence ultimately to the senses), by comparing or abstracting, must vanish with the dissolution of the machinery of sense; but it only vanishes to leave the purely intellectual essence where it found it, in its own intellectual home. Such reasoning as this (which I suspect to have

αἰσθητα εἰσι, των δὲ εἰδων τα μεν πολλα αττα ομαια εισι, το δε ειςει εν αυτο εκτασιν μόνον. Plato himself, as stated in the text, regarded the study of mathematics as a preparation for speculative philosophy; and distinguished the mathematical faculty (διανοια) from the higher speculative intelligence (νοημα), as well as from the mere notion or opinion founded on sense (δοξα). Κεφαλ. vi. 51 ν. The conceptions which the mathematician takes for granted as the basis of his reasoning (στοιχεῖα), such as space, number, &c. are among those which the philosopher seeks to account for. Compare a remarkable passage in Ευθυδ. 390 b: οι δὲ γεωμετρια...δε τηθευ...οικ επιστήμου, ἀλλα θηρίων...σαν τα πολην, παραδειγμα δή κοις διαλεκτικος καταχρηθαν αυτών τοις ευρημασι. Ed.]

7 [Nous, not Λόγος, is commonly found in this combination. I remember no instance of "Λόγος καθαρός" or "Εἰδουρυξις." The word nous answers well enough to the German “Vernunft,” but not so well to our “Reason,” of which λόγος is the natural correspondent. Milton’s distinction of Reason Discursive and Reason Intuitive represents fairly the difference between the two modes of mental action. Accordingly in ascending to first principles the philosopher is said to employ νοος μετα λόγο, or λογισμον. Ed.]

6 [Πάντα ψυχα διάθατοι, το γρα διακινησε θαθατον...μόνον δή το αυτό κινουν...δεδοτε λόγης κινουμενον. Phaedr. 245 c. Ed.]

8 [Πάντα ψυχα διάθατοι, το γρα διακινησε θαθατον...μόνον δή το αυτό κινουν...δεδοτε λόγης κινουμενον. Phaedr. 245 c. Ed.]
passed through the mind of Plato) would of course establish — if the phrase be not itself inaccurate — the anterior eternity of the soul. This doctrine of pre-existences, however, Plato endeavoured to demonstrate by a very fallacious experiment; which purported to convince that all discovery, or even instruction in abstract truth, was but the recollection of former knowledge: as if it were at all easier to conceive the mystery of remembrance than the mystery of successive suggestions, or the one were a whit more antecedently probable than the other*. The intellectual essence, then, Plato considered coeternal with those ideas which are its sole appropriate aliment; that which men call life was but a dark and transitory imprisonment; and time an episode in eternity. It dwelt of old in its own region; it sighs for it past, it longs for it to come; but, emancipated from the burden of flesh, it shall feel as one who awakes from a dream, discovering at length that though surrounded by visionary forms it never changed its real place through the entire; it reposes where it reposed before the vision began†!

With regard then to the connexion of the reason and the essential forms, we may pronounce it the spirit of the Platonic theory, 1st, that a true knowledge or communion of reason with the reality of things is ensured by the kindred, or even homogeneous, nature of reason and ideas⁹. 2ndly, that this intimate connexion is testified by the impassioned aspiration of the instructed soul for the perfection to be found only in the ideal world¹⁰. 3rdly,

* This singular passage (in the Meno) I suspect to have been a merely popular illustration of a doctrine which Plato—or Socrates, if it was truly his—built upon a deeper basis.

† To qualify this statement, it must, however, be noted, that in various parts of his writings Plato very distinctly lays down the doctrine of a future state of reward and punishment; which it certainly is not easy to reconcile with this simply metaphysical conception of the eternity of the rational soul as the main ground of the belief of immortality. In these representations it is exceedingly difficult to detach the mythical dress from the substance of doctrine; but it would appear that, though rejecting the notion of a re-integration of the dissolved bodily integument, Plato held that enough of the conscious mind remained united to its rational element to form a subject for happiness and misery; and, if this were difficult to admit, that by the perpetual transition from body to body, it continued to be provided with a corporeal vehicle until such a process of refinement had been effected as, by gradually weaning it from body, at length qualified it for a purely immaterial existence.

We here observe the independent originality of the Christian tone of thought, which, while it countenances (as we have seen) some of the nobler views, and adopts some of the more forcible expressions, of Platonism, altogether denies its theory of the inappropriateness of a connexion of body and soul in the state of perfect and consummate bliss.

⁹ [συγγενὴσιν ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς τῷ θεῷ...καὶ τῷ ἰδόντι.—Republic. x. 611 e. Ed.]

that the great business of the philosophic cultivator of his intelligence, is, by the constant exercise of accurate abstraction, to fit the qualities of sense to represent the everlasting models of the sphere of truth and being. 4thly, that we may well conclude the rational nature of man, formed as it is for ideal contemplation, to be eternal as ideas themselves; and though the sensible world itself is, by the participation of ideas, as perfect as the dull obduracy of its material subject will permit, yet that to the philosophic soul it can never appear in any other light than as a restriction to the inborn energies of the spirit, suggesting, indeed, the absolutely good and fair and true, but clouding and concealing the very perfection it suggests.

II. We have, next, to define the connexion of the Platonic ideas with the sensible universe. And here, as there is much obscurity, and has been much difference of opinion, I think it infinitely the best course to present you with the phrascology of the master himself: a phrascology which will to the meditative student afford a safer and clearer light than could be supplied in many pages of comment.

Plato, as I have before shewn, regarded the sensible as an image of perfection, whose adequateness to represent the perfect original was impeded by the unyielding nature of the subject on which it was impressed. He saw in the universal system, as all must, the two antagonist terms of good and evil; and his merit was, that in devising his theory of their mutual relations, he pronounced the principle of good naturally and eternally the superior principle; he pronounced the principle of evil to be itself devoid of real personality, and as far as possible of reality; and he pronounced that the evil—this dark negation of excellence—did not, and could never, stand in the relation of effect to the Almighty Personification of Good:—οὐκ ἀρα πάντων γε αἰτίων τὸ ἔγαθὼν ἀλλὰ τῶν μὲν εὗ ἐχύτων αἰτίων, τῶν δὲ κακῶν ἀναίτων. You will therefore perceive, that,
whatever modifications it might afterwards have undergone, the original theory of Plato is absolutely distinct from every form of Manicheism. I need not say, that this theory leaves the subject in much mystery; but this every theory must do: and the true merit in such a case is, not to explain the inexplicable, but to fix the mystery (which can never be absolutely evaded) in such a part of the question as will preserve the Divine characters and prerogatives unimpeached*. The material subject being thus opposed to the formative principle of good, the office of the eternal forms was to qualify and confine it; and hence Plato peremptorily designates bare matter as the "unlimited" (τὸ ἄτειρον), and the intelligible essence that impresses and controls it, as "the bound or limit." When he attempts to characterize the relation between these laws of perfect excellence and the sensible phenomenon, he speaks of it, as the relation, 1st, of one to many (τὸ ἕν τῷ τὰ πολλά, by which title the sensible world is constantly designated) 10; and hence, 2ndly, as of that which is single to that which is internally opposite to itself (ἐνάντιον αὐτῷ, αὕτῳ), multiplicity admitting of this reciprocal opposition of parts 11; and hence again, 3rdly, as of that which is simple to that which is confused (συγκεκριμένον) 12; and 4thly, as of that which is indivisible to that which is divisible (τὸ μεριστὸν) 13; 5thly, as the unchangeable to the changeable 14; the sensible (as we have so often seen) never truly existing, but "becoming;" 6thly, as the Divine (θεῖον) to the necessary (ἀναγκαῖον), a connexion very obscure, and by Plato treated briefly and hastily 15; 7thly, as the absolute to the relative;

exists in far larger measure than good—we cannot regard as caused by God, we must seek some other origin for it." Ed."

* The great practical defect of the system of Plato (as afterwards appeared) was the identification of the material, or corporeal, nature with the nature of evil; which unhappily countenanced all the extravagances of the ascetic discipline of the East, and assuredly injured the simplicity of Christian practice in the early ages. But this belongs to future inquiries.

10 [Philebus, p. 23 C: τὸν θεῖον ἐλέγομεν τοῦ τὸ μὲν ἄτειρον δεῖξαι τῶν ὅσων, τὸ δὲ πέρας. Ed.]

11 [Ib. p. 16 C: ἐξ ἕνας μὲν καὶ ἐκ πολλῶν ὅσων ἄτον ἐλέγομεν ἄναι, πέρας δὲ καὶ ἄτειρον ἐν αὐτῶν ἑξαφεροῦν ἑξάφερον. Ed.]

12 [Ib. pp. 24, 25; Tim. p. 49 C, fol.; Phædo, p. 70 D, fol., compared with 103 B, where the contrast between that which becomes and that which is is clearly brought out: τὸ σὲ μὲν ἄτειρον ἐν τούτῳ πράγματος τὸ ἐνάντιον πράγμα γέγραφαι, νῦν δὲ ...ἀυτῷ τὸ ἐνάντιον διατέφρουν οὐκ ἐν τούτῳ γέγραφαι. Ed.]


14 [Tim. p. 35 A, where ἡ ἁμερίστος καὶ δὲ κατὰ ταῦτα ἕχουσα οίνος is contrasted with ἡ περὶ τὸ σώματα γεγομένη μερίστη. Ed.]

15 [Ἀλλοιωμένον, καυσώμενον, ἐν κεκριμένον; ἀλλοιωμένος οἰ κηρυκς ἐνθεσμός, contrasted with τὸ δεῖων, τὸ ἐστός, τὸ δὲ κατὰ ταῦτα ἐχον κ.τ.λ. These phrases occur passim. Ed.]

16 [Tim. 68 Ε: δῆ αὖτις ἑδή, τὸ μὲν ἀναγκαῖον τὸ δὲ θεῖον. The passage is
the sensible world being thus known by the very peculiar expression (τὸ ἕτερον), and its existence being constantly described as little more than a relation to the real. Hence every actual phenomenon is pronounced (in the Timæus) to be a composition of same, different, and essence (or ὄντια). 8thly, as exemplar to copy,—the sensible being the picture of the invisible in the visible: this expression, though the commonest of all, is manifestly metaphorical; for there can be no proper resemblance between the sensible and ideal. There may indeed be conceived an analogy of elements correlatively connected in each; and to this, doubtless, it was that Plato referred in his παριδεύεμα and εἰκών. 9thly, as the means for the display of good, to the good itself. tothly, as the object of science, pure and perfect and eternal Being, to the object of opinion, which is declared intermediate between being and not-being, even as opinion is intermediate between science and ignorance. Finally, as comprehending them all, and forming the technical term of the school of Plato, the relation of the intelligible to the sensible was as the original idea to that which participates of it (τὸ μετέχον). I have no time now to try your patience by a separate investigation of all these ways of bringing within the scope of our faculties the relation of the eternal laws of the universal system, illustrated by p. 48 E: μετεχεῖν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου γένεσιν ἀνάγκης τῇ καὶ τοῦ συντάγματος ἐγκυροφθεὶς κ.τ.λ. Ed.]*

* Bare matter, however, abstracted from its forms, Plato scarcely distinguished from ρύθεν; and pronounced the connexion to be almost that of entity to absolute non-existence. This was consequent upon his notions of the purely negative nature of evil, and of its coincidence with matter,—the receiver, but the deliverer, of the eternal and all-perfect Ideas of God. In its primitive state this dark essence was characterized as ἀνείδης ἄμορφος, ἄσχηματος; and every artifice of language employed to convey the notion of pure negation, without directly asserting it. [Tim. p. 52 A: δὲ μὲν ἐναὶ τὸ κατὰ ταύτα εἰδών...τούτο δὲ δὴ νόμος ἐλεημὼν ἐπίσκοπον τῇ δ' ὁμόων δεύτερον αἰσθητῷ, γεννητῷ...ἀλλ' μετ' αἰσθήσεως ἀπεριήγητον τρίτων δὲ αὐτοὺς δὲ τὸ τῆς χώρας ἀεί, φθορὰν ὑπὸ προσθήκημαν, ἑδρὲαν ἄναρχον δεῖ ήξεῖ γένεσιν ταύτῃ, αὐτὸ δὲ μετ' άνασθεσίας άπότομον λογισμῶν τινός, μόνας πιστῶν, πρὸς δὲ δὴ καὶ λαθαριασθῶν βλέποντες, καὶ φανερὸν ἀναγκαίον εἶναι τὸ δὲ ἐκατ. ἐπὶ τοῦ τότε καὶ κατέχον χώραν τυλικαὶ ταῦτα. These three constituents of created being are presently styled ὑπὸ τοῦ τῇ χώρᾳ καὶ γένεσιν, and the second very expressively, ἀναγκαῖον γένεσιν, the nurse, or, as we should say, receptacle (or substratum) of the created or phenomenal world. See by all means Zeller's remarks on the Platonic conception of matter, Phìt. d. Grich. ii. p. 457 fol. 9'" Anl. Compare also the following Lecture. Ed.]
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themselves substantially true and good, to the sensible or apparitional world of experience. They illustrate, modify, and confirm, each other: and from the union of those which I have collected from various portions of the Platonic dialogues, and of others which you may discover there, you will attain as clear a conception as is now possible of the meaning of the author; and, if not much light as to the true nature of the mysterious connexion itself of the rational and irrational elements in the structure of the world, yet as much as our present state permits, which Plato himself regarded as at best a knowledge obscure, imperfect, and analogical only.

To this question of the relation of ideas to the sensible, belongs the subtle controversy between the Aristotelians and Platonics, as to whether the forms of things were distinct from, or truly embodied in, the phenomena. The founder of the Peripatetic school argues at great length, in his books of metaphysics, against the theory of exemplar ideas, pronouncing them purely poetical metaphors, and acknowledging no medium between the First Cause and that sensible world into which he has infused the qualifying forms of things. This metaphysical question has often been discussed in ages which we are now accustomed to regard as the peculiar era of verbal and unprofitable controversy. Into the voluminous writings of these disputants I cannot pretend to have struggled far; but I can, at the first aspect of the question, perceive that the controversy about the distinctness of forms is so far from being the puerile logomachy of dreamers, that it actually and necessarily involves the profoundest and most interesting of all philosophical questions. This will appear in the few words I can now devote to the third point proposed,—the relation of ideas to the supreme intelligence of God.

III. Relation of Ideas to the Divine Nature.

I have often reminded you that the character of Platonism is eminently ethical, and its great object the foundation on a permanent basis of the great principles of the moral law. Now, when the great philosopher contemplated the miserable destitution of his countrymen in all that regards a genuine sense of natural religion, he at once ascribed it to the necessary influence of polytheism, which, by erecting a multitude of divine standards of duty, all differing from each other, and many of them mutually contradictory, inevitably destroyed the connexion between religious belief and ethical conviction. This he has very fully explained in the dialogue entitled Euthyphron; which assuredly, if it was really a report of the Socratic conversa-

[Metaph. I. 9, 12: τὸ δὲ λέγειν παραδείγματα αὐτὰ (τὰ ἐθή) εἶναι, καὶ μετέχειν αὐτῶν τάλλα, κανονολογεῖν ὅσι καὶ μεταφορᾶς λέγειν ποιμεῖν. Ed.]
tion, may leave us little surprised at the fate of Socrates. But the reasoning of this precious fragment extends much farther than to confute the extravagances of the Olympian theology; its spirit, and some of its express details, are equally directed against a dogma which has reigned far more extensively than the pagan multitude of gods ever spread their authority,—the doctrine, namely, that the moral qualities of actions are themselves dependent on the arbitrary constitution of a Supreme Governor. Plato saw, that, even though the unity of God were universally received, the reception of this belief would be practically as injurious as the influence of absolute Atheism. Accordingly, his whole philosophy of ideas as related to God is a structure raised to fortify the elementary principles of the eternal law of right against the irruptions of this degrading tenet.

To evince this, observe, that we may be able legitimately to pronounce that a certain metaphysical connexion does not exist between two terms, even though we are wholly unable to apprehend what their true link of connexion is, and though, therefore, if we speak of it at all, we can do so only by the aid of analogies derived from experience. And such analogies may be logically received, as long as it is understood that they are presented for no more than they are worth; and less to pronounce a positive principle in the ideal system of the universe, than to occupy a place where intrusive errors might enter, until such time as we may be enabled to apprehend the truth in its direct, explicit purity. Remembering this, you are now to remark that Plato accounted for the existence of things, by affirming that a nature beyond all natures called the universe into being (whether from eternity or not, we are not now discussing); that in so doing this Being held in view as the sole end of his acts absolute and unclouded goodness, to be exhibited in the language of sensible objects; and that, the nature of goodness being coeternal with himself, not caused by him, nor dependent on him, but nevertheless the voluntary rule of his acts, he referred in all which he did, to these eternal relations of things, and made his work—as far as the mysteriously opposing principle would allow—the copy of their perfection. That is, divine goodness was the final cause, divine energy the efficient cause, and the eternal laws of right—the "ideas" of holiness, and proportion, and beauty—the formal cause of the world. The relation of Deity to the Ideal Models is, then, a most important and valuable element in the

[Timaeus, p. 39 B: ἀγαθὸν ἦν ὁ θεός...πᾶντα ὑπὸ μαλακτος γενέθθαι ἐβουλήθη παραπλήσια ταυτ. 28 C: πρὸς τὸ ἄδιδον ἐβλεπεν. Ed.]
Platonic metaphysics; and stands manifestly opposed, in its whole spirit and consequences, to the theory, which, by merging the Form in the Phenomenon, denies it separate existence or antecedent reality, and tends to exhibit it as a mere effect of Divine causation. Plato has, indeed, with his usual metaphysical accuracy, seen that the Eternal Laws of Right are in some mysterious bond (altogether beyond our conception) entwined with the Divine nature; and he accordingly represents them as contained by him in his own Divine reason; but, nevertheless, he maintains their substantial distinctness from the personal activity or volition of God, and their relation to him not in the bond of cause and effect, but—to express eternal truths by sensible analogies—in that of model or exemplar. They are coexistent, they may even be pronounced coincident; but they are not consequential, resultant, inferior: nor in the order of reason (for of the order of succession we speak not in eternal things) are they to be, with the Aristotelian, declared non-existent except in the phenomenal embodiment; a theory which would render it impossible to characterize any act as right, any relation as proportionate, any form as beautiful, for any reason beyond its bare existence; or to affirm that the Divine Will acts according to justice upon any ground distinct from that on which we affirm that he acts at all. If the Deity operates in any sense he operates rightly, if he operates rightly he operates according to a rule; and if he operates according to a rule, that rule is logically antecedent to the operation which practically exhibits it. God, then, is related to the eternal ideas as an architect is related to the model by which he labours.

Gentlemen, we have now surveyed the chief elements of the Metaphysical Principles of Plato; and if I have at all rendered this lofty philosophy more familiar to your thoughts in the Lectures which I am now bringing to a close, I shall at least have done what I candidly confess I know scarcely where to point to you the means of otherwise effecting. The popular treatises are so inaccurate, the accurate treatises so tedious and obscure, that it may, I fear, be pronounced that our language does not contain a satisfactory exposition of the genuine philosophy of Plato. I will hope that I have awakened the curiosity of some of my hearers to become more thoroughly acquainted with the illustrious original; and may thus, perhaps, have been the means of exciting that spirit of inquiry which yet may gift our language with this great desideratum.

The physical and ethical systems of Plato still remain. The next term I may hope to investigate these.
THIRD SERIES.

LECTURE I.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. No. VII.

GENTLEMEN,

I RESUME the consideration of the Platonic Philosophy with which we were engaged when last I addressed you. We had at that time, as you may remember, traversed one large district of this sublime and impressive doctrine; a district too which holds the key of all the rest, and which rightly to survey is to have caught those features that determine the expression of the whole. Undaunted by its reported terrors, we ventured to scale that Ideal World of whose obscure and cloudy elevation so much has been sarcastically said and written; and, though I cannot pretend to be the hierophant of all its mysteries, I trust you will at least have agreed with me that the theory, detached from some brilliant decorations of fancy, possesses a very discernible foundation in truth. Truth, both intellectual and moral, was beset by enemies in the days of Plato, exactly correspondent to those with whom you are all familiar in the last and current century,—enemies who endeavoured by the same arguments, urged with the same audacity, to impugn its evidences and question its very existence; and the Theory of Ideas was the first of those mighty appeals to the higher gifts and prerogatives of the human mind by which, under the guidance of the great lights of our race, such assaults have ever been resisted. When considering the foundations of the theory, I directed you principally to its' speculative value, as an answer to the logical difficulties concerning the reality of our knowledge; but I took care to admonish you that with Plato all things are subservient to a moral purpose. It is true that Platonism is a contemplative philosophy,—pervadingly, perhaps too pervadingly so,—but its contemplativeness is altogether directed to a practical purpose: it
is an intuition of truth, but of truth as identified with goodness. It rejoices to behold the reality of things fixed on a rock against which all the waves of sceptical opinion beat in vain; but it never forgets to insist that it is the supreme Ἀγάθον— that last and loftiest abstraction of intelligence—that, as the sun of the invisible world, quickens nature into being, and pours upon all things that revealing light of truth which makes them, in their ideas, the direct objects of human apprehension. Detached from these moral relations, Plato manifestly took little interest in the sciences; even his favourite pursuits, mathematics, music, and astronomy, are everywhere represented as mainly or solely valuable as clements of discipline for a science beyond them. In this respect Aristotle seems to furnish a strong contrast to his master; and will find far more sympathy in the existing condition of the world of thought. Plato would not have written the passage (noble, certainly, and awakening) with which Aristotle opens his metaphysical philosophy, by ascribing to the pursuit of causes the highest claims for its own sake. On the contrary—though it may seem paradoxical to attribute to Plato any form of utilitarianism—the founder of the Academy never speaks of knowledge as valuable when insulated from its practical scope, that of approximation to the source of perfection; and though I confess I see in this what is more than once to be seen in Plato, a view too simple and exclusive for the complexity of human nature,—it is, nevertheless, one of the characteristics which contribute to make the study of Platonism a most salutary corrective for the opposite and far more dangerous excess into which the present and the last age (especially in our own country) have universally fallen.

With such views as these predominant in all his writings, you will not expect in the Physics of Plato—the subject announced for this occasion—anything analogous to the vast, various, and ascertained body of knowledge which the magnificent successes of modern inquiry have enabled us to attach to the word. The very fact that the dialogue to which we must have recourse in order to obtain those views, contains a scheme of almost all the physical knowledge of the time—cosmical, anatomical, medical—is a sufficient indication how imperfect and superficial that knowledge must be. The departments of inquiry were so limited that the division of labour had scarcely commenced; and an accomplished teacher was expected to have mastered the whole.

Nevertheless, the Timæus—the performance of which I speak—is one of the most characteristic, and, in this
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respect, one of the most precious of all the writings of this
great master; but nothing is less understood than the

Plato.

It would be very mistaken to imagine that in this work
Plato dogmatically advanced an ascertained system of

nature, or a system professing to be such. Were this the
case, the practised disciple of Bacon might indeed close the
book with contempt; and the ordinary sarcasms with

which the "dreams" and "fictions" of Plato are received
would be perfectly justifiable. But he can have a very
faint perception of the peculiarities of the Platonic style
who fails to see in this singular dialogue more than the
surface exposes. But to illustrate this point (which really
seems to have been but feebly caught by even the modern
commentators on Plato) we must make a few preparatory
remarks.

The word "Idea," which stands at the head of each

district of the Platonic philosophy, is employed in senses

which differ considerably from each other, though resolving

into ultimate sameness. I do not here refer to the modern
adaptations, but to the genuine Platonic uses, of the word.
In our former discussions, regarding the Ideas mainly in
their speculative aspect, I endeavoured to illustrate them
by such expressions in the modern philosophy of Reason
as seemed to approach nearest to the scope of Plato,—
more particularly by such phrases as the "Grounds" and
"Reasons of Things," which, though necessarily occurring
more or less in all philosophies that do not overlook funda-
mental truth, have perhaps become peculiarly associated
with that of Leibnitz. But there is a view in which Ideas
are altogether Platonic, and in which all who have subse-
sequently insisted on them have been the manifest followers
of Plato. This second and most characteristic purport on
which the Platonic Ethics are finally based, as his Dialectics
on the former, is that in which the Idea is used as

synonymous with Paradigm or Exemplar. This signification
so far pervades all Platonism as to affect even the
former or merely theoretic import of the word; for in this
philosophy all things are blended with all: but an easy
analysis separates them: and though, to be faithful to my
author, I could not avoid introducing it even in the sim-
plest view of the Platonic dialectics, it is unquestionably
with the moral system that it holds its chief affinity. This
we shall probably see more fully when the ethics of Plato
come under review. My present purpose is to detect it in
what are regarded as his Physics.

In firmly holding the absolute excellence of the Deity,

and in regarding the visible world as His formation, the

use of the Ideal theory in the con-
philosopher held that the world and all its parts were images, in the sensible sphere, and as far as the sensible subject could receive their impress, of exemplars of unshadowed perfection;—of "Ideas," that is, in the sense which I have just instanced. Gazing upon these Ideas, the great Artificer projected the universe into being by a process such as Cicero describes when, speaking of the Grecian statuary, he tells us, "Nec vero ille artifex, cum faceret Jovis formam aut Minervae, contemplabatur aliquem e quo similitudinem duceret; sed ipsius in mente insidebat species pulchritudinis eximia quaedam, quam intuens, in eaque deexitus, ad illius similitudinem artem et manum dirigebat" (Orat. c. 2*). Now, as all the value and dignity of the sensible world lay in its presenting a faint copy of these invisible originals, it was natural to pronounce that the only utility of physical research—the only utility, at least, that philosophy could recognize—was to be found in its perpetually recalling these forms of perfection: in its representing, in the language of visible facts, unseen excellence. This was but one case of a general principle. To portray Ideals is the perpetual occupation of Plato,—and that not as answering to what exists, but to what might or ought to exist. The use of such a practice is twofold. Sometimes it points out a model to which men may endeavour constantly to approximate—"the curve," as it has been expressed, "to the asymptote" of their exertions; and of this object of Ideal representation the Republic of Plato is the palmary instance. Sometimes, where the subject is beyond the power of man to modify, the practice of Ideal Representation assists the mind in conceiving the exquisite order and simplicity by which actual results may have been brought to pass,—and to this purpose I would assign the composition of the Timaeus1.

I am convinced that if you read this remarkable work with this directive idea, you will find abundant confirmations of the truth of this conception of its real object. Instead of being the bold blundering dogmatism of pretended learning, you will find its hypotheses everywhere marked with the utmost modesty and candour, and the subordina-

* I may add that the process by which the human soul endeavours to ascend to these exemplars by a reverse course may be found described by the same gifted master of language in a very analogous passage in his treatise de Inventione (11, 1, 1), where he relates the well-known story of Zeuxis's picture of Helen.

1 [This thought is very well expressed by Stallbaum: "Quemadmodum igitur in libris de Republica quae ideae boni vis in vita humana et publica et privata esse-possit vel debeat ostenditur, ita in Timaeo docetur eadem ideam per totam regnare rerum universitatem atque in humana natura quoque divino quodam beneficio elucere." Ann. in Tim. init. Ed.]
tion of the uncertain suppositions to the great truth of Divine wisdom and goodness which they are meant to illustrate, everywhere impressed. "We attach ourselves in these explanations," he observes, "to whatever seems to carry most probability." "I will not undertake to expound the cause or the causes and reasons of all that exists; and I decline such an attempt, because altogether foreign to the plan of this discourse. Do not expect it from me; nor am I presumptuous enough to imagine myself competent to such an achievement. But content with probabilities, I will, as all along, endeavour to give you opinions at least as likely as those of others, and to treat the subject, both generally and in detail, with somewhat more extent than usual." "I who speak, and you who judge, partake of a common humanity; so that if you receive probabilities (τῶν εἰκότα μοῦν) you ought to ask no more." These characters of uncertainty are meant by Plato to apply,—partly to the very nature of physical, as contrasted with pure intellectual inquiry,—partly to the imperfection of existing materials of knowledge. As if to prevent misconception, the author continually interposes these observations about the uncertainty of that which he can only propound upon conjecture; and even in the very complexity of some portions of his theory (as the mathematical calculations of the constitution of the soul of the world) we can easily perceive that these elaborate deductions are introduced on very much the same principle of instructing by harmless illusion which induces the novelist to complicate his narrative. The Timæus, then, is nothing more than an ingenious series of hypotheses meant to deepen and vivify our notions of the harmony of the universe, and the consequent wisdom and goodness of its Author. Whatever physical truths were within the author's reach took their place in the general array; the vacancies were filled up with the best suppositions admitted by the limited science of the time. Thus, and only thus, the Timæus enters naturally where we know Plato made it enter—immediately after his books on a Republic; it is the Ideal of a physical, following the Ideal of a moral, harmony.

It may, indeed, be asserted with truth that Plato had no clear conception of the advances that a true system of observation and experiment might make in the knowledge of nature; but I believe it most unfair to conclude that he considered the Timæus as having realized them. And when we deplore that the loftiest conceptions ever entertained by uninspired man, of the moral advancement of

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our race, were not united in one mind with the sagacious views of Bacon as to its artificial and exterior amelioration, we ought also to remember how much larger was the philosophic experience of a sage of the sixteenth century, how much ampler and safer therefore his survey of human errors, than could belong to one who, if he raised philosophy into the vigour of manly youth, rose in almost its childhood.

In accordance with the representation which I have given you, Plato sets out by fixing Creation upon the absolute goodness of God, and thence evolving a system of optimism. He declares indeed (in a passage which has often been quoted, and censured, perhaps, without much reason) that "it is difficult to discover the Author and Father of the universe, and impossible after the discovery to make him universally known"; but this difficulty concerns only his intimate essence and productive power, and does not extend to his moral attributes. "Let us pronounce," says Timæus—and I invite you to observe the exquisite simplicity, the decision, and the depth, of the statement—"with what motive the Creator hath created nature and this universe. He was good; but in the good no manner of envy on any possible subject can subsist. Exempt from envy, he has wished that all things should as far as possible resemble himself. Whoever shall from wise teachers receive this as above all others the highest principle of the production of nature and the world, shall receive the truth. God, wishing that there should be as much good and as little evil as possible, took the whole fluctuating mass of things visible, which had been in orderless confusion, and reduced it to order, considering this to be far the better state. Now it was and is utterly impossible that He who is most excellent should form anything else but what is most excellent likewise." The same principle of the absolute perfection of the universal scheme, which is here applied physically, is affirmed in its moral aspect, in a noble passage of the Tenth Book of Laws, which I shall here cite, as contributing to illustrate a cardinal point in Platonism. "Let us persuade this young objector," says the Athenian interlocutor who represents Plato himself in that work, "that He who provides for all has arranged all for the advantage of the whole; that each part does and suffers only what it is suitable for it to do and suffer; that guardians have been set to watch unceasingly over each individual even to his minutest acts and affections, and to carry the general perfection into its smallest details. You

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4 [Tim. p. 28 c. Ed.]
6 [Ib. 29 d. Ed.]
8 [p. 903 b. Ed.]
yourself, thoughtless mortal! you are something, however minute, in the common system of order, you are incessantly referred to it. But you fail to see that every production is produced with this relation to the entire and to its happiness; that the universe exists not for you, but you for the universe. Every physician or other skilful artist directs all his operations towards a whole, and makes them contribute to the greatest perfection of the whole; he makes the part for the whole, not the whole for the part; and your murmurs (at the unequal disposition of fortunes) are all for want of knowing how these relations co-operate according to the laws of the general scheme...The Monarch of the world, having observed that all our operations arise from the soul, and are compounded of vice and virtue, that the soul and body, although not eternal as the gods of the established creed, ought not to be allowed to perish (for if either perished all production of animated beings would cease); and that it is of the essential nature of good, as it springs from the soul, to be advantageous, of evil to be mischievous; the King of the world, having known all this, conceived, in the general distribution, the system which he considered simplest and best, to the end that good might have the upper hand and evil be undermost in the universe. It is with this view to the whole that he has constructed his arrangement of the positions that each individual, according to his distinctive character, is to occupy: at the same time that he has left to the disposal of our own wills the causes on which these distinctive characters shall depend; for men are what men make themselves to be....Thus all animated beings are subject to various changes of which the regulative principle is within themselves; and in consequence of these changes, each finds himself in the place marked out by the established law." He then proceeds to bring the retributions of the future world under these general laws whose final cause is the perfection of the universe, in much the same manner as has been so admirably done by the author of the Analogy of Religion and Nature. "Those who have undergone but slight alterations of their present state, remove but slightly, and along the same plane in space; those whose souls are more radically perverted to evil descend into subterraneous dwellings....and when a soul has made a marked advance whether in evil or good by a firm purpose and constant

1 [Ibid. 904 A. Ed.]
2 δι' αυτῶν δι' θεομάσιον, καθάπερ οἱ κατὰ νόμου δωρεῖ θεό. Ib. where οἱ κατὰ νόμου θ. are equivalent to οἱ νομισμένοι θ. Plato himself in the Timæus denies immortality to the created gods, i.e. to all but the one Supreme Creator, p. 41 A. In this respect his gods are contrasted with those of the 'established creed.' Ed.]
habit, if so united to virtue as to share in her divinity of nature, then passes that soul from its present dwelling to one altogether blessed and securely happy; if surrendered to vice, its abode is conformable to its condition. In life, and in every successive death through the long annals of the soul, like meets like, and the natural results of actions are fixed. No man can ever evade this order, inviolably established by heaven." The dress borrowed from the religion of the times, and coloured by some of the peculiarities of Plato’s own system of psychology, will not here hide from you the lineaments of a noble and rational view of the moral universe. And it is the very same conviction of an established scheme of perfection that Plato has attempted to enbody in his account of the physical structure of the world. The description which Socrates is represented as giving, in the *Phaedo*, of his own early love of physical investigation, his delight with the great principle of Anaxagoras, ὁς ἀρα νοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ διευκοσμὸν τε καὶ πάντων αἰτίας, and his subsequent disappointment at finding this principle apparently forsaken by the philosopher himself, perfectly harmonizes with this view of the purpose of the Platonic physics. "I sink at once from all my high hopes," declares Socrates, "when on eagerly perusing his writings, I find the man never once employing mind, or anything such as mind, to order the system of nature, but recurring to air and ether and water and the like."

From a physical system thus intended as illustrative of a principle of optimism, the following consequences may be expected, which accordingly you will find abundantly exemplified in the *Timaeus*.

1st. That it will mainly concern itself with final causes. The universe being regarded chiefly as it is an indication of the Divine Intelligence, every phenomenon will be contemplated as it tends to display that intelligence; it is the volume in which the Deity inscribes His perfections, and is to be read in order to discern them*. It was, as we have just noticed, the neglect of these considerations which Socrates reprehended in the speculations of Anaxagoras, who had first placed philosophy on the road to detect them; and no plainer exposition of the importance of this view in the estimate of Plato can possibly be given, than the

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long and interesting passage of the *Phaedo*, in which Socrates refers all physical inquiry to the notion of The Best. A large body of treatises expressly devoted to the subject within the last few years, is one of the many proofs of the attention which this part of philosophical inquiry has received in modern times; but we can scarcely estimate, blessed as we are with distinct and independent proofs suited to all capacities, the importance which it must have assumed in the eyes of men who had little else to depend upon for the inculcation of a rational theology. And this is, perhaps, one of the many services which the belief in a Revelation has done to science; it has liberated it from the obligation of an almost exclusive attachment to this "Virgo Deo consecrata quae nihil parit\(^10\)." It is a singular instance of the caution with which the representations of Aristotle regarding his master are to be received, that he accuses him of neglecting efficient and final causes\(^11\). The entire current of Plato’s researches will appear to modern readers to have been but too pervasively imbued with both.

2. Plato’s Physics are mathematical rather than experimental.

2ndly. The next characteristic which may be expected in a system raised on such views, is, that it will be mathematical rather than experimental. Intended to embody conceptions of proportion and harmony, it will have immediate recourse to that department of science which deals with proportion in space and number. Such applications of mathematical truths, not being raised on ascertained facts, can only accidentally represent the real laws of the physical system; they will however vivify the student’s apprehensions of harmony, in the same manner as a happy parable, though not founded in real history, will enliven his perceptions of moral truth. And (as I before intimated) I do not conceive that the cautious and acute intellect of Plato ever contemplated any other purpose in presenting

\(^{10}\) [Bacon, *De Augm.* Lib. III. c. 5, speaking of the "inquisitio causarum finium." Ed.]

\(^{11}\) [Arist. *Metaph.* t. 6, 9, compared with c. 3, 1. Aristotle is himself made the subject of a hostile critique by Bacon: "Magis in hac parte acutissimis Aristotelis, quam Plato: quandoque foveat finis causarum finium, Deum scilicet, omnem, et naturam pro Deo substituerit, causaque ipseas finales, potius ut logice amor, quam theologice ampliss. sit." He adds, "neque haec eo dicimus, quod causa illis finales vere non sint, et inquisitione admodum digna in *speculationibus metaphysicis*: sed quia dum in physice causarum possessiones excurrent et irritant, miserum eam principiam depopulantur et vasant." *De Augm.* Lib. III. c. 4. Ed.]

\(^{12}\) [It is however Plato’s merit to have divined, more or less clearly, that the laws of the physical universe are resolvable into numerical relations, and therefore capable of being represented by mathematical formulae. In many other points of physical science Plato’s guesses contrast favourably with the dogmas of his disciple and critic; e.g. in his notions of a centripetal force, of the causes of gravity, of antipodes, and of the nullity of the popular distinction of "up" and "down." Compare *Timæus*, p. 62 c—63 d, with the passages from Aristotle’s physical writings referred to in Stallbaun’s judicious notes. Ed.]
them as adjuncts to his philosophy. Many ingenious sup-
positions have indeed been advanced with a view to re-
concile these abstruse and obscure calculations to the cos-
mical theory of modern times; yet though some remarkable
coincidences have been elicited, we are scarcely justified in
concluding that Plato wrote in view of any theory cor-
respondent to our own. But it is not, perhaps, impossible
that he formed his calculations upon facts of a different
region of nature, which subsequent investigation may dis-
cover to be connected under the bonds of a common prin-
ciple or law with the actual facts of the planetary system.
I may return again to this subject. I shall now only remark,
that as the former characteristic of the Platonic physics
contemplates the Deity acting in the view of goodness, so
this regards him as acting in the view of supreme beauty;
and that, as Plato appears to have owed to Socrates and
to Pythagoras nearly all which his own meditations did not
produce, so we may consider the former as eminently the
Socratic, and the latter as eminently the Pythagorean, ele-
ment in his system of nature.

3rdly. Another peculiarity which we may anticipate
in a system constructed with such a design, is, an im-
patience of every merely mechanical theory of the operations
of nature. The psychology of Plato led him to recognize
mind wherever there was motion, and hence not only to
require a Deity as first mover of the universe, but also to
conceive the propriety of separate and subordinate agents
attached to each of its parts, as principles of motion, no
less than intelligent directors. These agents were entitled
"gods" by an easy figure discernible even in the sacred
language, and which served, besides, to accommodate philos-
osophical hypotheses to the popular religion. Plato, how-
ever,—though the later Platonists, to meet certain pecu-
liarities of the Christian theology, misrepresented his words,
—carefully distinguishes between the sole Eternal Author
of the Universe on the one hand, and that "soul," vital
and intelligent \(^{13}\), which he attached to the world, as well
as the spherical intelligences, on the other. These subordi-
nate deities or spirits, though intrusted with a sort of
deputed creation, were still only the deputies of the Supreme
Framer and Director of all \(^{14}\). This soul, or moving and
intelligent principle infused into the world, is that which
binds and secures it according to the will of its Author;
it is formed in time, and if incapable of decay, is so only
because the goodness and wisdom of the Supreme deter-

\(^{13}\) [Tim. 34 A: ὁτι οὖν ὄντος ἀναθήματος θεοῦ περὶ τὸν κόσμον

\(^{14}\) [Ib. p. 42. Ed.]}