mine its conservation. And being thus indissolubly connected with the world, it may be considered to animate it; the world then itself is a thing of life, an animal, giving the same indications of an animal and rational nature as man himself, in that it moves, and moves according to the same consummate harmony; it is, therefore, ἡμῶν ῥήγησαν ἐννοι ἐννοεῖν τε, ψυχή) being infused into the vast body, and nous into this ψυχή) or vital vehicle. Such a notion has its ludicrous and its sublime aspects; and if Velleius in Cicero could expose to warrantable ridicule the "mundus animo et sensibus praeditus, rotundus, ardens, volubilis Deus," you are all familiar with the majestic portrait which Virgil has given of the same doctrine:

Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

For the hypothesis of this soul of the world, the greatest of created deities, and of the separate intelligences governing the celestial bodies, besides the reason already intimated (the anxiety to oppose all tendencies to theories of pure material necessity), others doubtless may likewise be conceived. These views of intermediate agency satisfied the demands of the public creed, which presented its facts to be accounted for no less than those of external nature; and they harmonized with the disposition, natural to all inquirers, of interposing some scale of ascent between the world and its infinite Author. It probably seemed also scarcely answerable to the dignity of that sovereign controller, to be laboriously and constantly engaged in the actual revolutions of the system; it was more correspondent to his majestic repose that, though ultimately deciding and dispensing all (for Plato earnestly argues against the subsequent Epicurean theory of divine apathy), he should yet distribute among his inferior functionaries the execution of his commands. This theory, also, by representing a "prerogative instance" of soul antecedent to body, added to it, and authoritatively directing its passive movements, enabled Plato to insist with special force upon one of the great principles of his philosophy, a principle at that time not at all familiar to Grecian speculation, namely, that soul (generically considered) was so far from being a composition of result of body even in its most refined state of attenuation, that it existed by its proper force before body had even been generated by the Father of the

18 [Ib. p. 39 b. Ed.]
19 [De Natura Deorum, Lib. i. c. 8, § 18. Ed.]
20 [As in the Laws, B. x. p. 899 d, fol. Ed.]
LECT. I. Universe. This object appears in the very context of the description of the universal soul. "It is thus," says Timæus¹⁰, "that the everlasting Deity conceived the generated Deity; he formed this being smooth, spherical, symmetrical, a whole, perfect, and compounded of all perfection; he then injected soul into the midst, interpenetrated and invested the mass with soul, and thus framed a globe revolving of itself, single, solitary, self-sufficing by its own inherent virtues, independent of all extrinsic aid, knowing and loving itself. In this way he produced a blessed god. But the Framer of all did not produce soul the last, in the order I have here followed; for in uniting soul and body he would never have permitted the more ancient to subserve and wait upon the younger. We who are conversant with uncertainty and conjecture, speak thus only by conjecture. The Creator formed soul superior to body both in order of generation and in innate virtue, in order that it might be the lord and governor of that inferior nature."

But the chief reason with Plato for the host of inferior deities which he interposed between men and their First Cause was, doubtless, in order to furnish a solution, superficial it might be but plausible, for the defects and disasters of sublunar affairs. The philosopher, jealous for the unimpeachable honour of the Divine character, and well knowing that with the surrender of this last citadel of truth and virtue all must be directly or indirectly conceded, represents man, animals, and the rest of the changeable furniture of the earth, as deriving their origin from inferior and created divinities; a supposition to which the influences of the celestial revolutions, over which these divinities presided, upon the formation, growth, and decay of plants and animals, lent great apparent confirmation. In order, however, to vindicate to the human soul its dignity, Plato assigns to these inferior intelligences (or daemons) the formation only of the human body and the junction of it with the soul, a diviner essence composed of a nature similar to, but less perfect than, the soul of the world itself, and proceeding directly from the hands of God.²⁰

These are some of the characteristics which may be traced more or less directly to the very design of the Platonist philosophy of nature; and which, by being thus easily referred, tend to illustrate the true nature of that design. In enumerating them I have necessarily been led to intimate some of the principal features of the system itself. It

¹⁰ [Tim. p. 34 b, fol. Ed.]
²⁰ [καθ' δεων μεν αυτων [των ἄνθρωπων] αδαντοις εϊων προσθεκε...στρες καὶ
υπηρέξηενς έγώ παραδόσων τό δε λοιπόν ύμείς κ.τ.λ. p. 41 c. Ed.]
will be proper to enter somewhat more closely into these, not indeed into any of the minuter physiological details, which in the present state of experimental physiology can only be subjects of curiosity, and whose interest cannot pass beyond themselves, but into those larger principles which connect themselves with philosophical speculation in every age. At the same time, I do not know a more interesting work than would be an edition of the Timaeus which should descend into all the specialties of its physiology, and by comparing them with our present attainments, should elucidate the progress of natural knowledge, vindicate the sagacity of happy conjecture, and illustrate the ordinary though subtle and elusive causes of error.

In that part of the Timaeus to which, though not first in actual arrangement, it may be best first to direct your attention, Plato, turning as it would seem with reluctance from the contemplation of the Divine agency in the production of the angelic essences and of men, to a more obscure part of his subject, undertakes to explain according to the most probable conception the primitive constituents of the universe. "We have spoken," he says, "of the acts and operations of intelligence. We must now add those that arise through necessity; for the world is the result of the combination of necessity and intelligence (εἰς ἀνάγκης τε καὶ νόημα); intelligence governing and persuading necessity to produce all things in the most perfect way, necessity yielding to the wisdom of intelligence." "We must follow this origin, as we followed the former." That is, as the former investigation led directly to the Supreme Mind, this is to lead as directly to the antithesis of mind, which with intentional vagueness he terms "necessity." "Let us examine," he continues, "what was, before the creation of the world, the nature of fire, air, water, earth; for assuredly it is most shortsighted to be satisfied with these as ultimate principles." He intimates, that these, or such like, may be considered "elements" of the world as it now is, but that they have no claim to the title when viewed antecedently to their present mode of existence. In that point of view they will each be found to consist of, or rather to represent, three distinct principles, the subject-matter on which they are impressed, the model after which they exist as they are, and the actual sensible object which they constitute and exhibit. Matter, ideas, and the objects of sense, which depend on both the former, are, then, the principles of the universe, the elements of elements; nor is there the minutest fragment in nature which does not

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include and require this triple origin as the rationale of its existence.

The first of these principles is obtained by an abstraction of the most refined accuracy. To term it "matter" is, in one sense of that word, already to corrupt its simplicity; for the "matter" of modern logicians possesses the inseparable qualities of extension and solidity. But the subject-matter of Plato is utterly without qualities, being considered antecedent to all sensible phenomena and their qualities. It could exist only in a state of things to which none of the forms of either sense or understanding have any reference. It was, as you must by this time be aware, the spirit of Platonism to regard all mental abstractions, not indeed as in themselves realities in the absurd sense of realism so commonly ascribed to Plato, but as the signs of real existences corresponding to them in a world of reason. When a man had from contemplating instances of virtue risen to a notion of the quality common to all those instances, and which he termed by the name, Plato instructed him to regard that quality and its name as representing in the mind of the speculator an ineffable something, which in the sphere of immutable reality answered to the conception in the soul. And as of single qualities so of their compounds; in a perfect world all sensible objects, whether simple or complex, were correlatives to ideal archetypes. Now though this system was mainly constructed to resist the assaults of sophistry upon the permanence of moral distinctions, it was of universal application. Successive abstractions can separate the passive subject from all its modifications; the passive subject then has a distinct reality in the world separate from sensible experience, a reality, however, of a kind different from that of the occupants of the ideal world, inasmuch as the recipient of ideas cannot itself be confounded with ideas. In this way, the same course of reasoning would lead to the independent anterior existence both of matter and of ideas; and would yet preserve them distinct from each other. But Plato appealed also to experience in illustration of this point. He observed that all sensible qualities undergo perpetual change; in this coinciding with the well-known doctrines of Heraclitus and the rest of the philosophers. The more accurate our examination becomes, the more fully we perceive that this change is incessant. But beneath all this superficial alteration we cannot but know that there is an unchanging subject, which yet is neither deity, nor ideas, nor the soul

[ p. 49 ε. εν δ' ἐφεύρεται δι' ἑαυτα φανέρωται καὶ τῶν... ἀπλάθεται, μὴν εἰς ἀντίθεσιν τῷ τῶν τοῦτο καὶ τῷ πολέμου... ἂν, τὸ δ' ἐπιστημον τι, θεματί... η ἢ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν οὐσιῶν... μὴν εἰς ἀντίθεσιν τῶν τοῦτον. Επ.]
of man. To express this original subject-matter, the basis of the universe of sense, Plato has exhausted every form of expression. It is the receptacle (ὑποδοχή), the nurse (τιθημη) of all that is produced. It alone gives any reality and definiteness to the evanescent phantoms of sense, for in their ceaseless change they cannot justly receive any title whatever; it alone can be styled τόδε, or τούτο, they rising no higher than τοιούτον, or ὅποιον τί. It is not earth, or air, or fire, or water, but it is "an invisible species and formless universal receiver, which in the most obscure way receives the immanence of the intelligible:"

—ἀνόρατον ἔδος καὶ ἄμορφον, πανδεχές, μεταλάμβανον ἐκ ἀπορώστατά τη τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ δυσαλωτότατον αὐτόν. And in relation to the other two principles it is the mother* to the father and the offspring—*it is τὸ ἐν ὃ γίγνεται, τὸ ἄθεν ἀφομομμενον φύσεται τὸ γεγομένον, and τὸ γεγομένον. But perhaps the most remarkable passage is that in which he seems to identify it with pure space, which "itself imperishable furnishes a seat (ἐδραν) to all that is produced, not apprehensible by direct perception, but caught by a certain spurious reasoning, scarcely admissible, but which we see as in a dream; gaining it by that judgment which pronounces it necessary that all which is be somewhere, and occupy a certain space." This you will perceive approaches the Cartesian doctrine which resolved matter into simple extension; a view which was by both united with the rejection of vacuum.*

It has been much disputed whether Plato held that this subject of ideal impression was eternal or originated in time. As on the one hand he maintained a strict system of dualism, and avoided without a single deviation that seduction of pantheism to which so many abstract speculators of his own school have fallen victims, so on the other it appears to me that he did not scruple to place this principle, the opposite of the divine intelligence, in a sphere independent of temporal origination. This view of the groundwork of the world of sense and contingency, though it unhappily led to the impieties of Manichcism in after ages, was never meant to countenance such tenets by Plato.

* It substantiallyizes them, as they to our sensible apprehensions individualize it.

[p. 49 A: πάσης εἰσὶ γενέσεως ὑποδοχήν αὐτόν ὅλων τιθήμην. Ed.]

[p. 51 A, fol. Ed.]

[p. 50 D. Ed.]

[p. 52 A, fol. Ed.]

[p. 58 A: ἦ τοι παράσορον περιοσθοχος...πρὸς αὐτὴν τεφευκαί βοδεσθαί ξυνίσκων, σφάγεις πάντα καὶ κωνίων χώραν οὐδεμιάν ἐξ λειτουργία. In this denial of a vacuum Plato was followed by Aristotle. See the references in Stallbaum's note on the passage quoted. Ed.]
But we can scarcely enter into his views unless we ascertain his notions of the nature of Time itself. This was considered to have been created with the rest of the sensible world, to finish with it, if it ever finish,—to be altogether relative to this phenomenal scene*. I need not remind you that these views in forms only slightly differing have been revived in various ages of philosophical speculation. They form a leading element in the most celebrated system of the last century, that of Kant; but in substance existed long before it in the schools of Germany. In our own country (and it would seem independently) they have been now and then suggested; but have attracted little attention, partly from being presented in an isolated and conjectural form, and partly, doubtless, from the national distaste for metaphysical inquiry. The first full and distinct statement of these remarkable doctrines (which obviously must more or less affect every region of any system which includes them) is too interesting to omit; and if I could induce you to study carefully the original (for the metaphysical expressiveness of the Greek language is altogether irreproachable) I suspect you would agree with me that very little has been since added to their cogency and decisiveness. I will not, indeed, conceal from you my own conviction, which increases the more I study this great Author, that in every thing of the higher metaphysics we can scarcely enter any chamber of the modern edifices of speculation where we shall not find that Plato has been before us.

"The generating Father," says Timæus, "having beheld this created image of the invisible powers, in life and

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* p. 37 Σ: εἰκὼν... λεγοντι τινα αἰώνος κοίνος, καὶ διακορομάνων ἀμα οὐρανον ποιεί κέντονος αἰώνος ἐν ὑπὸ κατ' ἀρκτικὸν λυθήναι αἰώνων εἰκόνα, τοῖν τω ἐκ τοῖν ἔργον Ἐρακάκες. 38 Β: χρόνος... μετ' οὐρανοῦ γέγονε, ὅτα ἡμετερβαίνειν ὄμα καὶ λοθῶν, ἀν ποτε λίκεις τις αὐτῶν γεγονοντι. The use of αἰώνος in the former passage is noteworthy. It seems to be used in a modified sense; for shortly after we are forbidden to apply the terms "was" and "will be" to the "eternal essence" (ἔνθον οὖσιν), past and future being mere "modes of time" (χρόνον ἐλθῃ). This seeming antithesis between αἰώνος and ἔθος is not noticed by the commentators. In no part of the dialogue is the superiority of Plato's metaphysical to his physical speculations more clearly manifest than in the very noble passage (translated in the text) from which these extracts come. Ed.]

* I speak thus generally, because, though the "time" spoken of seems to have, in the original, a peculiar connexion with the heavenly revolutions; as if Plato meant only such time as is measured by their changes; it is equally manifest, as we shall just now see, that the strain of the reasoning is applicable to Time in its most abstract form; so that though he speaks of life and motion antecedently to this mention of the creation of Time and its divisions, I cannot but believe that he intended the fullest sense of the metaphysical principle, but wished to defer stating it until it could be done in connexion with those celestial phenomena which have in all ages been associated with the flux of time as its natural and universal indices.

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motion, rejoiced at the sight ["saw that it was good"], and in his delight thought to make it yet more resemble its model: and this being a living thing, he endeavoured to give the universe this sort of completeness as far as might be. The nature of the exemplar animal was eternal; and it was impracticable to adapt this character to any thing created, without qualification; he determined therefore to create a moving image of eternity (eikô kubtôv τῶν αἰῶνων), and in disposing the heavens, he framed of this eternity reposing in its own unchangeable unity an eternal image, moving according to numerical succession which we call Time. With the world arose days, nights, months, years, which all had no previous existence; the past and future are but forms of time which we most erroneously transfer to the eternal substance: we say it was, and is, and will be, whereas we can only fitly say it is. Past and future are appropriate to the successive nature of generated beings; for they bespeak motion; but the Being eternally and unmovedly the same is subject neither to youth, nor to age, nor to any other accident of time; it neither was, nor hath been, nor will be, which are the attributes of fleeting sense, the circumstances of time imitating eternity in the shape of number and motion. Nor can anything be more inaccurate than to apply the term real Being (τὸ εἶναι) to past or present, or future, or even to non-existence (τὸ μὴ ἐν αὐτῷ). Of this however we cannot now speak fully. Time, then, was formed with the heavens, that together created they may together end, if indeed an end be in the purpose of the Creator; and it is designed as closely as possible to resemble the eternal nature, its exemplar. The model exists through all eternity; the world has been, is, and will be, through all time." This doctrine, as far as regarded the formal or accidental nature of time, was admitted by the Epicureans:

Epicurean

Tempus item per se non est; sed rebus ab ipis
Consequitur sensus.
Nee per se quenquam tempus sentire sentendum est
Scintum ab rerum motu placidâque quietae.

Lukct. i. 460.

The contrast with the nature of eternal Being was peculiarly Platonic, and does not seem to have entered into the Epicurean views; and even the tenet itself was held under different forms by these very opposite schools, though their language might resemble. The Epicureans gave thorough reality to the sensible phenomena, but held time to be a superadded mental relation; Plato considered both time and the sensible phenomena to be equally real, because neither of them truly so, but alike copies of super-
sensible realities. This part of his master’s system was not accepted by Aristotle *, to whose cardinal argument for the eternity of the universe it would have offered a very obvious answer. The founder of the Peripatetic school argued that the creation of the universe at any definite period was inadmissible, for that the difficulty would always lie—what had produced the delay, or determined an activity dormant from eternity? But Plato could at once reply, that the objection was founded upon an assumption not only gratuitous but contradictory, that eternity was but an infinite extension of the time with which the human mind is here conversant. If this supposition (which is unquestionably encumbered with great difficulties) be denied; if it appear that the mode of divine existence is altogether different from that of beings in successive duration; the force of the argument of Aristotle is at once destroyed, for it becomes absurd to speak of the Creator as creating the universe at any one period rather than another; it is referring creation to a standard which was itself created.

In this ineffable eternity Plato placed both the Supreme Being and the archetypal ideas of which the sensible world of time kατὰ δύναμιν “partakes.” Whether (which was the question immediately engaging us) he also included under the same mode of existence the subject-matter of the sensible world, it is not easy to pronounce, and it appears to me quite evident that he did not himself undertake to speak with assurance on this obscure problem. You will now however be enabled to perceive under what form he would have contemplated the subject, in what way he would have addressed himself to the solution. And endeavouring to fix the mind in the same attitude, I incline to think that he meant the creation of time to be subsequent (if I may so speak) to the existence of this mysterious substratum; a doctrine which certain features of his ethical system tended to confirm, as we shall endeavour hereafter to unfold. At the same time it is proper for you to reserve your decision on this question until you shall have considered a very different view of the Platonic conception of matter which I shall briefly notice in our next lecture.

31 [ See Phys. A 3. v. c. i, esp. § 11: περὶ γε χρόνου ἡμ ἐνε τον ὁμοιοίως ἐχοντες φαινονται πάντες ἀγένητον γὰρ εἶναι λέγουσιν...Πλάτων ὁ αὐτὸν γεννᾷ μόνος, κ.τ.λ. Ed.]
LEcTURE II.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. No. VIII.

GENTLEMEN,

I concluded the last lecture by some observations on that mysterious substratum of the sensible world which it perplexed Plato so much to conceive or describe, and regarding which his real opinion is to this day so much contested. The main reason for this obscurity to modern readers, especially to readers conversant with the Epicureanism all but universal for a long period in this division of the world of speculation, is undoubtedly the position which Plato habitually assigned to the universe of sensible experience and to the physical inquiry that undertook to explain it. It is not easy to place ourselves in a point of contemplation so utterly dissimilar to our ordinary one; as difficult as it is for the young astronomer to exchange geocentric for heliocentric measurements. With Plato truth, absolute scientific truth, was everything; and truth he considered to be found only in the abstractions of reason, the representatives and interpreters of the only real existences—of ideas. These latter were the proper objects of the Soul of man, itself a discontented prisoner in this scene of shadows; and every philosophic tendency which deviated from the single purpose of furnishing the soul as much as might be with this its congenial food, betrayed the duty of philosophy, degenerated into ingenious trifling, and, however laudable in its own sphere, fell as far below the aspiration after true wisdom as the loftiest heights of earth are below the expanse of heaven. From these principles, it was natural that when the great Idealist descended into the world of sense he should regard that world itself under a dialectical aspect, that he should consider not so much the succession of phenomena as the connexion of consequences with principles. Accordingly, the "matter" of which we have spoken is with Plato rather a logical entity than a physical; it is the condition or supposition necessary for the production of a world of phenomena. It is thus the transition element between the real and the apparent, the eternal and the contingent; and lying thus on the borders of both territories we must not be surprised
that it can hardly be characterized by any definite attribute. This leads me to notice another view of the Platonic theory of the Subject of the Sensible. Contrasted as it seems to be with the eternal basis of the world of reason, it may be doubted whether Plato meant to attribute to this condition of the sensible any reality of existence at all; and to this opinion some of the latest of his critical commentators incline. It is true, that he seems to hold that, as ideas are copied in the fluent world of nature, some subject must be provided on which the copy may be imprinted; it is true that he speaks of it as the direct subject of the operations of the Divine Artist; but it is also certain that he appears to provide no faculty of the mind by which it can be discerned. The proper objects of the senses are distinctly mentioned; the proper objects of the reason are Ideas; beyond ideas and their copies there remains nothing that can be the object of thought. Susceptible of all forms but determined to none, how can it be reached by any mental organ? We saw already how he declares it to be caught by an illegitimate exertion of reason (νόμος λογισμοῦ); and in the singular and abstruse discussion in the Sophistes, he seems to affirm that the sensible images of eternal truth are produced by a combination of the existent and non-existent, that is, of ideas by the way of μέθεξις or participation, and of the subject-matter, which thus seems identified with the non-existent. While again, the material substratum is constantly indicated by the title of θάτερον, or "The other," a term

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1 Soph. p. 249 C, fol. esp. 255 E: ἔν ἐκαστὸν ἔτερον ἐνακ τῶν ἀλλῶν οὐ διά τῆς αὐτοῦ φύσει, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ μετέξει τῆς ἱδέας τῆς θάτερον. The Timæus presents the physical, the Sophistes the purely dialectical view of the same distinction, expressed variously as that of τὸ ἐν to the ἄναρρος διά, of τὸ πέρας τὸ τὸ ἄναρρος, of οὐσία to the μὴ ὡς, or, as in the passage referred to, of ταῦτα to θάτερον. The actual phenomenal world is that which is mixed or participant of the two; and is designated as τὸ συμμετέχον, ἡ γένεσις, τὸ οὐσίας μετέχον, or, in the Timæus, 35 B, even as οὐσία—in the secondary sense however of existence; actuality, not of essential or ideal reality, which is the more usual meaning of οὐσία in Plato. The "matter" or ἄναρρος, &c. of Plato is a mere potentiality—necesse essendi positi limitis, as Stallbaum truly says, in his note to the passage last quoted. It is certainly incorrect to class Plato with those less scrupulous, because perhaps more superficial idealists, who deny matter in toto. To his ἄναρρος the corresponding Aristotelian term is ὁ λόγος, which Plato nowhere uses, though it is suggested by such passages as Timæus, 69 B. It is however found very convenient by the self-styled Timæus Locrus, who uses ὁ λόγος as the synonym of the ἄναρρος, &c. of the Platonic Timæus. The term is however objectionable, as suggesting the notion of something corporeal, like the "wood" from which the metaphor comes; though it must be confessed that Aristotle takes sufficient precautions against this misconception.

It has been made matter of serious reproach to Plato, that he allowed the existence of an independent co-eternal infinite side by side with the Divine cause—the ἄναρρος, as God is the ἄναρρος, of the actual universe. Stallbaum, indeed, attempts in his Prolegomena to the Timæus, to shew that matter itself is understood by Plato as produced by the Creative Mind: "ipsa cogitatione
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which implies, both in itself and in its Platonic use, the notion of mere relation, of an existence which possesses reality only in relation to true reality, and by a relation of even contrast, which certainly approaches as near to the notion of absolute non-existence as can easily be conceived. If this account be the nearest to the truth, it would be curious to compare the very different paths through which speculatists have arrived at the denial of the reality of matter in different ages. I may add to these arguments for this interpretation of the sense of Plato, that it certainly seems far more perfectly to harmonize with the system of universal ideality that was always present to his mind. Those who are induced to reject the reality of Time (on whatever grounds) will seldom be found to maintain the reality of Space; and we have already seen that Plato draws scarcely any distinction between the sensible substratum and simple extension. If Time, then, be but the image of eternity, in the sensible scene, Space may fairly be regarded as equally imaginary; and perhaps Plato would have expressed this conviction with equal directness if he could have found in the attributes of the ideal world a model answering to Space as readily as Eternity appears to answer to Time. For, whatever be the reason, it appears more easy to conceive a generic difference, and yet analogy, between Time and Eternity than between Space and Immensity.

If, then, it be next sought, what degree of subsistence Plato allowed the sensible sphere, the answer will depend upon your opinions as to the subject of our late discussion. If it be considered that he meant to allow reality to the unknown recipient of ideas, we shall have the reality of the sensible depend on the reality of this basis, and on the "participation" in the reality of ideas. If, on the other hand, we conceive this recipient unreal, the whole amount of reality allowed to the sensible will be resolved into its relation (of participant) to the ideal. In this case, the world (γένεσις, τὸ γεννητὸν, τὸ γεννώμενον ἄει, κόσμος, φύσις, τὸ πᾶν, οὐσία), though destined for perpetual durability as an image (ἀγαλμα) of divine perfection, must refer for all its claims of reality to its connexion with the eternal

[Dei] ortum esse sensilis mundi principium atque fontem." (ProL. p. 44.)
This, however, is nowhere even hinted by Plato, and seems to contradict his plain language. The creation of matter "out of nothing" is an idea which could scarcely have occurred to the mind of an ancient Greek, and it is surely anachronism to attribute it to Plato. Ed.]

2 [A passage quoted in note (23) in the former lecture from Tim. 49 ν., makes in favour of this supposition. We are there forbidden to call the unknown recipient by any name denoting quality (ἐπωνομαν τι), but permitted to style it "this" or "that" (τοῦτο or τὸστο). Ed.]
exemplars. It is the shadow that waits upon their substance. And whichever solution of the expressions of Plato we adopt, whether we regard the receptacle of the sensible as a mere condition in the nature of things for the apparition of eternal principles in a contingent form, or as a real physical groundwork for qualities analogous to the eternal principles, in either case its use and purpose is very clearly stated in the passage I subjoin. "It is proper to distinguish," observes Timæus⁶, "between two forms of cause, one necessary and one divine [τὸ μὲν ἀναγκαῖον, τὸ δὲ θεῖον]: and to seek out the divine in all things with a view to rational happiness as far as our nature admits; but the necessary element only for the sake of the former, remembering that without this it would not be possible to apprehend or seize or partake of the other." Now the "necessary" element is unquestionably this material condition or principle of physical existence; and we are here taught that, whatever it be, it exists as the means and occasion of the evolution of divine intelligence in the organization of the world. In another place he speaks of the Deity as "persuading it" to receive the impress of the eternal forms, subduing it to be the mirror of his ideas. This is what in modern language would be entitled the imposition upon the inanimate universe of laws of consummate wisdom; laws, which, because they are not to be referred to the arbitrary will of Deity, but to an eternal standard of rectitude according to which the Deity perpetually directs his own actions, Plato carefully set apart by appropriating to them their own foundations in their own sphere of being.

The manner in which Plato proceeded, upon the justest principles of logic, to construct the objects of the human mind in their two great divisions of successive and eternal upon an investigation of the correspondent faculties, and thus exemplified the true process for framing a correct ontology or philosophy of real existences, is very clearly exhibited in a well-known passage of the Timæus. After the exposition of this subject in the last series of Lectures, it is now, however, unnecessary to enter upon it at any length. As, nevertheless, the course of the subject (the elementary principles of the Physical Creation) requires us to hold this cardinal point in remembrance it may be well to cite the concise passage⁴ to which I allude, one of the commonplaces of Platonism, and which, therefore, ought to be familiar to every student of this philosophy.

"Is that which we see or feel by bodily organs alone real? is there indeed nothing beyond it? do we idly assert that

⁶ [Tim. 68 x. Compare p. 48 A. Ed.]
⁴ [Tim. 51 c. Ed.]
there does exist a form intelligible (ἐνδος νοητῶν) of each of these objects, or are these forms mere words? We should not affirm it without due investigation; at the same time that it would be unsuitable to extend into the minute details of any accessory subject this discourse of itself sufficiently voluminous. But if we could condense this important question into brief limits, it certainly would be highly advantageous to treat it. My own opinion is the following:—If Reason and Right Opinion (νος and δόξα δίκαιης) are two faculties generically distinct, it is absolutely necessary that there should be Ideas self-subsistent, not objects of our senses, objects of reason alone (ἀναθετα, νοούμενα μόνον). While if, as some imagine, there is no difference between these faculties, everything on the other hand which we apprehend through the bodily organs must be taken for perfectly stable. But they must be pronounced distinct, inasmuch as they are formed within us separately and with dissimilar characters. The one comes by the way of scientific instruction (διδαξῆς), the other through persuasion (πειθοῖς); the one is always accompanied by true rational conviction, the other has no rational foundation (ἄλογον); the one is immoveable by arts of persuasion, the other changeable by them. Of the one all men partake (Opinion), of the other only the gods, and a few among men.

These things being so, it must be acknowledged that there does exist on the one hand an ideal form, immutable, ingenerate (ἀγέννητων), imperishable; not receiving into itself any external element whatever, nor passing into anything else; invisible and to every sense imperceptible; and this it is the office of pure thought to contemplate: that on the other hand there is a second nature bearing the same name and similar to the former, perceptible by sense, generated, ever in motion, rising in a definite locality and thence again disappearing, apprehended by opinion with the aid of sensibility” (δόξη μετ’ αἰσθήσεως περιληπτῶν). He then proceeds to describe that third species of being of which we have already spoken so much; that which receives the sensible images of the eternal; and which we have already seen he declares to be not an object of sense, nor yet properly an object of reason, but perceived by a kind of spurious intelligence, and known only inferentially as presupposed in the existence of sensible phenomena. Finally, he condenses his account of these prerequisites of the physical or contingent and created universe in words

* Not that all human souls have not the mere faculty of scientific reason; but that only a few have been brought by discipline and reflection to its exercise, this discipline being the very object of philosophic education.
with which I shall leave the subject. "Here, then, is briefly my opinion; there exist, and existed before the formation of the universe, three distinct principles, Being, Place, and Production;" that is to say, the real which we know is essentially eternal, the nature which received the subsequent sensible creation, and the creative principle which was prepared, as it were, to project the eternal and invisible in the forms of time and sense. The chaotic confusion is then represented; and then the ordination of the whole by the interposition of a Supreme Intelligence.

One remark is useful here; that as some of these changes are conceived out of and beyond the sphere of time itself, whose date must commence with the first activity of the productive or genetic energy in framing a sensible system, they must be interpreted sometimes as mythical representations of metaphysical principles (as perhaps the chaos itself), sometimes as historical successions embodying the concatenation of logical conceptions. In reading Plato you will find it a rule of almost universal application to construe everything in its most abstract form; he represents principles by instances, general formulas by particular cases; it is as if you had to study Algebra in a book of Arithmetic. And, unhappily, the necessity of reversing the process must inevitably make his commentator, however he labour to avoid it, much duller and drier than the original. These deductions, which in their grave scholastic form appear so arid and uninteresting, are in Plato thrown off with a sparkling vivacity that never suffers the attention to slumber, or expressed with a gracefulness of phrase and a delicate attention to the rhythmical flow of periods, which while it never sacrifices a particle of accuracy, while it is indeed far more minutely accurate than perhaps is possible in any living language, shews us that "divine Philosophy" in some of her severest exercises may indeed be made "not harsh and crabbed,

but musical as is Apollo's lute."

Plato's physical system.

Having now considered these a priori or purely metaphysical principles of creation, as Plato conceived them, we may descend into some account of the physical system itself. I must here again remind you of the object of the entire, the embodiment in the facts of creation, of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, by a representation, ideal in its nature, but accommodated as nearly as might be to the evidence of experience. You are not to criticise the Timaeus fresh from the observatory of Airy, or the laboratory of Faraday; you are not to insult this venerable monument of early speculation by parading in its presence
the accumulated wisdom of two-and-twenty centuries. The *Timæus* is a physical Romance* with a mighty moral; to that moral all is subservient; and amid many paths through the labyrinth of phenomena the author always adopted that which seemed to lead most directly to his end. It is salutary, too, for us sometimes to humble our own pride at our modern advances in these studies, by remembering for how much, after all, we are indebted to that interposition of Providence which our ignorance calls chance; had the telescope been known in the days of Plato, Archimedes might have anticipated Newton.

In agreement with these views of the scope of the work, the main argument employed by Plato for all that lies beyond direct experience is confessedly drawn from his own conceptions of fitness. It is “better” that it should be so, more harmonious, more beautiful:—and he candidly admits that if anyone else can contrive a more perfect arrangement he will “welcome him, not as a foe, but as a friend.” In fact, you will remember that for the principal details of this system Plato was not himself answerable; they were the Pythagorean hypotheses*, and the exposition itself is by Plato put in the mouth of a Pythagorean philosopher, Timæus of Locri. It was, therefore, natural that he should not feel personally interested in the adoption of these physical opinions by his readers; while in treating the more speculative principles, those which were in his mind always connected with the stability of moral truth, we observe an earnestness and decision prominent amid the calm conjectural tone of the rest of the

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* [This epithet is hardly stronger than some which Plato himself applies to his own work. “Whenever,” he says, “the philosopher, in the intervals of his abstract dialectical enquiries, takes up by way of recreation the contemplation of mutable nature, and thus secures a pleasure which leaves no sting behind, he will enrich his life with a resource of amusement at once temperate and rational.” *Tim.* 53 d. In physical enquiries, he more than once admits that analogy and probability (τὴν τῶν εἰκών ἐκτὸς ἡδίων ἱκαν. *Tim.* 1. 1.) are his only guides; for, says he, “Being is related to Becoming (the Absolute to the Contingent) as Truth to Belief: consequently, we must not marvel should we find it impossible to arrive at any certain and conclusive result in our speculations upon the creation of the visible universe and its authors; it should be enough for us, if the account we have to give be as probable as any other, remembering that we are but men, and are therefore bound to acquiesce in merely probable results, without looking for a higher degree of certainty than the subject admits of.” (p. 29 d.) Accordingly, as if to disclaim the responsibility of the opinions put forth in the dialogue, instead of employing Socrates, the usual representative of his own views, he takes care to speak through the mouth of a stranger and a Pythagorean. Ed.]

* [p. 54 a: ξένων οἰκ. ἔχον ὠς ἄλλα ἀκόλουθα. Ed.]

* [Mixed, however, with Heraclitic and Empedoclean notions. The reputed fragments of Philolaus present many coincidences with parts of the *Timæus*, as indeed Stallbaum has pointed out. Unhappily however the coincidences are in some cases so striking as to suggest a suspicion that “Philolaus” was the borrower, and not Plato. See Bywater, on the Fragments of Philolaus in the *Cambridge Journal of Philology*, No. 1. Ed.]
dialogue. It was in these latter that he was eminently Socratic, and eminently himself.

Among those opinions which may be regarded as holding a middle place between pure dialectic reasoning and direct observation, we may mention the conclusions which he proposes at the opening of his exposition, with respect to the universe as a whole. Having already shewn that it is unquestionably not eternal, as sensible, and therefore in a state of constant generation, and therefore dependent upon a cause beyond itself (a course of reasoning not very unlike that of Clarke upon the idea of necessary and contingent existence); and having further established that it was formed after an eternal not a created exemplar, inasmuch as this supposition alone corresponds with a perfect world formed by the best of causes; and having, as was formerly explained, pronounced the divine goodness to have been the sole motive of creation;—he advances to a proposition which at once displays the chasm between our modes of thinking and those of that early age,—he declares the world endowed with intelligence, and this solely on the ground that the intelligent surpasses the unintelligent, and the universe must be perfect. If, however, you remember the peculiarities of that earliest age of Greek philosophy through which I had the honour of conducting some of you in the course of last year, this idea will not appear novel or startling. The extension of the entire bodily and mental nature of man to a universe which visibly possessed one element of the compound, was nothing new to the speculatists of that time; motion seemed to demand mental activity, and regularity of motion mental intelligence; and these sages seemed to conceive that the instance of the animal creation evinced it to be more in accordance with the analogy of nature that the Divine Principle should everywhere create separate centres of intelligence and will than that it should itself be the sole mover of an inanimate immense. The boundless universe, then, was quickened with a spiritual essence, and all its parts with separate portions of mind; it and they lived as well as moved. That, reasoned the philosopher, which so manifestly makes the great glory of one part of the creation, cannot surely be denied to the whole creation itself; the universe is not to be surpassed by any of its contents. You will, of course, recognize in this also the secret influence of polytheistic habits infecting the stream of thought even when guarded most laboriously from the stain.

In this supposition, likewise, you will perhaps observe

\[ p. 28 A: \text{παρά \ γάρ \ ἄθικ树立ς \ αὐτίκα \ γένεσιν \ εικόν.} \quad \text{lb. b. Ed.} \]

\[ p. 30 A, \text{fol. Ed.} \]
an exemplification, though doubtless one to our notions strange and inharmonious, of that great principle of the Platonic philosophy, its tendency to subordinate everything to higher and higher generalizations, and to see in the universal system a scale of being without defect in the intervals and almost without limit to the ascent. The single vast Idea of the Universe contemplated by the Creator is supposed to possess in it every noble attribute which any of its contained objects possesses; it is the fountain from which their streams are derived; it possesses in fee that treasury of perfections of which they, as it were, inherit the use. This presiding intelligible form includes the other forms, as its sensible counterpart includes its sensible contents. "This," declares Timæus, "contains all intelligible animals (νοον κοοα) in itself, just as this sensible world incloses us and all other visible animals (ζοοα ὁπατα)."

This evidently is not a mere logical inclusion of species in a genus, in which case the universal genus would be successively stript of all its perfections as it rose, and left at last in the bare solitude of abstract animality; but rather, the inclusion of an inferior body of laws under a single comprehensive law, itself endowed with all the prerogatives and powers of every law beneath it.* And more especially, that as there are examples of life in the various departments of the creation, so is there a vast law or principle of life in the huge frame of the creation itself. This is, we may object, a most unwarrantable generalization; yet is it, in the supposed absence of all experimental confirmation, more intrinsically unreasonable to imagine that the life which moves a man may move the heavens, than to ima-

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* I may observe in passing, that this is one among many instances of the gross mistakes of those who identify the Ideas of Plato with mere logical abstractions. It also seems possible that this theory may be otherwise (and as many may think more simply) interpreted. It may be intended to intimate that the Supreme Idea contains really and physically all the inferior attributes; according to the plan so observable in the disposition of species, while all seem to rise by regular progression above each other, not however by total differences, but each assuming into itself all the qualities beneath it, and adding to them its own. This has often been shown as regards the portion of this boundless progression that lies within our experience. I conceive, however, that the other view is more accordant with the expressions of Plato in the passage itself, and with the genius of his philosophy. "God, determining to frame the world to resemble that which is fairest and most perfect among things intelligible, made it animated, visible, single, and including in itself all other animated beings, as of the same nature with itself." Besides, it certainly does not literally include all the properties of the animated natures its idea comprises;—for instance, as he shows soon after, either their irregularity and diversity of motion, or their sensitive organs. We must, then, regard this Idea of the Universal Animated Being as intimating in the peculiar forms and phrasing of Platonism, that God has originally impressed upon the visible universe a principle of life and of intelligence of which all subordinate forms of motion and harmony are deductions and results.
gine that the weight which makes an apple fall directs the planetary revolutions? Or if, as many of our best thinkers maintain, all origin and continuance of motion bespeak a volition somewhere and somehow exerted, is it at all absurd to conceive that a special agent may be appointed to urge by direct energy of volition the moving systems of the universe? And if this agent be indissolubly connected with his department, under the disposition of Providence,—shall there be much difference assignable between such an arrangement and the composition of an animated being? And however this be determined, we may perhaps ask ourselves with a sigh, whether it might not have been better if philosophy had preferred as its motive principle life and intelligence pervading every region of creation, to the universal adoption of a purely mechanical principle, which, though decorously reserving a nominal first mover in the last resort, has already by the mouth of some of its highest organs boasted that it can do without that superfluous hypothesis? Unfortunately it is the very genius of a physical science acting on that philosophy, to defer the "dignus vindice nodus" to the last moment; and I fear that with too many the "nec Deus inter sit" has been accepted without the poet's qualifying conjunction.

The next principle delivered by Plato is one with which you can more readily accord. It is the unity of the world; a conception which indeed is embodied in our very word universe. Plato reasons it out from his own principles, and in connexion with the last article. He tells us, that if the κόσμος or harmonized physical system has been formed on an exemplar, and if the exemplar contain within it all intelligible beings, the world can be but one. "For this universally Comprehensive Intelligible Being cannot admit any other collateral to itself, by the supposition: if it did, it would at once be necessary that it should sink from its universality and rank with that other under a vaster idea; and the universe would then be the copy not of the two, but of that which comprises them. The Divine Artist, then, made the universe neither plural nor infinite; he made it the finite image of real perfection, and single as that is single." In the same way of thought, he pronounces it not amenable to the infirmities of disease or age; no evil can accede to it from external influences, for it involves all; it is therefore dissoluble only by the will of a Being too immutably wise and good ever to destroy that which wisdom and goodness alone have created. Beyond these characteristics, he conceives it

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11 [p. 31 A. Ed.]
12 [τῆς καὶ ἀγάθου καὶ δυνατοῦ, p. 33 A. Ed.]
fitting likewise to separate it by further distinctions from the inferior instances of animal existence. It is devoid of organs of sense, of the machinery of ingestion or egestion, of members adapted for motion. Its shape is strictly spherical, as being the most regular, the most comprehensive, the fittest for even revolution; its rotation circular, as being that among the seven species of local motion "which is the most nearly allied to reason," (τὴν κίνησιν τὴν περὶ νοῦν καὶ φρόνησιν μίαν αὐτὰς); a singular ground, indeed, and at once placing us in the midst of the Pythagorism of Plato, but which is only one instance of the most abstruse principle pervading this system, its representation of mental natures by mathematical relations. This brings us to the remarkable account of the composition of Soul—of soul generically; for though the passage seems peculiarly intended for the soul of the world, this itself is the type of all inferior souls. The soul of the universe is, in a manner, soul universally.

Soul is that which stands midway between the eternal and the contingent; itself created, and yet the interpreter of the uncate. We may suppose, then, that its substance in some mysterious way partakes of both; that, on the one hand, it is intimately associated with those eternal realities which its rational faculty apprehends, and, on the other, sufficiently congenial to the sensible to address itself to it likewise. For in the meditations of the early sages on the nature of Truth, they met, we may be well assured, with the same difficulties which we encounter in our efforts to connect knowledge with reality, and those who did not identify both (by either raising knowledge itself into coincidence with reality, or lowering reality into the mere forms of mental knowledge), were content to say, that there subsisted a perfect resemblance between both, an inward relation of complete analogy; for that “the like could only be known by the like.” It seems to be in the spirit of this conviction that Plato, obtaining by reflective abstraction the primary elements of creation, conceived the soul as analogously formed; so that ultimately the knowing and the known might be traced to the same original basis, though in the actual state of the soul we are conscious of their distinctness. This very refined analysis I suppose to be the key of the perplexing passage which relates the constitution of Soul. It runs thus: "With the substance indivisible..."
and ever subsisting the same, and with the substance divisible and concerned about bodies, he mingled a third form of substance intermediate between both these natures of same and different; and set it midway between the indivisible and the corporeally divisible: and then taking these three things he compounded them into one comprehensive idea, forcibly combining the intractable nature of the Different into union with that of the Same; and having mingled these both with that mediate nature and formed of the three one, he divided the whole into suitable parts, so that each part involved in it the three constituents of Same, different, and intermediate." He then proceeds to the divisions made in his ψυχή, which I shall presently notice. But in the mean time you cannot fail to perceive that these ingredients of the principle of soul are exactly the logical characteristics of the three elements of creation which have already come under our review.

As then the substance of soul is taken from the substance of the universe, so the divisions of soul are identified with the harmonies of the universe. The system of the heavenly bodies, as Plato held it, is represented (on the Pythagorean doctrine) by the intervals of the musical scale; and these intervals are given as distributions of the Soul of the World, this universal intelligence being thus regarded as one with his own incessant operations. This soul being diffused through the entire frame, and energizing with equal vitality through every separate part of it, is described as divided among its distinct localities according to the proportions they bear to each other.

For the proportions selected for this geometrical division many reasons have been assigned. The intervals stated may be represented by the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 8, 27,—which constitute the diatonic scale of the ancients composed of two disjoined tetrachords. Proclus considers that in the scale of Timæus an adumbration is intended of that triple nature of soul of which we have just spoken; an arithmetical, a geometrical, and an harmonical proportion being discoverable in it. The numbers are evidently divisible into the two progressions, 1, 2, 4, 8,—and 1, 3, 9, 27; and Stallbaum considers that the four terms of each progression denote the degrees by which the soul arrives at the plenitude of existence, according to the mystical language of the Pythagorean school. It is more important to observe that the same proportion immediately reappears in the arrangement of the planetary orbits; in consonance

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16 [That is, with the principles denoted as ράντρος, ἰδερέα, and ὁμα, or τὸ ἀκμαίον. See note (4). E.D.]

18 [Note to Tim. 35 b. E.D.]
with the supposition that these bodies are directed by laws accordant with those observable in the progression of the musical octave.

Thus the consideration of the vital and intelligent principle of the universe brings us to the very simple and inartificial astronomy of the *Timeus*. Eight concentric spheres are provided to bear in their revolutions the bodies affixed to their interior surface. It is the first and simplest effort of hypothesis, yet how far below the diviner simplicity of Nature itself! *Timeus* first presents us with two vast spheres which embody the principles of same and different. The outer sphere includes the innumerable multitude of the fixed stars. The interior sphere is subsequently divided by the Divine Artist into seven spheres which revolve with various velocities and in various directions. The earth is placed in the centre, and the moon, the sun, and the five planets, with the still mightier sphere of the stars beyond them, move in measured harmony around it. The central position and the immovable quality of the earth seem to be both asserted and implied; but one expression has offered too fair a ground for contesting this point to have failed of becoming one of the battle-fields of criticism. Plato speaks of the earth as "whirling around the pole of the universe" (ἐπλακόκητος δὲ περὶ τὸν διὰ των πυρῶν τοὺς τεταρτέων). Aristotle accordingly accuses him of holding the heresy of the earth's rotation; but I fear that that honourable accusation can scarcely be substantiated. A solitary passage susceptible of other explanations cannot be admitted against the entire tone of the expressions of Plato; nor can this supposition be conciliated with the declared motion of the other spheres, which alone suffice to account for the phenomena contemplated. "Hoc etiam," says Cicero, after stating the opinion of Hicetas of Syracuse ["neque, praeter terram, rem illum in mundo moveri, quae cum circum axcin se summa celeritate convertat et torqueat, eadem

17 [p. 36 c. See the diagram in Stallbaum's note. Ed.]

* We are informed that the Demiurgic Father first divided the mysterious composition before stated into two parts or lines; placed these lines so as to intersect obliquely (as the equinoctial and ecliptic); bent them into circles, and then set them to revolve.

18 [The controversy turns upon the interpretation of the word ἐπλακόκητος, which, it is thought, may either mean "revolving," or "circumvolved," i.e. wrapped or fastened or packed, round the pole or axis. To discuss this question fully would occupy too much space, and I am glad to be able to refer the reader to a nearly exhaustive dissertation on the subject contained in a recently published volume of the Minor Works of the late Mr Grote, p. 235; the only weak point in which is, in my opinion, his failure to perceive and therefore to explain the grammatical difficulty arising from the tense of ἐπλακόκητος. This may perhaps be disposed of, if we admit a slight modification, not so much of his theory, as of his rendering of the passage in the *Timeus*. Ed.]
effici omnia, quasi stante terra coelum moveretur” — “Hoc etiam Platonem in Timaeo dicere quidam arbitratur, sed paulo obscurius”¹⁰. The notice of Hicetas, though so incidentally introduced by Cicero, bore its fruits in future ages. Copernicus declares that it was this memorable sentence which first led him to speculate on the mobility of the earth. But antiquity does not recognize in Plato a supporter of this doctrine; which, nevertheless, he might have obtained from the speculations of Philolaus, an inheritor of the opinions of Pythagoras. But higher claims than these have been advanced on behalf of the *Timaeus*. It has been argued that the harmonic proportions of the universal soul nearly agree with the true distances of the planets from the sun; and that Plato not merely held the rotation on the axis but the revolution in the orbit; — that thus the spherical music was itself only a mystical and ambiguous expression of profounder truth*. Aristotle and Plutarch attribute to the Pythagoreans certain beliefs respecting the motion of the earth; the dark saying of Philolaus is still preserved, that “the earth and moon revolve, like the sun, around a central fire” (for it appears that this philosopher held that the sun we behold was but an optical image of an interior luminary); and Plutarch from Theophrastus records the report that Plato in his latter days was said to have regretted not having displaced the earth from the centre of the system. These faint gleams of ancient science have caught the observation and interested the inquiries of many historians of astronomy; but the indecision of expressions, the fragmentary character of the notices, and the veil of purposed obscurity which unfortunately conceals so much of the choicest wisdom of early ages, unite to render any satisfactory conclusion almost hopeless.

The hypothesis of solid concentric spheres was calculated for indefinite expansion; and *accordingly these auxiliaries of the imagination were soon multiplied beyond their original number. The difficulty of accounting for the direct, retrograde, and stationary positions of the planets induced Eudoxus, a pupil of Plato, to attempt a further complication. In order to escape the apparent improbability of such a variety of motions in each of the planetary spheres, Eudoxus imagined the addition of three spheres to each, in such an order that the body itself revolved in the lowest, and the three above it presided over the diversity of its motions. The nearest to the

¹⁰ *Acad. Pr. II. 39, 123. Ed.*

* I confess this notion appears to me altogether incredible, being inconsistent, not only with the order of orbs mentioned in the *Timaeus* itself, but also with the general strain of the writings of Plato. (See *Phaedo*, near the end.)
planet had an oscillatory motion which it communicated to
the sphere of the body itself, and this occasioned the direct,
retrograde, and stationary movements; the next com-
communicated the daily, the highest the annual revolutions.
Three spheres were thought sufficient to account for the
motion of the sun, and as many were assigned to the
moon; which with the sphere of the fixed stars made the
number twenty-seven. Callippus was dissatisfied with any
allowance under thirty-four, and Aristotle could not un-
dertake to inclose the phenomena in any number of
spheres below fifty-six. Augmentations even beyond these
were thought necessary in subsequent ages; but in the
mean time another system had arisen, that of which
Apollonius is said to have been the author, and which,
improved by Hipparchus, we have received under the title
of the Ptolemaic:—a system cumbersome and complicated
indeed, but recommended by many advantages above the
former. I am not now, however, to enter into the detailed
history of it or of its successors. The slight notice already
presented is merely meant to exemplify the inevitable
progress of hypothesis. A system invented to comprehend
a few facts is burthened with more and more accessories
as new facts appear; nature swells beyond the measure
of its artificial bondage; custom and imagination are still
unwilling to alter fundamentally the greater lineaments of
the portrait they have so long cherished; accordingly, the
system continues to live until too heavy to bear its own
weight—that is, until the explanations become almost as
numerous as the facts to be explained. The imagination
at this point finds no help in the hypothesis, and deserts it.
"Systems," says Adam Smith, in one of his many pas-
sages of happy illustration, "Systems in many respects
resemble machines. A machine is a little system, created
to perform as well as to connect together in reality those
different movements and effects which the artist has oc-
casion for. A system is an imaginary machine, invented
to connect together in the fancy those different movements
and effects which are already in reality performed. The
machines that are at first invented to perform any par-
ticular movement are always the most complex; and
succeeding artists generally discover that with fewer wheels,
with fewer principles of motion, than had been originally
employed, the same effects may be more easily produced.
The first systems, in the same manner, are always the most
complex, and a particular connecting chain or principle is

[Essays on Philosophical Subjects, p. 44. Most of the foregoing state-
ments come from the same source. F.D.]
generally thought necessary to unite every two seemingly disjointed appearances; but it often happens that one great connecting principle is afterwards found to be sufficient to bind together all the discordant phenomena that occur in a whole species of things. How many wheels are necessary to carry on the movements of this imaginary machine, the system of eccentric spheres! The westward diurnal revolution of the firmament, whose rapidity carries all the other heavenly bodies along with it, requires one. The periodical eastward revolutions of the sun, moon, and five planets, require for each of these bodies another. Their differently accelerated and retarded motions require that those wheels or circles should neither be concentric with the firmament nor with one another; which more than anything seems to disturb the harmony of the universe. The retrograde and stationary appearance of the five planets, as well as the extreme inconstancy of the moon’s motion, require for each of them an epicycle, another little wheel attached to the circumference of the great wheel, which still more interrupts the uniformity of the system. The motion of the apogeeum of each of those bodies requires in each of them still another wheel to carry the centres of their eccentric spheres round the centre of the earth. And thus this imaginary machine, though perhaps more simple and certainly better adapted to the phenomena than the fifty-six planetary spheres of Aristotle, was still too intricate and complex for the imagination to rest in it with complete tranquillity and satisfaction."

I return to the Timaeus. You will perceive that the fundamental conception which sustains all the Platonic or Pythagorean opinions on the cosmical arrangements, is that the universal soul is to be the medium between the eternal and the successive, and therefore to have its roots in both. The Deity forms it, but he forms it of those elements which lie at the foundation of the real and the apparent, of same and different; since it is to address itself to both, it must have some original affinity for both. Now the first grand development of these opposite attributes of soul is conceived to be the arrangement of the magnificent framework of the universe; this is the universal type of active intelligence; and here, therefore, in their simplest exhibition will be found the two presiding characteristics of soul. When from this a priori conception the Platonist descended to inspect the facts, he found that the few then known could be without much difficulty organized as a sensible manifestation of the primary metaphysical principles already elicited; as manifestations, that is, of principles that may be said to form the very substance of intelligence itself.
He therefore expressed the harmonies of the heavens as reducible in the last analysis to the two original principles of intelligence, the categories of sameness and difference of permanence and change; and inasmuch as soul was not only cognitive but active, not only an intelligence but an energy, and thus vitally present in each of its functions, he expressed the measurements of these harmonious motions as distributions of the very soul that quickened and preserved them. The proper interest to our age of such speculations is of course altogether metaphysical; we have long outgrown the cosmical hypothesis in which the conceptions were embodied; but the profound questions which arise out of these conceptions themselves are still as pregnant with interest as ever to all reflecting spirits, and the withering breath of oblivion which has passed over the mere astronomy of the *Timeus*, has left its speculative philosophy as fresh and as attractive as in the days of the old Locrian himself. You will now, I trust, be prepared to enter into the purport of the following passage, which succeeds the account of the geometrical division of soul

"The whole composition of the soul being completed according to the design of its composer, he, after this, constructed all the bodily nature within it, and fitting centre to centre united them: but the soul, diffused from the middle to the uttermost bounds of creation, and investing the whole circularly from without, introduced a revolution on itself, the divine principle of incessant and intelligent life to last for ever. The body of the world is visible, the soul invisible; participating of reason and of the harmony of beings intelligible and eternal, it is the most perfect of all such beings as the Perfect Being has formed. Now, since it is composed of these three elements—the same, the different, and the mediate "substance,"—divided and combined according to proportion, and returning circularly on itself, whenever it meets anything essentially divisible, or anything essentially indivisible, moved through its whole self, it pronounces with what any substance is identical, and from what it differs, why, and where, and how, and when, it happens that anything either is or suffers in relation to anything else through the whole sphere both of the created and of the eternal. Now Reason, which is true when conversant with the immutable, may be engaged with both the changeable and the immutable; and when, borne along in its own silent course, it meets a sensible object, and the circle of difference in its regular function

21 [*Tim. p. 36 n, fol. En.*]
22 [*ὅθεν ἄρχῃ ἡ Ἰερά, "began the divine commencement," "divinum fecit initium." En.*]
transmits the message to the entire soul, then are generated opinions and beliefs firm and true: but when, on the contrary, it is engaged with the rational, and the revolving circle of sameness declares it to the soul, intelligence and scientific knowledge necessarily result. But if any man shall say that these things are anywhere but in the soul produced, he shall speak what is utterly erroneous." Nothing can be more plain than that in this description the universal soul is the type of soul in general; that its circles of sameness and difference are but representatives, in the language of that celestial system with which it is directly connected, of the faculties of belief and knowledge, πίστις and νόησις, which Plato so carefully separates in the human soul, and which he evidently conceived to be the appropriate and necessary faculties of every description of soul, when once placed in relation with a phenomenal or sensible system, the image of one invisible and eternal. But this may appear more distinctly when in the next Lecture, passing from these inevitably abstruse deductions, I proceed to the Psychology of Plato, to his views of the substance, properties, prerogatives, and fortunes of the human soul.
LECTURE III.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. NO. IX.

GENTLEMEN,

As I have already stated to you, it is not within my plan to enter at any length into the details of the system of the natural phenomena offered by Plato. For those who are interested in tracing the history of the physical sciences, the Timæus presents a rich magazine of ancient speculations, if not upon the anatomical construction (in which it is brief and imperfect), at least upon the objects and adaptation of the parts of the human body; as well as upon the arrangement of the "elements," as they were called, and the productions of the more striking appearances of external nature. To enumerate these particulars would only be to transcribe the work itself, which is easily within your reach, and the language of which could scarcely be abridged. But even if I could succeed in condensing and methodizing the entire of these details, the result would only be to lead me away from my object in these sketches, which is to catch and portray the features and expression of the Platonic habits of thought, and to represent the opinions of this great master upon those questions of eternal interest which no variation in the science of the visible creation can ever antiquate,—no successes in that field of investigation ever supersede. I know, gentlemen, that these discussions can scarcely hope to be popular: I avow that I cannot rid you of the burthen-some necessity of patient meditation, if you would think as Plato thought: the depths of the ocean cannot sparkle with the glitter of the surface, nor the student who would enter into the regions of the φιλοσοφία τοῦ ἄντων, the philosophy of the real and absolute, expect to be entertained with the brilliant varieties of the last new theory of association or of taste. To Plato himself almost alone of mankind belonged the gift of conveying the profoundest truths in the most airy vehicle of fancy, of being livelier among ideal abstractions than most men could contrive to be in the scenes of a romance; yet even Plato himself has
in some respects suffered by this very perfection. The forms of Grecian art are too exquisitely wrought for our dull sensibilities,—the parallel motion of philosopher and poet is too rapid and perplexing for our slow faculties; we cannot read the two languages together,—we mutilate this mighty mind to bring it within our grasp, and vexed at feeling that the life has evaporated, take revenge by talking of it as the mind of a dreamer and a phantast. In truth, there never were written pages less marked by the negligent vagueness of reverie than those of Plato; the severest control governs his highest flights,—the sublimity is ever in the substance of the thoughts, not in their accidental connexions; nor is there a sentence of what a modern critic would call declamation from beginning to end of his writings. Serenest when loftiest, he rises without effort or perceptible motion.

"Ye cannot see
The stirring of his wings, and yet he soars!"

These singular perfections, however, are the excellencies of a Greek; and of all Greeks, the special excellency of Plato. The lecturer's work of cold analysis is necessarily very different; he cannot even lay the body itself on his dissecting table, when though lifeless it would at least be entire; he must take it limb by limb, and the limb itself few can recognize after it has been disfigured to be exposed, and its external result of beauty lost in tracing out its tissues and arteries.

I shall not, therefore, attempt any minute account of the merely hypothetical explanations which Plato gives us of the arrangement of the elements and their original constitution. He obtains the four elements by arguing that corporeal nature was meant to be visible and tangible; that fire was necessary for the former (a supposition, by the way, countenanced by those late interesting investigations which seem to establish that light and heat are really modes of the same original essence, rays of heat being light invisible, and light caloric visible)—and earth, the principle of solidity, necessary for actual grasp. But between these very different natures it is fitting that some connecting medium or media should intervene; and Plato shews by some geometrical considerations, which, however, have rather perplexed his commentators, that the most perfect arrangement is that in which two proportionals are inserted; so that fire may be to air as air is to water, and air to water as water to earth.

1 [Tim. p. 31 B—32 C. Ed.]
2 [Ib. p. 53 C—56 C. Ed.]
into their mathematical construction, in the spirit of the Italic school, and decides it primarily on the principle of beauty. The pyramid is assigned to the particles of fire, the cube to those of earth, the octahedron to air, the icosahedron to water. The reasons for these distinctions are of course altogether fanciful; yet in the course of the exposition conjectures not wholly unlike truth occur; and it is impossible in reading it not to conceive with what pleasure Plato would have entered into the modern law of definite proportions, and still more, perhaps, into the striking and beautiful phenomena of crystallization. In such cases as these, where ancient hypotheses are contrasted with modern discoveries, and the reality found so far to excel the anticipation, it is instructive to regard the difference between the moral and the purely intellectual in man. In his moral being, it is the tendency of awakened man to aspire perpetually after a perfection which this world does not concede him, and even out of his own preconceptions of the just and the good to faintly dare to shadow a scene infinitely surpassing it; and reason and revelation alike encourage him in the noble and elevating occupation;—in the sphere of simple fact, the object of his observing and theorizing faculties, on the contrary, the construction of imaginary worlds on principles of supposed perfection, if intended to satisfy the reason, is discomfited by reason itself, while even piety bids us beware how we risk degrading that workmanship which all experience perpetually proves to rise beyond the utmost ingenuity and harmony of our best ideal constructions. And could I believe that the very imperfect system delineated by Plato was ever meant by him to be the last term of physical speculation, I should judge him strictly amenable to this censure;—everything about it, however, seems to me to mark his clear conviction that he walked among the obscurities of conjecture, and that his attempts at theoretical representation of phenomena were only valuable as they seemed to exemplify in a vivid form what might be the real wisdom and benevolence of the Deity. You will remember also what was the actual position and vocation of true philosophy at this period. Schools existed—popular and fashionable schools—crowded by all that was influential and eminent in Greece, in which every principle of moral and religious truth was systematically undermined. Among other devices of this unholy warfare, the physical universe itself was raised into a fortress from which heaven might be stormed. The evidences of design in its structure were questioned; its existence attributed to necessity, to destiny,
to caprice, to chance. Under the pressure of these circumstances, something should be done, and speedily: to wait until full certainty should be attained, was to wait for the lapse of ages. The instructor of the public mind had only to take the best account that thoughtful men had till then been able to devise; to insist upon such instances as appeared least questionable; to attire the rest in the most becoming dress, and so to arrange the whole as to leave upon the mind of his reader the ideas of order and beneficence deeply and distinctly impressed. And as he would be obliged to admit the public religion of his country in its chief elements, his object would be so to represent polytheism as to give the moral effect of monotheism; by classing the received gods as the subjects and deputies of the Supreme, all animated by a single purpose derived from him, and moving together in harmony of will and action. For it is clear that the great moral evil of polytheism consists, not in it merely as polytheism, but in its defect of subordination among its deities, and its tendency to admit private interests, personal preferences, and even positive hostilities among them. This Plato himself bitterly felt and lamented; and the diffusion of such debasing tenets among the mass of the people formed one of his prominent and constant charges against the popular poetry of his country. Against this doctrine of divine dissension he has forcibly and unreservedly argued in the Euthyphron; and we can easily conceive, that, while on the one hand the belief of rivalry among the presiding deities must at once destroy all the religious foundations of morality, on the other, the belief of their common animation by a single spirit and purpose, their conjunction in the same strict principles of right and wrong, must unconsciously infuse into the mind the very spirit of monotheism itself— the standard in which they agree becoming in a manner the deity of the reason, and the several divinities becoming to the hopes and fears the avenging and rewarding ministers of that Supreme and Eternal Law.

But this process becomes still more simple and certain, when, as with Plato, the Supreme is clearly represented on the stage of creation, and the deities (even Jupiter, the governing divinity of the poetical and popular mythology) are classed as the descendants of powers included within that creation itself. Such, then, on the whole, seems to me the historical position and design of the Timaeus; and to estimate fairly the execution you must remember the

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3 [See the tenth Book of the Laws, p. 889 A. Ed.]
4 [p. 8. Ed.]
5 [Tim. p. 40 A. Ed.]
6 [Ib. 40 E. Ed.]
age and the purpose. I shall only add, lest my own selections should do injustice to the philosopher, that in the course of the work the instances of design are really taken in far the greater number from the most accessible, and what Paley, and Socrates himself, both agreed to be the most convincing department of nature, the organized animal creation. The few references I have made have been chosen with a different view,—in illustration of the purely speculative philosophy of Plato; with which view it is also that I now proceed to consider and generalize the principal opinions of Plato regarding the nature and destinies of the human soul.

"If," said Socrates, "there be anything about man that partakes of divine, it is the soul." This brief sentence may stand as the text of the whole Platonic psychology. The spirit that animates the entire of his many and diversified references to this subject, whether they be general or detailed, is ever the same, the conviction deep and ineffaceable, that there is a principle in man which manifestly separates itself from the rest of his nature, and internally proclaims an essence kindred with the skies. The whole force of his genius is bent to clear and confirm this conviction: to it directly or indirectly he perpetually returns; it is assumed in every dialogue in which it is not argued. And yet it is unquestionable, that, though he has fortunately left us some imperishable memorials of the grounds of his belief, considerable obscurity still hangs over his opinions on some parts of the subject; an obscurity arising partly, we may suppose, from his disinclination to speak dogmatically upon matters which he could not but feel were, without direct revelation, inevitable uncertainties, and partly from the very different periods of a long life in which his dialogues were meditated and written. The most striking of these instances in which we are still left in some doubt as to his real sentiments, occurs in the very opening of the subject.

Plato informs us, that after the Supreme Being had created the visible and the invisible gods, he commanded them to frame the animated natures of the Earth; but that in doing so he reserved to himself the formation of that portion of their being which deserved the name of immortal, "to be entitled divine, and serve as guide to all who would follow justice:" that accordingly the Father of the universe composed this diviner portion of the remainder of that

1 [Legg. v. init.: πάντων τῶν αὐτῶν κτήματων μετὰ θεοῦ ψυχὸς θεότατον. Ed.]
2 [Tim. 41 A. Ed.]
mysterious substance of which the soul of the world had been already formed, but of an essence, from some unexplained cause, much less refined*. This mythical representation embodies the doctrine, that the soul of man, and (it would appear) that of all animals, are of the same nature with the universal soul, though of inferior excellence—a point of view in which we have already in the last Lecture contemplated the subject; that, though of the same kind and family, they are individually distinct from it and from each other; and consequently that the notion of ultimate absorption*, so often ascribed to Plato, is really without foundation in his theory.

However, when from this account of the soul just recited, of the soul “the most excellent of generated beings,” we turn to the *Phaedrus*, we find an account not easy to reconcile with the above, an account which seems to attribute to the soul an essential eternity of nature. Plato here argues10, that the soul, as self-moving, is a *Principle* of motion; that a principle cannot be produced any more than it can be destroyed. Not produced, for it would then no longer be a principle, no longer the self-dependent source of its own energy; not destroyed, for if so the whole existence of things, which rests on first principles of production, might cease. “If then,” he con-

9 [ἀνάρατα δ' οὐκέτι κατὰ ταύτα ὅσατως ἀλλὰ δεύτερα καὶ τρίτα. Ib. D. Ed.]

* The opinion of Warburton, who ascribes this notion of the derivation of the souls of men from the divine essence and their final resolution into it, to all the ancient philosophers without exception, is, I think, quite unsupported in the case of Platonism, as it came from the hands of Plato himself. Plato may, in the last analysis, have embraced all things in some mysterious unity—an idea which in some vague sense it seems impossible for human reason to avoid; but as far as he professes to trace the fortunes of the souls of men, he seems to me to see them distinct to the end, even when most closely combined with those great realities of the Ideal World with which their origin is so intimately blended. I have already attempted to show what appears the true foundation of the Platonist theory of the constitution of soul, viz. the mysterious oneness of truth and knowledge, which naturally led to deriving the rational element of the Soul (the element that knows, that possesses the faculty of εἰδομενος) from the real element in things (the element that εις, the νοομενον); and in the original, the final, and, though imperfectly, the present, state of that rational element, he, doubtless, conceived it united with its object in an eternal conjunction or even identity. But though Intelligence and its correlative Intelligences were, and are, thus combined, the soul is more than pure intelligence; it possesses an element of personality and consciousness distinct to each individual, of which we have no reason to suppose, from anything his writings contain, Plato ever meant to deprive it. [It is thus we must explain the Platonist doctrine that the number of souls in the universe is constant. *Refl. x. 111 A: (φυσικα) ἂν ἐν ἐνεκ αὐτα, ὡς γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἐδύνατοι γένεσιν μεθεμβασις ἀπολιμένη, ὡς αὐθ εἰς τοῖς ἐδύνατοι γένεσις, καὶ τῶν ἐδύνατοι γένεσις, εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον γένεσιν, καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ τελευταίᾳ ἄνθρωπον. This number is elsewhere defined to be that of the stars. (Tim. 41 D.) Whimsical as this may seem, it is at least conclusive against the absorption theory, which indeed there is otherwise no pretext for attributing to Plato. Ed.]

10 [Phaedr. p. 245 C: άρχη δὲ ἄνθρωπον, κτλ. Ed.]
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cludes, “all which is the source of its own motion is soul, assuredly the soul can have neither commencement nor termination....”

That this profound argument is truly applicable to the First Principle of the Universe, no one can justly deny; and accordingly in an elaborate exposition in the tenth book of Laws\(^{11}\) Plato admirably applies it to the proof of the existence of God; but in that very discussion he draws a marked distinction between the divine and human forms of the moving principle, and suspends the continuance of created souls upon the will and wisdom of the Deity. I do not pretend that I can throw any decisive light upon this great difficulty. I will remark, however, that Plato himself describes the Soul as formed of pre-existing materials; the demiurge in the Timeus is not the framer of either the material or mental universe out of nothing,—an idea not embraced by the Platonic habits of thought. In the Timeus we contemplate him as intelligent and active; not as literally creative in our sense of the expression. But if the soul was conceived to have been the result of a composition of previous elements; and if, as we know, one of these elements (that which Plato calls “The Same”) is always by him represented as eternal in the strictest sense; we may, perhaps, venture to imagine that in uniting these notions we shall have obtained some conception of the manner in which he might have contemplated the human soul as a generated being in its actual manifestations and personal history, and yet as in its ultimate constitution a principle essentially eternal. That which in the passage of the Phaedrus is called the Principle of Self-motion ought probably to be generalized as the principle of self-determination\(^{12}\); for motion was, in the Greek philosophic phraseology, a word almost indiscriminately applied to every species of change. Now the self-determining principle in man is rationally inferrible from the conception of duty (as Kant has so nobly demonstrated)\(^{13}\); if, then, the immutable element of the soul styled by Plato “the Same,” be, as I have in the last Lecture supposed, the part of the Soul which corresponds to the objective “Same,” that is, to the intelligible world, and if, as we well know, the noblest furniture of that eternal scene was believed by Plato to be the idea of Moral Rectitude, it is not too overstrained to conceive that in this way not merely the faculty of beholding the intelligible, but the ground of the self-directing

\(^{11}\) [pp. 892 A, 994 B, fol. Ed.]

\(^{12}\) [See ibid. 906 E: τάλ (ψυχή) καθόσων...διάματα τοιο βούλεσθαι, σπνων-σθαι. Ε. η. η. Ed.]

\(^{13}\) [Pract. Vernuntiis, 1. Θ. Ed.]
energy, might have been involved by Plato in that element of the soul whose foundations lay in Eternity. 

This doctrine of the Eternity of the Rational and Moral Elements of Soul appears more repulsive than, perhaps, it ought fairly to do, in consequence of not being accompanied by an appropriate conception of the Platonic eternity itself. As long as we regard this great Idea as merely an indefinite extension of time with its past, present, and future, the notion of the anterior eternity of soul will perhaps startle us as something altogether imaginary and incredible. But I have already remarked, that Plato had risen into a very clear apprehension of the inapplicability of these relations of successive existence to the ideal sphere of being. And as succession was refused to these mighty essences (the Ideas), so the notion of succession to the contemplative element of the soul; for the contemplation of immutability to our own experience destroys the perception of time, and the transcendent glories of the ideal scene presented in one unchangeable picture to that soul would be independent of the aids of memory to recover the past, and thus intrude the notion of successive existences. The Soul, therefore, in its elements of rationality and freedom, has existed anterior to time, because it now and essentially exists in eternity. In these respects it

* We should, however, again observe, with respect to the notion of "absorption," that even this supposition—the eternity of the self-determining Principle—still leaves us perfectly distinct the conscious personal exercise of that principle, and thus saves the felt individuality of each soul now and for ever.

14 The eternity of the "rational element" is an undoubted Platonic doctrine. With regard to the emotiv part, in both its divisions of σώματα and ἐνεργεία, it is difficult to clear his utterances of inconsistency. In the Timæus the emotive part is conceived as mortal (see p. 41 c a.), whereas in the great Mythus of the Phædrus the tripartite soul is represented as in its entirety pre-existent in the ἰσαρχούμενος ἔσος. And such must be his meaning in a passage of the Laws, x. p. 896 ο. seqq. This alone seems to me to forbid the forced interpretation of the Phædric allegory of the Chariot which was adopted by Hermias as a means of escape from what he imagined to be the unplatonic doctrine of the immortality of the emotive principle. This difficulty, we may observe, was felt by the old as well as by later Platonists—and their varying theories are enumerated by Olympiodorus, Schol. in Phædonem, § 175 οὐ μὲν ἀλήθεια τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς ἄμων τῆς ἐμφάνεσε ἠκολουθεῖσα, ὡς Νικιμών. οὐ δὲ μέχρι τῆς φύσεως ὡς Πλατόνιος ἱερόν διόν οὐ δὲ μέχρι τῆς λογικῆς, ὡς τῶν μὲν ταλαιπὸν Ζευκράτη καὶ Σφενδάκτυς, τῶν δὲ νεώτερων Ἰμβλίσιος καὶ Πλούταρχος οὐ δὲ μέχρι μόνης τῆς λογικῆς, ὡς Πρόκλος καὶ Πορφύριος οὐ δὲ μέχρι μόνου τοῦ νου, φλέστως τῷ τῆς δόξας, ὡς τελετο τῶν Περικάτησκων. I take this from a tract of Gieseler De partibus animis immortalibus secundum Platonem, Gottingae 1850, where the restrictive view of the Platonic Immortality is ingeniously defended. Ed.]

16 Τίν. p. 37 Ε: τῷ τ’ ἤν τῷ τ’ ἡσια χρόνον...εἴδη, ἀ δὴ φύσεως λαμβάνειν ἐνεργείαν ἐν εἰς τῇ ἄλλῳ ὁμοιώτατον ὁμός ὁμοιότ. λέγομεν γὰρ δὴ ὡς ἦν ἔτη τε καὶ ἑτερα, τῇ δὲ τῇ μένῳ κατὰ τὸν ἐλεύθηρον προσέχει. "Was' and 'will be' are but modes of time, which we are apt without thinking to apply wrongfully to the eternal essence. We say, It was, is and is to come: whereas in strict reason 'is' alone can properly be said of it." Ed.]
knows no past, present, or future; it is, as the Phaedrus declares, a principle uncommenced and interminable.

Still it may be asked, how the notion of Creation can be properly applied to an essence thus supposed in certain respects self-existent? And to this I can only repeat my impression that Plato meant to apply the fact of Creation, or, as he calls it, Generation by the divine Father, not directly to the soul in its primitive elements, but to the soul in its manifestation as the mediate nature between the eternal and sensible. The Universal Soul, we have seen, may be regarded as the type of soul in general; having all those prerogatives in the highest and amplest degree which appertain to soul essentially, and which in inferior degrees characterize every separate instance of soul throughout the universe. Now, that universal soul is on one side linked with eternity, formed of that element which constitutes the real or immutable, and beyond which is nothing,—on the other side linked with the sensible and contingent, being formed of that element which is purely relative and phenomenal. The office of the Demiurgus or Creator was simply to combine these elements into the state in which they are actually presented; and thus to give a definite and positive existence, in a conjunctive form, to ingredients already prepared. When the mysterious compound is thus projected into the sphere of positive existence, the elements will still preserve indefasible the rights of their eternal ancestry; and thus a soul, which as a soul owes its being and its continuance to the wisdom and beneficence of that Almighty Disposer and Parent of whom it was the firstborn offspring, may yet recognize in itself the essential powers of a Principle, and know that, whether in its faculty of pure intelligence or in its corresponding faculty of self-determination, it lies out of the ever-varying circle of sense, is so far the subject of no direct causation, and transcends the world of successive duration.

This portion of the soul, accordingly, it is to which Plato has assigned a proper immortality, and whose present state he believed bore manifest indications equally of a prior and a future perpetuity. The rest of its characteristics he ascribed to its junction with the body; and he clearly intimates that the object of this temporary connexion was the establishment of a state of moral discipline and probation. He describes (and of course you will understand these descriptions as mainly intended for picturesque forms of metaphysical truth, philosophy in the dress of narrative) the souls which were to be distributed through the universe as first distributed among the stars, one to each, and the
Deity as unfolding to these souls the irreversible decrees of the universal system, which consist mainly of the law of moral trial and the transmigration through various bodily vehicles of such as lose their original purity, until, after a period more or less protracted, they become fitted to recover their primal state in the star to which each has been first associated 18.

The philosophical doctrines of the eternal existence of the free and rational elements of the soul, of the possibility and propriety of the conjunction of the soul with a variety of successive bodily organizations, and of the object of the whole arrangement,—the manifestation of the final triumph of the good over the evil principle; these doctrines rest on their own evidence, whatever that may be, and should be carefully separated from all that mass of imaginative representation and ornament with which in the Platonic dialogues they are combined. Nothing can be more unjust, or indeed more wearisome, than the clumsy criticisms of those unsympathizing judges of Plato, who, unable to rise to the habitual elevation of his thoughts, or unable to breathe in an atmosphere so rare when they have attained it, content themselves with watching his flight through their critical telescopes from below, and registering with painful minuteness every golden cloud he pours around his path, as a solid body which he is establishing in his system. The “Homericus philosophorum,” as Cicero 17 calls him, loves to see everything flush with the colours of a pure and solemn poetry; standing for ever in front of the changeless and eternal, his spirit is filled with the exceeding awfulness of the presence; and when he would speak, his thoughts swell into the strong rapture of a hymn. And why, upon yet profounder motives, he purposely sought thus to engage the Imagination as well as the Reason, and deemed both efforts equally his duty, we may, perhaps, hereafter inquire, when in the last section of the subject we examine the single grand object of his entire labours. It is enough here to remind you that it will be necessary to interpret constantly for yourselves the profuse language of mythological representation into the simpler dialect of scientific truth.

To this class of imaginative shadowings of moral truth belong nearly all the descriptions which Plato has given us of the actual occupations of the soul of man prior to its present earthly existence; descriptions which are all meant for those who can penetrate beyond the veil of imagery, and which are intentionally thrown into a form as remote as possible from scientific exposition. He constantly warns

18 [αἱ τῶν τυχόν παραδόθην οἰκείων θανάτου. Tim. p. 42 B. Ed.]
17 [Rather Panaetius, whom Cicero quotes. Tusc. Qu. i. c. 32. Ed.]
us of this. "To explain," he declares, "what the soul is in itself would require a science divine, and prolonged disquisitions; but to give an idea by the way of comparison, human science is enough, and there is no need of many words." It is after making this admonition, that he proceeds to present one of the most elaborate of all these allegories. It is that in the _Phaedrus_ in which he has described under the most brilliant and varied colourings the prior state, and the fall, of the spirit of man; a passage curious and important on many accounts, and not least on this,—that it evinces how early in the annals of Plato's philosophical life the main features of his system were fixed, and thus seems to indicate that these outlines must have been, however rudely, sketched in some of the philosophies (especially, doubtless, the Pythagorean) with which he was at that time conversant. As to the doctrines of pre-existence and transmigration, these we know were Egyptian and Pythagorean; the chief question of interest regards the connexion of the Ideal Theory with these antique traditions, which in themselves, and probably in the old Egyptian conception of them, wore rather a physiological than metaphysical aspect. And unfortunately Plato's own singular modesty (which, in spite of ancient scandal, strongly marks his writings) puts it still more out of our power to determine the exact amount of his contributions of doctrine absolutely novel to the general fund of thought; his usual practice being to assign his sentiments to others,—to Socrates, to Parmenides, to even the Sophists. All this dramatic personation was of course well understood in his own age among the literary circles of Athens; and his contemporaries and successors seem, assuredly, to have agreed, that wherever he touched he superseded all who had gone before him in the same walk; but whether the miracle was achieved by absolute creation or by new and felicitous combination of previous materials,—by bestowing what men never possessed, or by teaching them the unsuspected value of what they had,—this it remains in many respects difficult to decide.

I shall give you the passage to which I have alluded. You may find some interest in comparing its picturesque

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38 [I have already intimated my dissent from the popular tradition which represents the _Phaedrus_ as the firstborn of Plato's genius. Cicero's authority may fairly be held as of equal weight with that of the Peripatetics, with whom the report seems to have originated. For it is difficult to believe that he wrote without book, when, in reference to the notice of Isocrates, "on the last page of the _Phaedrus_" he observed, "Hae de adolescente Socrates auguratur. At es de seniore scribit Plato, et scribit equalis, et quidem, exagitator omnium rhetorum, hunc miratur unum."—Orator, c. 13. § 45. The vulgar tradition cannot have been unknown to Cicero, nor would he have contradicted it without some reason. I have entered at some length into the question in the Prolegomena to my edition of the Dialogue. Ed.]
and symbolical imagery with the grave account which
Bishop Butler in the fifth chapter of his "Analogy" gives,
of the course of temptation by which persons "made upright
may fall." The substance of these very different forms of
deduction is not itself very different; for the "particular
propensions" hostile to conscience in the Bishop's argument
are personified in the unmanageable courser of the allegory.
I proceed to translate.

"Let us compare," he says, "the soul (in its original
state) to the combined energies of a winged equipage and
a charioteer. The coursers and the charioteers of the gods
are all noble and nobly sprung; but those of other natures
are very various. With us men, for example, the charioteer
does indeed direct the equipage; but of the coursers one is
well proportioned and well bred, the other quite the oppo-
site; from whence it results that the work of guiding the
chariot is exceedingly difficult. And here we may explain
the difference between the mortal and immortal species.
Soul in general presides over lifeless nature and makes the
voyage of the universe under many forms. As long as it
is in perfection, and preserves its wings in all their vigour,
it traverses the ethereal regions and governs the whole
world; but when its wings fail, it is carried at random until
at length it falls upon and attaches itself to something solid,
and thenceforward remains there. It is thus that we call
the union of soul and body a living being, this body appear-
ing to move itself, by reason of the power derived from the
soul. As to the immortal nature, we have no certainty
upon the subject, we can only offer conjecture; and without
having even seen Deity or sufficiently understanding its
being, we imagine a living immortal essence whose soul and
body are everlastingly united. But however that be, it is
for us to consider and recount the causes why souls first
lose those wings of which we have spoken.

"The power of the wings is to elevate that which is
heavy to those higher regions of the gods; and they share,
more than anything else which is corporeal, in that which
is divine. Now that which is divine is the Beautiful, the
True, the Good, and everything that resembles them. This
then is what feeds and nerves the wings of the soul; while,
on the other hand, all that is evil and deformed injures and
destroyes them. Well then, the sovereign ruler, Jove, ad-
vances in the van, guiding his winged chariot, disposing and
controlling all. After him comes the host of gods and
powers in eleven divisions, for Vesta remains alone in the
palace of the immortals; but the eleven other 'dii majores'
advance, each at the head of a detachment, in their

[Phadr. p. 246 fol. Ed.]
appointed rank. And then what captivating sights, what
grand opening vistas, enliven the inner depths of the
heavens while the blessed discharge their divine offices
accompanied by all who will or can follow them; for far is
envy from the celestial choir. When they return to the
splendid banquet provided for them, and ascend to the
crown of the vault of heaven, the chariots of the immortals,
always in perfect balance, advance with lightness and ease;
the others toil on with difficulty; for the bad courser drags
down earthwards the car, unless he have been right well
trained by his driver. Here comes the great and sore trial
of the soul. The souls of the immortals, after rising to the
highest point of the heavens, dismiss their equipages and
place themselves on the convex side of its vault; and while
they remain there the circular motion of the system carries
them round the heavens of which they contemplate the
exterior region. That region above the heavens none of
our poets has yet celebrated; none ever shall celebrate it
worthily. I will venture, however, in truth's cause, now
especially demanding it, to portray the wondrous abode.
True essence, colourless, formless, impalpable, cannot be
contemplated but by intelligence, the guide of the soul.
Around essence is the place of true science. Now the think-
ing energy of the gods, which feeds on intelligence and
knowledge, pure as that of every soul that would fulfil its
vocation, loves to gaze on that essence from which it has
been so long separated, and surrenders itself delightedly to
the contemplation of truth, until the moment when the cir-
cular revolution brings it to the point of its departure again.
In this transit it contemplates Justice, Wisdom, Science—
not that science which is concerned with change, and which
appears under a different manifestation in different objects
which we choose to call beings, but science such as it is in
that which alone is indeed Being. After having thus con-
templated all essences and been fully satisfied, it returns to
the divine palace in the interior of the heavens, the chariot-
cer conducts the courser to their stalls, and spreads before
them immortal food. Such is the life of the gods. Among
the other souls, the one which best follows the divine souls,
and resembles them the most, lifts the head of the chariot-
cer above the highest regions, and traverses them, borne
on by the circular motion; but at the same time, embarr-
sed by its courser, it has great difficulty in attempting
steadily to contemplate essences. Another, again, is now
lifted, and now depressed; the irregular plunging of its
courser allows it to perceive some essences, but hides the
rest. The last in the train follow afar, eager to contemplate
the higher region, but unable to attain the object; the
revolution carries them into the lower; they are overthrown, they fall over each other in attempting to advance, they crowd, they battle, they toil, and by the awkwardness of their charioteers many of them are disabled, many others lose the best part of the plumage of their wings, and all, after painful and unavailing efforts, are disappointed in the view of real being, and are obliged to find their aliment in mere conjecture. The cause of their anxiety to gain the field of truth is, that the appropriate nourishment of the best part of the soul is to be found in the fertile meadows which this plain incloses, and that the nature of the soul's pinions is thereby strengthened and refreshed. It is an Adrastean (irrevocable) law, that every soul which, in undeviating attendance on the divine souls, has caught the sight of any of the essences, shall be exempt from suffering until a new voyage, and that if it can always succeed in thus accompanying the gods, it never experiences any evil. But when it cannot follow the gods, or contemplate essences, and that unfortunately becoming fattened on the gross food of vice and forgetfulness, it gravitates, loses its wings, and falls to the earth, the law protects it from animating the body of any beast in its first stage. He then proceeds to describe the various fortunes of life, and the subsequent destinies of the undying spirit passing through forms of death, until at the close of ten millenniums it arrives again at its original state. But there is one exception, in which the period is abridged; it is that of the philosopher—Plato's ideal of human excellence; who after the third revolution of a thousand years recovers the wings of the liberated soul. During his human life his power of reminiscence is, as far as possible, engaged with those essences he once knew in his state of enfranchisement. "The man," declares Plato, "who turns these precious recollections to good account, participates incessantly in the true and perfect mysteries, and himself alone becomes truly perfect. Isolated from earthly cares and disquietudes, attached to things divine alone, the multitude warn him to be more a man of sense, or treat him as an idiot,—they see not that he is inspired!"

Into the portion of this remarkable representation which concerns the future state of the soul, it is not now the time to enter. It would appear, with respect to the anterior state, that Plato conceived the soul, after its elements had been combined by the divine Framer, to be possessed of certain tendencies distinct from the purely rational, and for which it was not indebted to the body. These tendencies are symbolized in the two coursers, and it is impossible not to connect them with the well-known division of the soul which Plato elsewhere makes into the rational, irascible,
and concupiscible, and in which division he always speaks favourably of the second element. It seems to me, then, that either at this time he had not matured the doctrine which appears in the Timaeus and elsewhere, and which seems to make the passions wholly the result of the bodily connexion;—or that he conceived the soul in its original form to possess in a germinant state those tendencies which afterwards in full energy for good and evil developed in the corporeal. It is, at all events, certain, that in this mythical portrait he represents the bodily state as the result of the incompetence of the soul to preserve its original purity, through a weakness from which the immortals, themselves created, are free; and you will remember that in the account of the first composition of human souls in the Timaeus it was expressly stated that their substance was inferior in purity to the animating principle of the universe. We are to collect, then, from this narrative that the soul of man, kindred to the powers and principles of the universe, possessed in its primal state a strong desire to enjoy the perfection of Goodness, Beauty, and Truth, which desire was partly, but only partly, seconded by its powers; that failing to attain its mighty object through inseparable defects, a failure which, however, varied in degree in different individuals, it was condemned to assume the grosser bodily condition, in which a vast accession of evils alleviated by scarcely any advantage assails it, but which also affords a scene for the exercise of moral control, a period of trial, and an occasion of ultimate triumph. Anything much more minute on this subject we shall scarcely find in Plato without overstraining casual expressions. The peculiar questions which the Christian revelation has made to us so interesting, were not prominently before the public mind in his age; and he consequently was not led to investigate them except briefly and incidentally.

The body, then, is the prison of the soul, which however defies its oppressor; and the aim of virtue is to preserve the distinctness of the two, and realize liberty even in bonds; looking forward as its recompense to a total enfranchisement. From this seminal idea the whole moral system of Platonism springs; and it is this general conception which all the allegorical representations of the past and future state are intended to vivify and impress.


[As Ibid. p. 440 E: φαίνεται γελών μᾶλλον τὸ θυμοειδὲς ἐν τῇ τῆς ψυχῆς στάσει τίθεντο τῇ διὸ πρὸς τῷ λογισμοῖς. Ed.]

[In the curious passage of the Laws x. p. 897 A above referred to, the emotions of Joy, Sorrow, Courage, Fear are attributed both to the gods and to the unbodied souls. This is quite consistent with the mythical psychology of the Phaedrus. Ed.]
LECTURE IV.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. No. X.

GENTLEMEN,

THE doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of man, which was widely spread through Egypt and the East, probably came to Plato by these foreign and traditional conveyances. He received it along with many other theories, of which the original reasons had, perhaps, been lost; of which, perhaps also, the original reasons had never been well worth preserving. The strong conviction, which, to the honour of human nature, subsists among so many of its scattered families, that there is in the living being that feels and reasons a true composition, an element that asserts its natural superiority above the rest, took, without much difficulty, the form of a supposition that the higher element was essentially removed from the sphere of change and decay; the easy and obvious analysis by which the bodily sensations, passions, and affections were detached from the power of contemplation and the originating principle of motion, would help to define and distinguish the opposite members of the combination; and when the conception had been thus cleared, the very misfortunes, infirmities, and diseases of the inferior element would heighten the contrast, and lead the mind to dwell with pleasurable pride upon that glorious principle for which, at length, no merely created origin would seem adequate to account. Men of reflexion and virtue, anxious to impress moral principles upon society, would look with favour upon everything which tended to exalt the rational principle above that of mere desire, and on which a scheme of moral discipline or purification could be so readily grafted.

Indeed it may be doubted whether the strangeness and improbability of this hypothesis of pre-existence among ourselves (omitting now the notion of absolute semipaternity), arises after all from grounds on which our philosophy has reason to congratulate itself highly. It may be questioned whether, if we examine ourselves candidly, we shall not discover, that the feeling of absolute extravagance with which it affects us, has its secret source in materialist or semi-materialist prejudices, and that we believe the thinking principle cannot have existed before its bodily apparatus,
because we strongly suspect that in some unknown way out of the bodily apparatus it arises. But however this may be, it is certain that with Plato the conviction was associated with a vast and pervading principle which extended through every department of nature and of thought. This principle was the priority of Mind to Body, both in order of dignity and in order of time; a principle which with him was not satisfied by the single admission of a divine pre-existence, but extended through every instance in which these natures could be compared. A very striking example of the manner in which he thus generalized the principle of the priority of Mind to Body is to be found in the well-known passage in the Tenth Book of his Laws, in which he proves the existence of divine agency. The argument employed really applies to every case of motion, and equally proves that every separate corporal system is but a mechanism moved by a spiritual essence anterior to itself. The universe is full of gods, and the human soul is, as it were, the god or demon of the human body. "The systems," says Plato, "which have originated impiety, have reversed the proper order of things by taking away the character of first principle from the primary cause of the generation and corruption of all beings, and setting before it that which exists only after it; thence arise their errors on the true nature of gods.... Scarcely one of these philosophers has truly known what the soul is, and what are its properties. They are all unaware that in every respect, and particularly with regard to origin, it truly is one of the first beings which has existed, that it has been prior to bodies, and has presided eminently over their various changes and combinations." "Have we not," he asks, "fully established that the soul is the first principle of generation and of motion, of corruption and of repose, in all beings past, present, and to come, since we have seen that it is the cause of every change, and every motion in all existing things? Is it not true that motion produced by a foreign cause in a substance where one perceives no self-moving essence—this motion being nothing else than the change of a body really inanimate—ought to be set in the second rank, and, as far as possible, below the first?—Certainly.—We have, then, spoken the exact truth when we said that the soul has existed before the body, that it possesses authority over it as being superior to it in rank  

2. [Legg. x. p. 891 f. Ed.]  
3. [I. 1. 896 a—897 b. Ed.]
and order of existence, and its natural governor. And just so, all that belongs to Soul must likewise be admitted to be prior to Body. Consequently, characters, manners, volitions, reasonings, true opinions, foresight, and memory, have existed before length, breadth, depth, and strength of bodies, the soul itself existing before bodies. It thence follows, too, that Soul is the principle of good and evil, of honesty and dishonesty, of just and unjust, and of all other contraries, if we but recognize it as the cause of all which exists. Must we not then allow," he continues, rising to his immediate subject, "that the Soul which dwells in all that moves, and governs its motions, rules also the heavens?" He then condenses his argument into one emphatic statement—"Soul governs, then, all which is in heaven, on earth, and in the sea, by motions which are its proper functions, and which we call will, attention, foresight, deliberation, judgment; and, whether true or false, joy, sadness, confidence, fear, aversion, love; and by other similar movements which are the first efficient causes, and which directing the motions of bodies, as so many secondary causes, produce in all things increase or diminution, composition or division, and the qualities which result from them, as heat, cold, weight, levity, hardness, softness, white, black, harsh, sweet, and bitter. Soul, which is a divinity, calling to its aid another divinity, intelligence, to govern these divers movements, governs, then, all things with wisdom, and conducts them to true felicity." In this remarkable passage, Soul appears to me to be regarded with the utmost possible degree of generality, as a first principle which, in all cases, preceded and presided over both bodily masses in general, and thence, the particular organizations with which in separate instances it became specially connected. It is here considered mainly, though not exclusively, as an active principle; the aspect in which, when its intellectual faculties are not directly specified, Plato most usually may be interpreted as regarding it.

This universality of Plato's views of the principle entitled Soul naturally led him to extensions which to us are not less startling than the theory of pre-existence itself. It may, I conceive, be collected from various expressions in his writings, that he considered the animating principle of the brute creation to be itself but a repressed and mutilated form of the same essence which in man shone forth in the fulness and brilliancy of reason. This supposition, as it flowed naturally from the enlarged conception of which we have just been treating, so it readily countenanced, and combined with, the doctrine of transmigration,
which conducted the same substantial essence through all varieties of expansion and limitation; with, however, the special provision noted in the Phaedrus, that the man might sink to the brute, but the brute which had not originally entered the human frame could never rise to that culminating point of earthly mind. The astonishing diversities of intelligence which are observable in the human species, and which seem to separate man from man almost as much as the lowest form of humanity is separated from the most sagacious of the inferior animals, probably gave appearances of plausibility to this doctrine, which in Plato's age was not unfamiliar to the Grecian mind. It peculiarly pleased the intellectual disposition of Plato to comprehend, as far as possible, every variety of phenomenon under the simplicity and unity of single general formulas; and to view the whole system of Nature as one vast mechanism subject to the immediate operation of mind, and solely constructed for its trial and display. Now this complicated evolution of mental energy was conceivable enough in two regions of creation; in the management of the human frame which was superintended by human spirits, and in the inanimate world which was in consummate harmony guided and governed by superior powers. But that intervening region which was constituted by the lower animals broke the unity of the conception, and seemed to defraud the mental essence of a large and interesting province of its empire. Plato might have conciliated the difficulty as Descartes did, by classing the brute creation with the purely mechanical; he preferred to see in it an inferior and crippled form of the one universal energy of Soul,—a form which was still more closely associated with the human development of the principle by often containing it in a mysterious state of transition. It has been, indeed, much doubted how far Plato in reality assented to these doctrines; and it is usual to speak of him as countenancing popular fictions for public benefit. I suspect, however, that these easy solutions are in a great measure gratuitous. It is not very manifest what public benefit was to be derived from this form of the doctrine of reward and punishment; nor can it be easily shewn on what principle Plato should descend to gross deception in order to aid the cause of truth. On the other hand,

4 [It is clear from more than one passage in the Dialogues, that though Plato thought he had proved the doctrine of the immortality of the Soul, he was not inclined to overrate the importance of the mythical representations with which in the Phaedo, Timaeus, and Tenth Book of the Republic, that doctrine is associated. One pregnant passage in the Phaedo seems to prove that he referred all such speculations to the eleboron μόνον ἱδία,—the category of probability,—of which he speaks in the Timaeus. "No man in his senses," he
though I confess the doctrine is very alien to our habits of speculation, I seem to myself to see in it much that might have harmonised with the spirit of the Platonic system, more especially when we remember that he received it as a venerable tradition of immemorial wisdom, countersigned by many of the names to which he was most accustomed to defer.

It must also be allowed that there is much in the hypothesis of pre-existence (at least) which might attract a speculator busied with the endeavour to reduce the moral system of the world under intelligible laws. The solution which it at once furnishes of the state and fortunes of each individual, as arising in some unknown but direct process from his own voluntary acts, though it throws, of course, no light on the ultimate question of the existence of moral evil (which it only removes a single step), does yet contribute to satisfy the mind as to the equity of that immediate manifestation of it, and of its physical attendants, which we unhappily witness. There is internally no greater improbability that the present may be the result of a former state now almost wholly forgotten, than that the present should be followed by a future form of existence in which, perhaps, or in some departments of which, the oblivion may be as complete. And if to that future state there are already discernible faint longings and impulses which to many men have seemed to involve a direct proof of its reality, hopes that will not be bounded by the grave, and desires that grasp eternity, others have found within them, it would seem, faint intimations scarcely less impressive of the past, as if the soul vibrated the echoes of a harmony not of this world. The greatest of living poets has told us, that such convictions seem to be a part, though a neglected part, of the heritage of our race:

Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,

Wordsworth’s Ode observes, “would dream of insisting that the description just given corresponds to the reality: but that, the soul having been shown to be immortal, this, or something like this, is true of individual souls and their habitations, I think reasonable in itself, and am disposed to risk the consequences of my belief (ὅπως αὐτήν κυριοτέρως αἱμορpheric στὰς ἔργα). Phæd. p. 114 D. Similar is the purport of a remark in the Gorgias, 527 A. “This” (description of the state of souls after death) “may seem to you a fable, an old woman’s tale. We might indeed be at liberty to despise it, as you do, if our researches could furnish us with a better and truer account: you see, however, that all the efforts of three of the wisest men in Greece, yourself, Polus, and Gorgias, have failed to prove that there is any other right life for man, than that which is conducive to his well-being in the next world, &c.” He evidently means to say, that the beliefs to which he alludes, though not susceptible of proof, are consistent with proved truths; and have that degree of probability which is sufficient, in modern phrase, to influence practice. “Gross deception” is out of the question.
Our Souls have sight of that immortal Sea,
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

And hence, he has dared to pronounce, in language worthy to give utterance to the thought of Plato, that

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The youth who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

The substance of this noble stanza, which Wordsworth has with exquisite delicacy and art connected with the innocence of childhood, you will find given at great length in various passages of the *Timaeus*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Phaedo*; but, of course, in a form more directly philosophical. And if it were permitted to venture, except as strict interpreter of my author, upon these seductive paths of conjecture, it might be observed that this supposition of pre-existence could be naturally connected with that most interesting fact of human nature, which all more or less experience, but minds of a pensive or imaginative cast especially,—the feeling of melancholy retrospect with which the past, and, above all, the extreme past of childhood, is recovered by the recollection, and the imaginary happiness with which the mind, in spite of its graver convictions, perpetually invests that period. A Platonist might say that this was but the natural tendency of the soul, which, haunted by dim recollections, vaguely stretches to its ante-natal state of perfect bliss; but, being unable to recover it, and, by an ordinary principle, remembering the emotion, where it cannot remember the cause, associates

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6 [Where however it is by no means “connected with the innocence of childhood.” The differences indeed between the Platonic and the Wordsworthian views of the doctrine are at least as great as their resemblances. What, we may ask, would have been the answer of the poet, if any one had recommended to him a course of Dialectic (under, let us say, Sir W. Hamilton) as the most efficient means of reviving his ante-natal intuitions? Ed.]
the happiness which should belong to that forgotten world with any intervening incident, or state, or period, that agrees with it in being past. And this association, he would add, will, of course, become more complete, and the illusion more perfectly deceptive, according as the period in the present life approximates more closely to the true object preceding it; childhood, therefore, will be the chosen subject of this melancholy pleasure. But I ought, perhaps, to apologize for detaining you with these excursions of fancy. If, on the whole, there be any truth in these natural hopes, and even these "shadowy recollections," and if it be a certain fact that, at least within the compass of this life, we are discontented with the present, and incessantly strain after the past and the future, what shall we say but that the spirit of man gives clear intimations of its essential unfitness for the existing world, and would it even be too extravagant to imagine that these indications, pointing equally in both directions, seem to betoken a state to be the proper inheritance of the mind, which many, in every age since Plato's day, have dreamed of,—a state in which the soul, liberated to know Eternity its own, should find both Past and Future blended and lost in one unalterable Now?

Thoughts of this kind in boundless variety, doubtless, traversed the mind of the great Idealist; and we are not to suppose that, if he has given us the seeds of much reflection, he has preserved among his writings all the fruit they bore in his own fertile intelligence. But one argument there is, upon which he has peculiarly and frequently insisted, and which lies near the root of his entire philosophy. You are, of course, aware that I allude to the doctrine of "Reminiscence;" the doctrine that the mind brought with it from a previous state, and now possessed by the way of memory, all those relations, in their ultimate and simplest form, which it here applies to sensible objects, or which, as Plato held, it recovers on occasion of sensible objects.

In the dialogue entitled Meno, Socrates is represented as entering into a very elaborate proof of this doctrine by experimental investigation. He shews, what indeed can—

"[Meno, p. 81, B—85 C. This experiment upon the slave can hardly be considered crucial. The doctrine of διάσωμα is again affirmed in the Phaedo, p. 72 B, a passage to be understood as referring to the conversation in the Meno. The brilliant exposition of the same theory in the Phaedrus, has already been presented to the reader. Metaphysically considered, the theory nearly answers to the Kantian doctrine of Ideas or Forms, which exist potentially in the reason antecedently to experience, but are brought into actual consciousness by experience and simultaneously with it. To this extent, the doctrine of reminiscence appeared to Plato demonstrably certain; but there is no proof that he regarded the physical hypothesis of pre-existence with which
not be denied, that by a series of well-adapted interrogatories, a person ignorant until the period of the interview, may be brought to recognize and admit rational truths. These truths are perceived by the native power of the mind, they may be said then to lie concealed in the mind since they are potentially contained in its faculties:—and if all knowledge must be given from some exterior cause, and the possession of these unexercised apprehensions may be called a dormant knowledge, we may then speak of a knowledge bestowed and possessed before (at any given period) it is brought into the sphere of positive consciousness,—but to gain a knowledge before possessed is nothing else than Remembrance. If this were Plato's meaning, the doctrine would amount to nothing more than a vivid statement in a figurative form, of the fact that in the present state, the faculties of the human mind become a source of ideas to themselves which yet have a real truth independent of the mind's apprehension of them. And, perhaps, if we examine the point more closely, we may be induced to believe that this important principle was the essential thought which Plato conveyed by the theory of reminiscence;—the principle in short which is expressed in Leibnitz's well-known exception,—"nihil est in intellectu quod non prius in sensu—nisi ipsa intellectus."

An important caution, however, must here be suggested. We are not, as too many of Plato's critics are wont to do, to transgress his own express provisions, and carry the forms of sense into the sphere of simple reason. The state to which Socrates is made to refer as being the original of these reminiscences, cannot be (by the very nature of the case) any state but that first and elementary condition of the soul in which alone it stood in direct contact with the ideas of beauty, truth, goodness, equality, and the rest. If then we look upon the soul of man solely in its rational element, we shall find it so disposed by its very constitution as to answer to certain ideas which, lying at the basis of all particular perceived relations, are to us the fundamental truths of the universe. This is the divinest element of the soul, it may, then, even on that ground, be fairly termed its first. But there is a reason more natural and obvious still. Plato, we saw, conceives it coeternal with its ideal objects in an ultimate unity. Moreover, we know that the

he connects it, as more than a probable belief: such at least seems to have been his feeling when he composed the Meno. See p. 86 b: τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλα ὅτι ἐν φάνη ὑπὲρ τοῦ λόγου διαχηρωμένη. ὃς ἐν τῷ, κ.τ.λ.

In the Phaedrus he affirms with greater apparent confidence an antecedent immortality: but here we must allow for the mythical form in which the belief is presented. Ed.]
soul, likewise, as an active principle, claims an existence extrinsic to the sphere of time; and this active principle, itself eternal, but now consciously developed in the contingent world of time, may be considered as a connective medium which preserves the identity of the soul under these two opposite aspects; a consideration (by the way) which might lead us to imagine that the ὀυσία, or intermediate substance, in the composition of soul is no other than the active energy. But to our subject. When, now, in presence of sensible objects, and merely on occasion of their presence, relations are apprehended which, in their last analysis, resolve into certain fundamental ideas of the Reason, the conscious understanding refers for these its ideas to the Reason, receives them from the Reason, which itself in the order of nature possessed them first,—that is, the Soul in the sensible and contingent world receives what the Soul possesses in the eternal world, which latter, by the most natural of figures, is conceived prior to the former. It is no violent metaphor to call this reminiscence.

I do not assert that this is the precise explanation which Plato would have given of his theory; and yet it is not impossible that to his chosen friends and disciples many highly-coloured depictions of this kind were by himself translated into their more abstract significancies*. The doctrine of Reminiscences, which thus interpreted is purely metaphysical, naturally attached itself to the popular notion of pre-existence; and Plato would be inclined to leave it under that veil. But whatever he supposed the fortunes of the soul in the pre-existent state, and in whatever degree Plato favoured the ordinary conception of a conscious personal existence, it must be remembered that this theory of Reminiscence, or any other of a similar ideal description, must altogether be referred to the rational element of the soul and to it alone. It, therefore, proves only the immortality of the rational element; that is, it proves that this element of soul furnishing to the conscious

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* [On this sense of οὐσία see note 1. to Lect. II. of this 3rd Series. ED.]
* The most characteristic description of the Platonic speculative system might perhaps be,—that it translated Pythagorism into its metaphysical corollaries.
* [It is interesting to compare the views of a more modern thinker upon this subject:

"Mens humana non potest cum corpore destri, sed ejus aliquis remanet, quod aeternum est...Est hae idea que corporis essentiam sub specie eternitatis exprimit, certus cogitandi modus qui ad mentis aeternitatem pertinent, quique necessario aeternus est. Nec tamen fieri potest, ut recordemur nos ante corpus exstisisse, quandoquidem nec in corpore ulla ejus vestigia dari, nec aeternitas tempore definiri, nec illam ad tempus relationem habere potest. At nihil minus sentimus experimurque, nos aeternos esse," seqq. Spinoza, Ethices Pars v. Prop. xxii. Schol. ED.]
mind conceptions of the immutable and eternal, which conceptions suppose their corresponding objects, and are with them blended in unchangeable unity,—it is itself eternal. Hence the argument in the *Meno* concludes with the words, "If then truth be perpetually in our soul, that soul is immortal."

But even though it were granted that Plato would not have exactly thus explained himself, it may be allowable to say, that there may exist points upon which we understand Plato's teaching better than himself. This is high praise, but not of ourselves—of him. It supposes that there may be principles involved in his depth of view which even he himself never completely sounded; that by a kind of inspiration he may have caught truths which were too vast for his own intelligence, or for any intelligence belonging to his position and period in the history of metaphysical inquiry. But though I state this as possible, and as justifying a bolder and more enlarged method of criticism than, perhaps, is ordinary among readers of Plato, I confess I do not think it very likely. On the contrary, I have little doubt, that the logical views which I have attempted to sketch, or views akin to them, were really the principal foundations of the Platonic psychology, and I would thus venture to divide the entire subject of this system of the soul into two regions, which in your speculations on the views of Plato it may be well to keep distinct. One of these includes the purely metaphysical doctrines which concern the nature and relation of knowledge to the reality of things, and which lose themselves at length in the ineffable unity of the Last Principle of Being, the mysterious τὸ ἑὐ;—and of these doctrines we have no reason to doubt that Plato had through his own path of dialectics arrived at certainty; these, doubtless, were the favourite subjects of those more private esoteric meditations in which he indulged with the few who were adapted to apprehend them. The other division of the Platonic system of the Soul embraced all those more popular and accessible doctrines of pre-existence, transmigration, and recompense, which we may fairly conclude that Plato thought to a high degree probable, but to which he never assigns demonstrative certainty, and on which, it is possible, his degree of belief often varied. It was natural that the latter division should be most insisted on in the more public discussions of the master; and it was not difficult at any time (as in this very instance of the theory of Reminiscence) to slip the embroidered veil of figurative depiction, and admit the more thoughtful student to the sanctuary within.
Plato having thus, by the spirit of his whole philosophy, restricted essential immortality, essential eternity, to the purely rational and active elements of the soul, and being habituated, with a constancy and decisiveness far rarer, I suspect, in our times than in his writings, to regard these as wholly separable from the body,—he, with perfect consistency, represents the connexion of such an essence with the body as a misfortune and an imprisonment. The best service the bodily organs can do is (as in the case of vision and hearing), to suggest a state in which we may be altogether independent of their aid. In the Timaeus he describes, carrying on his nomenclature of circles of sameness and difference, these circles as plunged into a river of Body;—as not allowing themselves to be hurried away by the current, and yet as unable to guide it; as distracted by the violent agitation of sensible impulse, their harmonious regularity destroyed, their appointed paths distorted. Hence the soul, when first united to a mortal body, is without intelligence. But according as the current of bodily alimentation and enlargement decreases, the circles of the soul, gaining gradual tranquillity, assume their proper course, govern their motions in accordance with their kindred circles of the universal system, are no longer deceived about the variable and the invariable, and generate true Wisdom. Education does more still; philosophy most of all. For this he appeals even to experience. “The soul,” he affirms, “exerts its reasoning faculties” (which are its eminent characteristics) “best when disturbed by no bodily connexion, neither by hearing, sight, pleasure, nor pain, but when it exists self-centered, eminently itself, discharging all thought of body, neither giving to it nor taking from it, but reaching out after real being.” In all its influences this base companion, degrades the state and dignity of the soul. It alone brings us those impressions which seduce the mighty stranger within us from its proper occupation. It is the sole cause of wars, seditions, conflicts: and all experience ascertains to us the profound truth, “either that we never can possess knowledge, or that after death alone we are to expect it.” Hence, Philosophy itself is distinctly defined, the meditation and discipline of death; and all its functions in this state resolved into the one maxim of a death practical and perpetual.

8 [Tim. p. 43 A: τὰ δὲ τὴν ὀμαντὸν ψυχὴν περιβάλλων ἄνθρωπον (ὁ Θεός) εἰς ἐκπορευθέντος σώμα καὶ ἐκπορευθεῖσαν. αὐτὸ δὲ εἰς πάντας κυρὶος πολλοί ὀδὸν ἐκπορεύσαις οὖν ἐκπορευθέντος, βιοῦ δὲ ἀφόρομα καὶ ἐφόροι, κ.τ.λ. Επ.]  
10 [Phaedo, p. 65 C. Επ.]
11 [Ib. 66 C; καὶ γὰρ πολέμου καὶ στάσεις καὶ μάχαις οὖν ἅλλο παρῆκεν ἤτο σῶμα καὶ αἱ τουτοῦ ἐπιθυμίαι. Επ.]  
12 [μελέτη θεαμάτων. Ιβ. 81 Α. Επ.]
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That this view, which undoubtedly contains a large measure of truth, is founded on a contemplation of man too extensive, and therefore absolutely imperfect; that it must consequently be received with reservation; that it subsequently led to gross and extravagant error;—are considerations which belong to another part of the subject. The topic to which at present this maxim of the philosophic death, arising out of the Platonic Psychology, conducts us, is that in illustration of which Plato himself employed it in the best known of all his writings, his famous dialogue upon the Immortality of the Soul.

The arguments which Plato used, and which he attributes (many of them, doubtless, with truth) to his illustrious master, on the eve of his death, may be conveniently distributed into those which involve a pre-existent, or even eternal duration to the soul, and those which contend for only its future perpetuation without any immediate or direct reference to its origin antecedent to the present mode of its existence. Of the former class I have in a great measure treated already. The doctrine of Reminiscence arising out of the conceptions which we possess of ideas not assignable to any sensible origin; the argument derived from the independent power of self-motion which Plato conceives equally irreducible to any temporal origination; these I have brought before you as essential elements of the Platonic psychology. A form of reasoning not very dissimilar to the latter makes the final argument of the Phaedo; although it is not certain whether Plato meant it to conclude with equal cogency for the eternity as for the futurity of the living state. All principles of being are essentially causative; and bring with them their inseparable results—the very attributes or characters of their existence. Now it is the nature of a principle to exclude its contrary, to subsist unaffected by any opposite principle, and independent of it. The first informations of our reason produce this; and Plato enters into great minuteness of example to illustrate the point. And if there be any thing so connected with a principle that where the principle is, there must be likewise its associates, it is equally certain that the principle will never tolerate the direct opposite of that associate nature. Now, as fire is the principle of heat, as fever is the principle of disease, as unity is the principle of odd numbers,—even so is the soul the principle of life. Wherever soul is, there also must be life as its necessary attendant; it therefore excludes death, it is deathless, and if deathless indestructible.

For if it be conceded, that the soul, as principle of life, is safe from that cause (whatever it be) which produces the phenomena of death, no one will deny its nature to be imperishable. The manner in which the immortal is here connected with the imperishable may remind you of the train of Bp. Butler’s argument:—“If it would be in a manner certain that we should survive death, provided it were certain that death would not be our destruction, it must be highly probable that we shall survive it, if there be no ground to think that death will be our destruction.” And the view that follows, in which it is urged that “we know not what death is in itself, but only some of its effects,” is not dissimilar to the opposition Plato introduces between life and death as considered in their unknown causes or principles.

To such arguments as these, which seem to conclude equally for the duration of the soul both previously and subsequently to the present state, may be added those which are, without any very definite statement of their scope, drawn from what Plato calls the divinity of the soul, whether in its substantial being or in its faculties: a form of expression which, as you know, is constantly employed by Cicero likewise. It seems to have arisen from the general conviction, that while all things were durable in proportion to their perfection, while the best things in nature, the characteristics which we almost instinctively attribute to Deity, were in that very attribution regarded as incapable of mutation or decay, it would be strange indeed, if the soul itself which gave to man the notions of these enduring perfections, were itself destined to a transitory and evanescent existence.

To pass from these, to arguments more immediately directed to convince of the continuance of future existence. With his usual spirit of comprehensive generalization, Plato argues this matter from the principle of contrary reproduction. The System of the world, he reasons, is one of incessant change, in which opposites constantly generate their opposites. Were it not so, all the most precious attributes of existence would be lost in their contrarics, and the order of the world suspended. More particularly is this observable in the animal system, in which all things seem to succeed in these perpetual cycles. Hunger and fulness, sleeping and waking, rest and motion, strength and weariness, are ordained to follow each other, and without such a disposition of consecutive states the universe would exchange its incessant activity for a dull and lifeless

14 [Phaedo, p. 70 C—72 E. Ed.]
monotony. So, doubtless, it is with the states which we call life and death; life at length gives way to death, death in its turn must bring forth life,—the eternal Soul remaining unaltered amid the succession of these superficial mutations.

With greater force Plato insists upon the incomposite nature of Soul. Its close alliance with those beings which are themselves changeless and eternal, proves the true simplicity of its essence, for that which is absolutely immutable is also perfectly indivisible. If the True, and the Beautiful, and the Good, have any real existence in the Universe, it is absurd to imagine that these ultimate essences are capable of diiscernment, and surely nothing less can be said for that as mysterious essence, which alone in this earth is capacitated to recognize them. Its separation from all sensible perceptibility is another circumstance in which it resembles these everlasting natures. And all experience of the operations of the Soul itself confirms these views, for, as Plato alleges, it is never perfectly at rest unless when engaged upon these self-existent and immutable objects of reason. Its obvious prerogative of command, and the as obvious function of the bodily adjunct to obey, further insinuate a being wholly exalted above that inferior nature in which alone we can directly detect the successful assault of the principle of death.

Against such reasonings as these, however, one of the earliest forms of materialism erected itself. It was urged that the soul was, after all, analogous to the harmony of a lyre, the well-proportioned result of the bodily organization. This, too, appeared to possess some of the characters ascribed to the soul; it seemed to be simple and attenuated almost above sensible existence, in a great measure apprehended only by the understanding which perceives the proportion of harmonized sounds. To this objection Plato answers, not, perhaps, with as much psychological exactness as one could wish; for it plainly includes the essence of all materialistic theories. He replies, in the first place, by referring to the proof already given of the pre-existence of the soul. He urges again, that the soul controls the body and its desires, instead of being, as harmony, a simple result. He argues that vice, on this supposition, could only be discord, and that as the harmony would not suffer this, all souls must, on the hypothesis, be placed on a perfect equality of virtue, which contradicts all experience. It is pretty evident that the more subtle materialism of subsequent times would not have been sent away satisfied with such arguments as these. The pre-existence, in any sense

18 [Phaed. p. 78 B—79 E. Ed.]
16 [Ib. p. 91 D, fol. Ed.]
of it, would be rejected as a fantastic hypothesis: and the
oppositions between the soul and body would be referred
to the same principles as the oppositions between even
bodily desires themselves. It would appear, however, that
the doctrine of harmony was not itself urged upon large
and general grounds; and we know that one of the chief
patrons of it was himself a musician. But Plato's usual
promptitude at generalization might have led us to expect
that he would himself have widened the grounds of the
objection, and taken in its entire compass: more especially
as the true answer lay within the reach of his ordinary field
of thought,—the answer that denies any analogy whatever
to exist between a combination of sounds affecting the
human ear (for such, and no more, is "harmony") and that
single self-conscious being which each man calls himself—
which is known by a different evidence, and, properly con-
sidered, bears no one point of similarity to the sensitive
impression with which it is compared. By thus reducing
harmony from its vague sense to its only true significance,
it results, that the pretended analogy really amounts to
a comparison instituted between the mind itself on the one
hand, and a certain state or modification of it on the other,
and that the argument concludes, that because the remote
cause of the one effect is a certain organization of material
substances, entitled a musical instrument, therefore, the
immediate cause of the other effect, which is in every re-
spect unlike the former, must be a certain material organi-
zation likewise.

But the spirit of the Platonic investigation is not very
favourable to this kind of argument, for which, perhaps,
we of these latter times are indebted mainly to our ad-
vances in physiological science. What Plato most insists
on, as the necessary corollary to all his teaching, is, the
possession by the mind of a class of ideas which themselves
bespeak an origin immeasurably above body. It is in the
furniture of the mind and its functions, rather than in its
physiological aspect, that he sees stamped its essential
stability. No modification of matter, however refined, how-
ever elaborated, can give to man the idea of the Absolute,
Necessary, and Eternal: no modification of matter can be
conceived the free and voluntary originator of motion.
The brain may receive impressions as a vegetable receives
air and light; the brain may be conscious of the impres-
sions, and experience pleasure and pain; the brain may
pass through a vast variety of passive states differing from
each other, and even in the present obscurely remember
the past; but to know that it has within it the real laws
of the universe,—principles which it knows would subsist
for ever, though every conscious soul ceased to exist, though none below God Himself ever had existed,—by a free choice to deliberate, determine, and act,—these are powers, which, if man possess, man must infallibly be more than a chemical compound. That he does possess them, it was the direct or indirect object of all Platonism to establish: and, above all, that he possesses them in their loftiest form, when the one class becomes the absolute truths of immutable morality, and the other becomes the exercise of freedom in the achievement of virtue. To this last division of our subject, the Ethical System of Plato, I shall invite your attention on our next day of meeting.
LECTURE V.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. NO. XI.

GENTLEMEN,

The Platonic system of the nature of Soul in general, and specially of the soul of man, conducts us, by an easy transition, to his views of moral rights and duties. The doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, which was the last subject of our consideration, was, indeed, by Plato himself viewed as, in some respects, resting on a moral foundation; and to the brief sketch which I offered you, of the arguments by which he persuaded himself of the great fact of an existence perpetuated in the life to come, must be subjoined the very remarkable reasoning by which, in the tenth Book of the Politeia, he argues, that any living essence, to be destroyed at all, must be destroyed by some appropriate malady; that injustice is the main disease of the soul; that experience proves this worst of spiritual maladies unable to make it cease to exist; and that from this undeniable fact we may conclude that nothing else can. This assumption of the hostility of injustice to the very nature of the divine principle in man is certainly characteristic of the exalted tone of the Platonic morality; but the proposition will appear less surprising when we remember that the δικαιοσύνη of this philosophy is a term of rather more comprehensive signification than the corresponding "justice" of our ordinary language; that it less refers to the external sum cuique tribuere, than to a certain perfect proportionality of all the internal elements of the soul itself, from which, of course, the former, with many other excellent consequences, would flow. This application of the word we preserve when we speak of the "justness" of proportions, or the "justness" of critical taste, usually reserving "justice" to express the moral virtue of equity. In this sense, then, it no longer appears altogether out of

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1 [p. 608 E, fol. Ed.]
2 ομιλεῖ γὰρ ἄριστα μὴ λάκων ἢ γὰρ οἴκελα πονηρα καὶ τὸ οἰκεῖον κακῶς ἀντικείμενο και ἀποκλίνει ψυχής, σχεδόν τὸ γε τὸ ἑαυτῷ ἐλέησι τεταγμένον καθὼς ψυχής ἢ τι ἄλλο ἀποκλίνει πλὴν ἢ τὸ τέτακτα . . . οὐκέρ οπότε μὴ μὴ ἢ ἃν ἀποκλίνει κακῶς, μὴ τὸ οἰκεῖον μὴ τὸ ἀλλοτρίον, δῆλον οτι ἀναγίησιν ἐστὶν ὅτι οἶνος, et οὐ ἂν ὅτι, ἀδάμπτως. Ἱμ. ὁτὲ ξ. Ed.]
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analogue experience to conjecture, that if the soul of man were at all capable of destruction, it could not survive the confusion of all its internal relations. But these considerations may appear plainer as we advance.

The connexion of ethics with psychology, in Plato's estimate, also arises out of the triple distribution of the soul, as it manifests itself in the body, into the rational and immortal, the irascible, and the concupiscible, elements: which latter two terms, belonging to the scholastic vocabulary, were, in Plato, the θυμοειδές and the ἐπιθυμητικόν. The rational element sprang from the formative.—at least the combinative, power of the supreme Creator; the inferior elements were framed by those same junior deities to whom He had committed the composition of the body. As the ethical, and even the political, views of Plato rest on this threefold distinction, itself a psychological fact, it may be well to subjoin his own account of it. "All things," he tells us, were at first without order; God alone originated, in each and all, harmonizing proportions as far as possible, for at that period none of them possessed any the least; nor could they, with any propriety, receive the names they now hold,—fire, water, or any other such element. The Deity began by fixing all bodies, then proceeded to compose the universe, of which He made a single animated being, which comprehends within itself all other animated beings, mortal or immortal. He Himself formed the divine, and He delivered over to His celestial offspring the task of forming the mortal. These subordinate deities, copying the example of their Parent, and receiving from his hands the immortal principle of the human soul, fashioned, subsequent to this, the mortal body, which they consigned to the soul as its vehicle, and in which they placed another kind of soul, mortal, the seat of violent and fatal affections;—first of all, pleasure, the too charming attraction to evil; then pain, the cowardly fugitive from good; boldness and fear, senseless counsellors; unrelenting anger; hope, easily deceived by unreasoning sensibility and unscrupulous love. Mingling these under laws of necessity, they framed the mortal kind; but, to avoid defiling the divine element more than was absolutely necessary, they assigned to the mortal part a separate portion of the frame, and set between the head and chest a kind of isthmus to divide them. It was in the trunk of the body that they lodged the mortal principle; and as there were, even in this mortal principle, a better and a worse portion, they divided the interior of the frame, as we separate the apartments of the men and

* [Timæus, p. 61 b, fol.]
women in our houses, and fixed the diaphragm as the partition. Nearer to the head, between the neck and diaphragm, they placed the manly and courageous division of the soul, prompt to war,—in order that, obedient to reason, and in concert with it, it may subdue the rebellion of passion and desire, when these refuse, of their own accord, to obey the commands that issue from the high citadel of reason... The division of mere alimentation was placed beneath the diaphragm, the stall or manger of the body, purposely placed as far as possible from the locality of presiding reason." This scheme of the parts of the human soul, which, whether the anatomical details be accepted or not, has itself sufficient foundation in experience, supports much of the Platonic system of moral self-government, and must, therefore, be constantly kept in mind. There is nothing very peculiar about it, except, perhaps, the special favour with which Plato views the ὑποστήριγμα, or resolute division of the mortal soul; a favour which, indeed, rises into making its proper energies, when under the government of supreme reason, themselves the subject of one of the four virtues characteristic of the perfect man.

But to gain a just conception of the moral system of Plato, as distinguished from that of other teachers, we must rise into a region more peculiarly his own.

Nowhere more than in attempting some limited account of this last section of the general subject, do we feel how illusive are the ordinary heads of division under which this (with other philosophies) is arranged for didactic delivery. Although the triple distribution of Logic, Physics, and Ethics, is by Laertius attributed to Plato, I doubt much whether his philosophy can be most satisfactorily treated by adhering to that division, which I have followed in these sketches rather in conformity with ordinary usage, than from any fixed conviction of its propriety or utility. In Plato the entire mass of philosophical topics is so closely interlaced, everything so truly at once depends on and supports everything, that the division of a frame, thus animated with a single vitality, can scarcely be effected without rending the ligatures, and dislocating the joints, and dissevering parts that combine in a common function. Platonism is, perhaps, less a definite theory than a "way of thinking," and the same elementary thoughts appear in the physical, the logical, the ethical views of this master. The only difficulty is to grasp these fundamental conceptions, to bring the mind into the same attitude in which he habitually held it, and the details of any separate branch might almost be predicted.

In speaking of the Ethics of Plato, if we use the word
in a large sense, we might say that his entire labours were subordinate to ethical purposes. Never was a philosopher so speculative with so practical an object. But in these speculations you will find very little answering to the theoretical ethics of modern times. Whether from the dialogic form itself, or from the absence of definite controversy upon them, you will not discover in Plato distinct and guarded answers to those questions which make the staple of our later treatises,—the nature of the moral principle as a state or function of the mind, and the precise criterion or rule of moral rectitude. To both these interrogatories, indeed, general answers might be collected, but it is by such a collection alone they could be obtained. And, therefore, those readers who come to Plato from the exclusive perusal of the analytic disquisitions of our own age are likely to be much disappointed,—to find much taken for granted which scepticism has since questioned, and much omitted which has since been regarded as essential. And yet it may, perhaps, be found by such readers that if, in a patient spirit of candid allowance, entering into different times which required different remedies, they resign themselves to the collective influence of the whole philosophy of Plato, they shall discover that solutions tolerably accurate will develop themselves out of his writings, and, perhaps, that in some instances his replies are not distinct, only because they are involved in larger formulas; that he is busied in laying his foundations so deep, that his voice is scarcely articulate when it arrives on a level with the surface. For example, the question so perpetually discussed—the nature of the moral approbation—was, with Plato, a mere corollary from his views of the supersensible origin of the rational element of soul; he would not have dreamed of degrading the immutable idea of virtue, with its appended notions of right and obligation, by referring them to any inferior region. And as to that other subject of controversy which regards the rule of duty, Plato descended from the elevation of his praxis of philosophical perfection, when he bade his fellow-citizens be brave, and temperate, and pious, and just. These notions of the immutability of ideal virtue, and the duty of constant effort to gain it, thereby liberating the soul in even the bondage of the body, and preparing it to meet its kindred essences hereafter, are omnipresent in the Platonic philosophy; and if they answer the problems of modern disputation, they do so on principles which, whether right or wrong, transcend the problems themselves, and place us in a region where we no longer remember their existence.

The whole philosophy, then, of Plato, is one vast scheme
of moral discipline, directed to the purification of the rational element in man; and its fundamental principle is the aspiration after perfection,—such perfection as competes to an unbodied spirit. Dialectics, physics, the science of mutual duties, are all but ancillary to this last and loftiest object of man; it is their relation to it which alone gives them a place in "philosophy," and, deprived (as so often by sophistical traders in knowledge) of that relation, they sink into empty counterfeits, or tricks of mechanical art. Without this idea, perpetually preserved, you will read Plato in vain; the clue of the labyrinth will have been lost; the luminary that sheds impartial light on every object will have disappeared. It is this presiding object which still dignifies the minutest subtleties of his dialectics; they are parts of the general discipline for the apprehension of ideas perfect and changeless; it is this which gives interest to discussions, apparently worthless, on the pompous follies of the time; they serve to contrast the pretended wisdom of the popular schools with the only true and permanent wisdom which he professed to explain and uphold. Man is made for the immutable; this world in all, even of its best and happiest devices, is essentially the sphere of the fleeting and the variable: everything, then, which would lead the diviner element to content itself with these transient apparitions, whether it be the rhetoric of the sophist or the poetry of the more accomplished artist, is but an ingenious illusion, and dangerous in proportion to the strength of its treacherous fascinations.

But, that we may better judge of the execution, let us observe the circumstances that regulated the design of Plato.

The design of Platonic philosophy, then, in this its moral, which is its principal, aspect, was nothing less than to supply its age with a complete system of human life. The want was manifest and alarming, and it had already called out the detached but powerful efforts of Plato's illustrious and martyred master. But Socrates was formed only to commence the work; it is his highest merit that he did commence it. To do more his very excellencies forbade. Sagacious, practical, fearless, he succeeded in revolutionizing the literary mind of Athens, but the very resoluteness and sincerity of his nature laid him open to assault, alarmed the vigilance of the public corruptors, and lighted their revenge to its object. But in another respect Socrates, perhaps, was hardly fitted to accomplish the entire task which the time demanded. With great force of ideas, he probably valued little the regularity of system; and the regularity of system is often required as well to assist the feeble combinations of inferior minds, as, by its imposing
majesty of aspect, to awe down opposition. That, then, which Socrates had begun, his greatest pupil undertook to complete, in the structure of a vast and symmetrical system which should at once provide a reply to the assailants of the reality of moral distinctions in all their varieties; should give to its defenders the means of allying it with all the advances of human science, and preserving its eminence unchanged; should supply appropriate nutriment to every faculty and disposition of the human soul; and should insinuate the principles of unchangeable truth, in such a form as to evade that opposition of interested adversaries which had already proved so fatal to Socrates.

Had there existed at this time a public establishment of religion, claiming and proving a divine origin, and extending its influence over every rank and division of society, to elevate, to purify, and to strengthen, this vast enterprise would, of course, have been, in many respects, superfluous; and though the powers of Plato would still have found salutary occupation in deepening and securing the metaphysical basis of morality, I persuade myself that none would have been readier than this majestic mind to ally itself, in all points of belief and practice, with such a religion, and to acknowledge that its noblest and happiest exertions were those devoted to appreciating and diffusing it. But, as Greece was then circumstanced, religion was itself to be numbered among the enemies of truth; and yet, in all that monstrous mass of fiction, there lay some scattered elements of reality, nor could the entire be supplanted without, perhaps, greater danger than it brought. The design of the Platonic system was adapted to this state of things with great skill. In the last Lecture I observed, that it consisted of two forms of teaching very easily distinguishable. The more popular formed the vestibule to the profounder, and, for those who could pass no farther than the vestibule, it supplied food for the imagination of a far superior quality to that furnished by any part of the degrading superstition of the state. But it is when we look at the entire, and when we thus place ourselves in the position of Plato's more gifted auditors, that we gain some conception of the completeness and grandeur of his plan. We then see in it nothing less than a vast and proportioned system of metaphysical, moral, and theological principles, designed to supersede, silently but effectively, the whole mass of the public superstitions, supplying the place of every rejected folly by some counterpart of forcible doctrine, and building up at the side of each gaudy edifice of vicious fancy some impressive tenet, decorated (for otherwise all were fruitless) with no less richness of imagination,
but imperceptibly winning the spectator to penetrate into its inner chambers, and there discover the precious reality of moral truth. It is hence that Plato occasionally talks of the pursuit of philosophy under his auspices as the initiation to "mysteries," and borrows, to represent the course and result of the discipline he recommends, all the expressive phraseology of these awful observances. And thus this singular system, adapting itself with equal accuracy to the reason and the imagination, at the same time that it deals with the darkest questions of metaphysics, constructs, by a parallel operation, a kind of philosophical mythology, and solders the whole fast to the very heart of Greece and of the age, by adopting the more innocent stories of the popular belief among its occasional decorations. By degrees, as the student became more and more habituated to thought, the change grew more complete; and, as Olympus and its vulgar wonders melted away, a new heaven came in its place,—no other than that *ideal world* which Plato has purposely brightened with the most ethereal colouring of fancy, that the transformation might become more insensible. The "gods" slowly descend into the humble ministers of a Supreme Intelligence, holding their very immortality at his will; and the purified mind of the disciple at length finds itself alone in a world solitary and eternal,—around him, the immutable forms of the good, the just, the fair,—and over all, the expanded arms of infinite power and infinite intelligence.

It was thus that the calm, comprehensive, all-conciliating mind of Plato conceived a system adequate to all the wants of the soul of man, and by its very nature susceptible of indefinite expansion, without losing the proportion of its parts. It was, of course, as every philosophical system, limited in its efficiency to the minds of the cultivated and reflective; but Plato knew, that if these were gained, the result would be more or less discernible in every corner of society. He could as little conceive as rival that wondrous system, which, sublimer than his own, is yet simple enough for the thoughts and the tears of childhood,—which awes the contemplation of sages, and regulates the morality of the cottage hearth: but we are not to expect in the philosopher the inspiration also of the prophet.

It was necessary to enter into these considerations of the position of Plato, as the great architect upon the Socratic foundation, in order to approach, with due pre-

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* [As in *Phaedr.* 250 C, where the entire phraseology is borrowed from the "Mysteries." But I am not aware of any passage in which Plato represents himself as the mystagogue, except the evidently sportive one in *Theat.* 156 A. Ed.]
paration, his theory of human life. When, satisfied of the importance and truth of the moral teaching of Socrates, the pupil proceeded to examine into the speculative principles on which, in systematic exposition, it should be founded, he saw nothing complete in the theoretic philosophy of his day, but the greatest dignity and the largest capabilities of improvement in that of the Pythagoreans. It has been the ceaseless burden of the anti-Platonists,—from Xenophon, who sneers at the τερατώδης σοφία of Pythagoras, to Brucker (the worst section in which six quartos is that on Plato),—that the philosopher alloyed the simplicity of Socrates with these heterogeneous combinations from the Italic school. I confess I never could understand what these objectors mean. The maxims of Socrates, admirable and pregnant and right-minded as they were, and forming the true elements of a great system, were not a system, if by that term be meant a strict concatenation of deductions from established principles, divided under distinct heads, embracing all parts of their subject, and fortified against objections. To frame a system it was absolutely necessary to transcend the teaching of Socrates; and they who censure Plato for having attempted to carry that teaching back into its metaphysical principles (in the spirit of Italicism), might nearly as well censure Clarke or Bishop Butler for not having been content with the profound but unconnected Pensées of Pascal. The System of Ideas, the great characteristic of Platonism, is no fanciful or gratuitous addition; it is a bulwark based deep in reflective inquiry, and built, in its original purpose, to resist the pressing assaults of contemporary scepticism.

With that theory of ideas this part, as every part of Platonism, is directly connected. The "idea," in three different views of it, stands at the head of the three divisions of Platonism. The object of Platonic Dialectics is to obtain a right conception, and, as far as man may, a direct apprehension, of the idea; the object of Platonic Physics is to illustrate the results of the participation of the idea by the sensible universe; the object of the Platonic Ethics is to make the idea the subject of perpetual imitation. In the latter sense man constructs his life, as the Deity constructed the universe, after the exemplar of the ideal.

Let me once more recall to your recollection the nature of Ideas, which are thus the basis of the Philosophy we are studying. Everything which becomes the subject of sensible knowledge may be said to possess three elements, which I will call the ideal, the material, and the formal. The material element is the mere impression of object on

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6 [The pseudo-Xenophon, as stated in a previous note. Ed.]
organ, itself no direct subject of consciousness; the formal
is the mental element which receives, and, in receiving,
qualifies that organic impression; the ideal is the founda-
tion of the whole phenomenon in the world of reality,—
a foundation to which Plato, with great subtlety, assigned
as it were another foundation, The Good, thereby intimating
that the last principle of the existence of all that does
exist was to be found in the inconceivable Perfection: a
notion which we familiarize to ourselves by saying (what
we often do say without any reflection on the depth of
the thought itself!) that for all that exists there must
assuredly be, in the nature of things, some reason which
makes it better that it should exist, and exist thus, than
that it should not exist thus, or not exist at all. The
connexion between the Idea and the Phenomenon is by
Plato variously stated, and in the former course I en-
deavoured to collect and consider his expressions. The
most usual, you all know, are Imitation and Participation
(μεταφορά and μεθεξίς); words as unexceptionable, probably,
as any that could be found to denote the bond between the
Real and the Apparent,—the real cause, the apparent effect,
—the real law, the apparent instance,—but which have
sadly misled the ordinary critics of Platonism, who are
wont to devise an imaginary world of shadows, and, having
demolished this spectral region as a phantom, to exult in
dismissing for ever the ideal system of Plato. The great
character of the ideal essences, or original laws and reasons
of things, is their independence of the mental act of appre-
hending them, as well as of all other influences:—as the
external world discovered by sense is independent of that
discovery, so the intelligible world discovered by intellect
is independent of it, and of all things. In the discovery of
both we draw these conclusions of both.

The intelligible element, then, gives itself to the sen-
sible; and the intellect of man, the appointed interpreter
of the universe, refers the sensible to the intelligible. But,
from causes altogether mysterious, and which Plato treats
with haste and brevity, the sensible result is ever inferior
and disproportionate to the intelligible ground. You will
reply, that, according to the interpretation already given,
this is impossible; for that the effect can never be dis-
proportionate to its own cause, the result inadequate to
its own reason. But here we come upon one of those ar-
rangements of Platonism, which, even when the reason
hesitates to accept them, still endear it to every elevated
mind. Plato, well knowing this difficulty, aware that this
balance of inferiority,—this melancholy deficit in nature,—
must be accounted for, determined yet to do it in such
a manner as to save the ideal world unharmed. Accordingly, he ascribed it to that undefinable something, the substratum of the sensible, on the nature of which I have already at some length engaged you. It followed, that the more we could detach phenomena from their sensible existence, the more we could consider qualities as in themselves, and not as elements of the visible series, the more we should have brought them into that state in which we could consider them as images of eternal realities.

Such views as these obviously extended to every form of existence; the theory included all nature, from its vastest to its minutest constituents. But, though every phenomenon of nature might thus form a step from the sensible to the ideal, some objects there were which stood as steps far higher than the rest in this ladder of the philosophic contemplatist. For, if there be difference of rank in the ideal world itself,—if there be some laws of the Universal System that originate all the rest, and make, as it were, the very charter of its entire legislation,—assuredly there must be proportionate differences in the sensible embodiment; and the judicious aspirant after the true dignity of man will attach himself with anxious earnestness to these. In every object, that even feebly exhibits them, he will see the reflected light of eternity, and know the quivering beam through all its dimness and distortion; if many such objects meet his gaze, he will abstract the blessed quality from them all, and thus condense the light in his intellectual focus; and it may be that patient contemplation shall at length enable him to gain some conception of the splendour of the original luminary. And that which encourages such a hope is the perceived fact, that the most commanding ideas of the invisible world do actually reveal themselves in this world in a form partially intelligible. For example, the qualities of sense, whiteness, sweetness, odours, sounds,—though they, doubtless, are finally referrible to ideal originals,—can at best bear but a faint analogy to their intelligibles; but it is not so with proportions, with mathematical regulations,—with first principles, theἀναρχία of the sciences,—above all, it is not so with moral virtues. Here, though still unable to behold except in particular manifestation, an easy effort of abstraction brings us almost within reach of the ideas themselves, and we seem to become conscious of the fact, that we have but to escape the body, and with it the world of sense, to stand in the simplicity of pure rational natures in front of the awful originals.

But when we inquire what it is, in the Platonic sense, thus to behold an idea, we cannot easily obtain a satisfactory answer. The question might be replied to in two
ways. 1st, It might be said that the disembodied rational faculty can and shall apprehend, by a succession of generalizations, the laws of the Universal System more and more widely unfolded; perceiving in each that perfection of wisdom which gives it the highest moral necessity. The idea of virtue, or rather the various forms of the one ultimate idea, may thus expand into a vastness of glory now altogether inconceivable, and so amplify for ever, itself indeed immutable, but the reason unconsciously widening in capacity. This presents a true and noble sense; nor, indeed, can any one among ourselves, who has learned to hunger and thirst after knowledge, as well as "righteousness," conceive, that for a little temporary endurance this infinite perspective of attainment is almost distinctly promised in the charter of our Christian hopes, without a beating heart and a resolve of high endeavour.

But there is a second sense in which the emancipation of the rational element for the direct intuition of ideas may be conceived. It may be supposed that the reason shall instantly apprehend the ultimate idea, shall grasp at once the very foundations of existence.

I need not again observe to you, that this anticipation supposes an ultimate unity between the rational element of the soul and the Ideal Realities themselves; for thus only could it be expected that the reason, when freed from its restrictions, would necessarily embrace them. It is one thing to know that there must be ideal foundations for all existences, another thing to apprehend the ideal foundations themselves. To suppose the latter faculty certain is, I repeat, to suppose the last reasons of things and the reason of man to be fundamentally one; a supposition which we have before seen is perfectly agreeable to the Platonic doctrine of the eternity of the soul; a supposition which wonderfully enhances, indeed, the dignity of the spiritual principle in man, by thus supposing it to hold the key of the universe; but a supposition for which, in this unlimited sense, there seems to be no foundation.

As concerns our present purpose, either of these suppositions might be accepted. I mention them because the Platonic expositors do not seem to have kept the distinction in view. But with reference to what I conceive the true and genuine value of the Platonic philosophy, speculative and practical,—with reference, especially, to the present division of the subject, you may adopt either. The infinite progression, or the changeless intuition, would alike suit the rule and tenor of the Ethics of Plato.

You are now prepared to entertain that subject. You have seen that the phenomenal images of ideas, that ideas
in their most perfect state of sensible manifestation can be obtained by the reflective mind. Separating these from all their debasing concomitants, conceiving them in a state yet purer than any which experience in its limited range can exhibit, the thoughts are raised on the ascent to absolute perfection. In the mean time, the soul is quickened by the remembrance of its own dignity and capacities, it laments the ignoble confinement to which it is reduced, it knows the path to freedom lies through self-purification, terminated by the brief and happy gate of death; it, therefore, resolves to exert its anticipated freedom by realizing the high vision of perfection for ever before it. Distinctly to know these truths, the necessary requisite to all useful effort,—practically to fix them as the rules of life,—this is prudence or wisdom,—φρονμενος,—the leading excellence according to the views of Plato; the virtue without which all others are but specious vices. You perceive from hence that the idea of the Rational in man is the leading idea of the Platonic morals; and the main exercise of the Rational, the separation of soul, as far as possible, from body and all bodily adjuncts.

This principle of Rationality is a direct consequence from the entire scheme of Platonism. The system supposes the original unity of the Beautiful, the Just, and the Good, in the True; the True being, as it were, the supporting or substantiating; the Good, the characterizing idea; the Beautiful and Just accompanying both: the True being the very reality of things; the Good, the final cause of their being; and the others investing the True out of the strength of that final cause,—for wherever is the ἀγαθος, there will infallibly be the highest measure of harmonious proportion; and proportion is the essential idea of both the Beautiful and the Just. Now the soul of man is originally formed to meet these governing ideas of the Universe; it is congenial, it is (in its rational element) coeternal with them. This must apply equally to every human soul, however debased by its contact with, and slavery to, the body; the depth of its degradation cannot efface the fact of its original adaptation; and though the vast majority of the race live unconscious of their privileges, the privileges nevertheless exist, and it is the function of "philosophy" to instruct how to enjoy them. The great requisite of virtue, then, is to gain the intuition of these ideal excellencies; and the original fitness of the soul to meet them is so certain, that it cannot be conceived that it can really apprehend these eternal objects without yielding to their divine attraction. But the intuition of ideas is knowledge or science in its highest, its only genuine sense; the moral
and the intellectual are thus identified in their highest point; and the νούσις of the philosophic mind sees beneath it, on one side, all the infinite varieties of human learning, on the other, all the diversities of human virtue, as its subordinate results, or dependent developments.

From this leading conception of the nature of the human soul, consequences naturally follow, which have often startled the readers of Plato, but which are really the necessary fruits of this principle.

For example, Plato inherits from Socrates the maxim that no man is voluntarily evil, κακὸς ἐκὼν οὐδείς. The rationale of this doctrine seems to be,—that the immortal element of the soul, the directive power, is essentially formed to make good its object; that, therefore, it can only be through a suspension, or eclipse of that power, that evil can in fact become the aim of the man; a suspension which even then does not allow him to choose evil as evil, but which hides from his view the perfect idea of the good. Even when he is admonished, he may pursue the delusive phantom, but it is still from a belief of its reality; it is as the reality of excellence he follows it; and the original, the indestructible law of his rational being, still proclaims him a devoted worshipper of virtue, at the very moment that in his temporary blindness he adores its opposite. This doctrine, which in a certain degree is true and profitable, but which may obviously, by overlooking the operation of habit and passion, be carried to a very extravagant length*, is made the basis of many admirable arguments on the advantage of philosophy, the couche of the eye of reason, the legislator of true and apparent goods. In its fullest form it resolves into the proposition that all vice is ignorance.

The principle, often directly or indirectly propounded by Plato, that all virtue is "one," that no man can be truly

* [See Protag. p. 358 c. Tim. p. 86 D. Ed.]

* For it surely is most erroneous to deny, what all men can attest, that the force of habit or of violent propension may urge to the commission of vice at the very instance that the intellect is most abundantly cognizant of the excellence of virtue. To call this blindness, or the substitution of a false for a true good, seems wholly unwarrantable. Plato argues, that we commit vice for the sake of a supposed good, and that it is good which still is in view. This supposes man always to act with an ulterior view, which is likewise quite gratuitous. [It is difficult to reconcile this notion of the involuntary nature of evil with the passages in which Plato insists upon the necessity of allaying the reason with the nobler emotions (τὴν ἀθωοῦσα) in order to control effectually the lower appetites. The inconsistency will appear more distinctly in the course of the next lecture. Meanwhile it may be observed that the author of the Magna Moralia (attributed to Aristotle) represents Plato as differing from Socrates in not referring virtue exclusively to the intellectual region of the soul; a limitation which can alone justify the paradox in question. See M. M. i. c. 1, §§ 5—7. Ed.]
virtuous by halves, is not far removed from the same leading notion. To us the doctrine seems easily derivable from the consideration that the same principle, whatever it be,—whether the will of God, or the fitness of things, or both,—which urges to partial virtue, must, if genuine, urge to all, as equally applicable to all. This seems to have been in Plato's mind, but not this only. Virtue itself, when contemplated from without, seemed to consist in a certain happy proportionality in all the elements of the system; this (which was justice) was the last result of the possession and exercise of that wisdom of which we have spoken. Now the very notion of just proportion brings with it the idea of unity in the midst of multiplicity; it is the diversified governed by the uniform. Virtue, then, the result of the presidency of the Rational, takes from this singleness of control a character of unity; for the harmonious relation of parts is a thing in itself indivisible. To these views contemplations more metaphysical allied themselves; the very unity of the supreme idea of good, in which all inferior manifestations were absorbed and lost, reduced to its own simplicity all human efforts to copy and embody it.

Lastly, the maxim which is the subject of so much discussion in the Platonic dialogues,—the maxim, "that virtue cannot be scholastically taught,"—finds its explanation in the same system of the human soul. It is Plato's perpetual admonition, that true knowledge is incommunicable, in the way of information, from man to man,—that it must be recovered out of the depths of the soul itself. On this principle turns the singular passage in the Phaedrus, so alien to our modern habits of thought, in which Plato denounces the invention of writing as a misfortune to man,—as the prolific parent of borrowed, sophistical, and illusory wisdom. Now we have seen that the fonsal ideas of virtue and science are blended in the φρόνησις, or wisdom, of Plato. The same principle must, therefore, apply to virtue as to knowledge. In its true essence it cannot be conveyed; no series of practical maxims, however judicious, can reach this hidden reality; it must discover itself to the reflective mind by its own inherent light. It is when Plato treats of this subject that he rises into those expressions so deeply interesting to Christian readers, in which he intimates, though darkly, some belief of the operation of the Eternal Spirit upon the soul of man. Nor does it at all lessen that interest, that they are combined with his own theory of the natural prerogatives of Soul itself; inasmuch as the point alone practically important, the necessity of an aid distinct from ordinary influences, remains unaffected by any hypothesis of that description. These demands,
echoing from the inmost nature of the profoundest and purest of moral reflectors, have their own unalterable value, although Plato considered them required, not so much, indeed, to communicate new impressions, as to restore the native functions of the paralyzed mind; to "teach" virtue, but to teach it by a λόγος θείος,—a supernal element regained; to teach it, not by conveying truths so much as renovating faculties, not so much by exhibiting objects before inconceivable, as by brightening the tarnished surface of the intellectual mirror, which then must, of its own accord, reflect the unchangeable images of virtue and of truth.
LECTURE VI.

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY. NO. XII.

GENTLEMEN,

I ATTEMPTED on the last occasion to exhibit to you the leading idea of the Platonic morals, the idea that in the exercise, and thence the gradual enfranchisement of the rational element in human nature, its true dignity and duties consisted. The ceaseless effort at self-perfection by the imitation of ideal excellence, and in the hope of a thorough eventual union with this object of exalted contemplation, included, with Plato, all the obligations of life; and hence the notion of mere obligation in its directness and simplicity makes little figure in his writings. He composed, indeed, with great care an elaborate system of Laws of public polity; but the harsh external control of positive law is superfluous to the being of Plato's conception, or if it concern him, can only do so in its milder form of a code of moral education. Internal obligation is, in his view, less the immediate imperative of an instantaneous command, as our moralists more safely represent it, than the calm collection of a reason weighing its own dignity, and glorying in progressive supremacy over the seductions of sense. When I offer these general characteristics you will understand them as general, that is, as not beyond the possibility of occasional, though rare exception. Few moralists of antiquity,—perhaps on the whole not one,—can be said to have left maxims purer or more rigorous behind them; Plato has the force of the Stoics without their extravagance. And in enforcing these principles he employs language which it is not difficult to translate into the exactness and decision of the ethics of Butler or of Kant. But as the general strain of his discourse he rather assails vice as degrading humanity than as violating its explicit commands; he rather pities it as a blindness than arraigns it as guilt.

Wisdom, then, the philosophic insight, is the perfect glory of man, the chief of virtues, which alone gives their value to all the rest. Fortitude and temperance respect each of those two divisions into which the mortal part of man's soul is separated. And justice is the fitting proportion of the whole. The dependence of these qualities upon the presiding presence of Wisdom for all their genuineness
and real value is finely illustrated in a well-known passage of the *Phaedo*, not less true or less instructive at this hour than when it fell from the lips of the dying Socrates. "If you but investigate the fortitude and temperance of any but philosophers you will find them very absurd.—How?
—You know that the mass of mankind fear death as one of the greatest of evils?—Certainly.—When then they suffer death with some courage they only suffer it because they fear a greater evil...And consequently, none but the philosopher is courageous from any motive but fear; and surely it is absurd that a man should be brave from sheer cowardice...Is the case different with your ordinary men of temperance? Are they temperate from any other motive but intemperance; contradictory as it seems? For they never abjure one pleasure except through dread of being deprived of another which they prefer in their slavery. They call it intemperance to be mastered by their passions; but that does not hinder them from never thinking of subduing certain enjoyments, except with a view to others; which assuredly realizes what I said just now, that they are temperate through intemperance...What a spurious system of barter is this, to change pleasures against pleasures, pains for pains, fears for fears, like coin for coin;—the sole coin for which all the rest should be willingly exchanged is *Wisdom*. With this, one buys all, has all—fortitude, temperance, justice; in a word, true virtue is in and with wisdom, independently of pleasures, pains, fears, and all other affections; while without it, the virtue that consists in these transfers is but a shadowy, servile, false virtue. For the real essence of virtue is the purification of the soul from all these defilements; and temperance, justice, fortitude, yea, wisdom itself, all are but modes of effecting this purification. And such is the symbolical purport of initiation in the mysteries." It thus appears that the essence of perfect virtue is found in its origination in contemplative wisdom, and that its object is the purification of the soul from all earthly taint, in order to its easy passage to the state of disembodied peace.

To conciliate a system so ethereal with the actual state and demands of human nature, so as to make it practically applicable and operative, may appear no easy task. Plato

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1 [p. 68 d, fol. Ed.]

οὖσιν νόμισμα λευκὸν ἄργυρον μάρμαρον
καὶ χρυσόν ἄστυν ἀλλὰ κέρατον βρωτὸν
νόμισμα κάτω τάσιν ἢτ φθάσαν χρυσόν.

This sentiment may have suggested the passage of the *Phaedo*, or it may have been suggested to Euripides, according to the common tradition, by the teaching of Socrates. Ed.]
seems to have effected this chiefly by representing his system as one of progressive discipline, one, therefore, in which every rank of mind could obtain its suitable place. The lowest step was dignified, for it was a step to absolute perfection. The whole array of the sciences (and Plato was conversant with all the knowledge of his time) were enlisted in the service of this great cause; for they all were subservient to the attainment of that calm and meditative spirit of abstraction which was the temper and the instrument of philosophic wisdom. And though Plato gave no great encouragement to the exercise of active talents, on which, except in minds of singular sobriety, he was apt to look with coldness and suspicion; yet even these tumults of public life might be converted to the same high and holy purpose by becoming a school of discipline in the art of self-control. But without this motive steadily understood and maintained, a motive which, in its true sincerity, was scarcely compatible with the feverish excitement of ambitious pursuits, man could not claim the skies. When in the Phædo² Socrates is represented as speculating on the changes of the metempsychosis as determined by moral causes, after condemning the glutton and the tyrant to the state of the ass and the wolf, he declares that those who have practised those social virtues which men call moderation and justice, by mere habit and exercise, without reflective contemplation or philosophy, may be expected to re-appear in the forms of the more peaceable animals, the bee or ant, or in that of good men once more; but that to reach by a bound the rank of the immortals belongs only to him who has “philosophized,” and who has by that exalted process left this life in perfect purity. And to compensate the limited application of this promise, you must remember that Plato everywhere insinuates that the attainment is really within reach of all, and, were political establishments regulated on the principles he proposes, would, through appropriate education, become the heritage of all. He felt and acknowledged that no existing state of society permitted the realization of those principles; but the error, he contended, was not in the principles, but in society. And it was from this consideration that he uttered the well-known sentence in the fifth book of the Republic⁴, that no polity would ever be perfect until philosophers became its kings, or its kings philosophers.

But even a system the most resolutely restricted to the cultivation of the rational element cannot neglect the rest of our nature. The object of such a system will be, therefore, to convert, if possible, the affections to the

² [p. 82. Ed.] ⁴ [p. 473 D. Ed.]
furtherance of its design; to recognise them but as inferior ministers of its presiding principle. This is the true link which connects Plato's doctrine of self-purification, through the intuition of truth, with his treatment of the questions of happiness and the emotions. This connexion will, I think, appear by a very brief consideration.

The question of happiness is discussed in the dialogue entitled Philebus, the oldest regular disquisition we possess on what was afterwards called the "sumnum bonum." The point submitted to debate is,—the respective claim of pleasure and reason to constitute the chief happiness of man; and the matter is investigated with great refinement. A condition of pleasure altogether destitute of any rational element, a condition of reason altogether devoid of any element of sensibility, are both subjected to inquisition, and both rejected. The true position of man ought then to consist of some union of the two; and after a long, and in some respects very interesting analysis of the characteristics of pleasure and of philosophic science, Plato concludes by giving, as might be supposed, to the latter the unquestionable precedence, but allowing to the former its place in that temperate degree which shall in no respect interfere with the exercise and the supremacy of reason. The discussion is marked with peculiar good sense, and forms a striking contrast to the contemporary extravagance of the cynic school. The philosophic discipline of Plato does not deny sensitive happiness,—it claims to regulate it;—and as far as possible to show that its purity and perfection consists in its dependence upon that regulation.

But the relation of the emotions to the immortal element of the soul, and to its objects, is still more marked in the most celebrated, and unhappily the most perverted, of all the tenets of Plato,—his philosophic adaptation of the emotion of Love. It is not impossible that the large proportion of the writings of Plato devoted to this subject, in some or other of its aspects, may have been owing in a considerable measure to the habits of the time, which

8 [Phil. p. 20 B. ἄγνωστος δὲ καὶ κρίνωμεν τὸν τε ἡθήνα καὶ τὴν φρονήσεως βίον ἰδάντες χωρίς...to p. 23 B: τούτων γε περὶ βίου ως ὀσείτερος αὐτῶν ἔχει τάξιν. The difference between the Platonic system and the purely Socratic is clearly brought out in this portion of the dialogue. See note to p. 470. Ed.]

6 [Stylistic καρδιά, or ματήτης βίον. Ib. D. Ed.]

7 [Who are generally (I am not sure whether correctly) supposed to be meant by the "seers" happily described as "prophesying under the inspiration of an austere but not ungenerous nature." Phil. p. 44. C. An analysis of this abstract, but interesting and important dialogue, is found in Trendelenburg's tract De Platonis Philoχ Consilio and of course in Prof. Jowett's Plato and in the Introductions to Mr Poste's edition and that of Dr Badham, Berlin, 1837. Ed.]
rendered the topic an easy and natural one for those transitions in dialogue from things outward to things invisible, which perpetually mark his philosophic style. Thus we know that the Symposium, which, with the Phaedrus, may be considered the text-books of this division of Platonism, was really the description of an ordinary Athenian scene. The succession of speeches, and even the special subject, were usual forms of festive amusement; and though in a very different style, the custom is still found in many parts of the East, where you will remember that these intellectual encounters date as far back as the days of Samson. I do not find that the Platonic theory of love coloured much of ancient literature; it may, perhaps, be recognised in passages of Euripides\(^8\), whose pensive muse congenially adopted it. Some of the Christian fathers, especially St Augustine, found it susceptible of a divine adaptation; but the period from which, in a form whose folly might well be enough to neutralize its danger, it became one of the staples of modern romance, seems to have been that of the revival of classical literature in Italy. It probably became, to the thoughtful and sedentary, pretty much what chivalry was to the active and ardent; and the same singular combination of devotion to the human and divine was equally characteristic of both.

The Platonic theory of ideal love rested upon principles similar to those I have already so often explained in considering his views of knowledge and of virtue, and was strictly subservient to both. As the sensible world was the exhibition (as far as its nature would permit) of absolute truth and absolute goodness, so was it also the exhibition of absolute beauty; and the faculties of the human soul were originally competent to apprehend them all. But for the illustration of his general theory, the case of the participation of the primal principle of Beauty was far the most convenient and forcible. It lent itself to expression with greater readiness, it found an echo more perfect in the peculiar genius of Greece, and it seemed to claim that emotion of the heart of man as specially consecrated to it, which the imagination in all ages had laboured to celebrate and to adorn. Its internal connexion with Plato’s favourite principle of proportion, the very mysteriousness and power of its influences, added dignity to the theme;

\(^8\) [As in the celebrated choral song in praise of Athens, where the “Loves” are described as ἄµοικα νυκτοὺς…μωρίδασ ἀγάπων ἐπεμαθόλ. (Medea, v. 828, ed. Foss.) Compare this with a fragment of the Dictys (Fr. viii. ed. Dindorf.) and the lyrical passage preserved by Athenæus, xiii. p. 581 A. (Frag. inc. cxiii. Dind.) Chronological reasons it should be observed forbid us to suppose that Euripides “adopted” the Platonic theory of love, at least from Plato, for the Medea, an early play, was acted two years before the philosopher was born. Ed.]
and even the ambiguous use of language, in which it is not easy to separate the moral and the sensitive, furnished means of heightening the effect by insinuating associations borrowed from either side of the analogy. And the very principle of Plato, that the true state of soul consisted in the intuition of truth, naturally led to the representation of the divine object of this contemplation as the object of love. And if all the preliminary studies, mathematical, musical, dialectical, are but preparatives for this final effort of the soul, then may they all be considered a discipline for this emotion which accompanies it. Nay, the very anxiety for truth becomes but a form of it; for this anxiety, when genuine, is but the struggle of the soul for the possession of the central beauty in the possession of the central truth. But, of course, the process becomes yet more direct in the contemplation of objects themselves sharing and manifesting the primal καλόν; and this holds through all the regions of creation, moral and material; for whatever their specific nature—whether inanimate or animate, visible forms, or actions high and heroic—they all bring to the enraptured memory the recollection of that ideal loveliness once the immediate object of the unembodied soul, and now faintly reflected in the sphere of sense and time. Hence philosophers are declared to be, by virtue of their vocation, ἰθόκαλοι and ἐρωτικοὶ; and Socrates, in the Symposium, professes that his whole science is nothing but a science of “love.” And in the Theages, ἐγὼ τυγχάνω, ὥς ἐπος εἰπεῖν, οὐδὲν ἐπιστάμενον πλὴν σμικροῦ γε τινος μαθήματος, τῶν ἐρωτικῶν.

You will perceive that “Love” is, then, a word of very general significance in this philosophy. It stands for all aspiration after a communion with perfection. And it assuredly is one of the peculiar excellencies of the Platonic way of thought, that it regarded the upward tendencies of the human soul in a light which no one before its author seems to have fully caught, and which few after him have seized who were not directly or indirectly his copyists. To Plato they were facts, and facts of transcendent importance.

The Platonic “love” may then be considered as developed in two forms, a superior and a subordinate. The former takes place when the soul strains after the infinite perfection of beauty, prompted on its path by earthly manifestations. The latter is engendered, when souls, as kindred immortal essences, recognise each other in the world of sense; and it thus includes the ordinary notions of exalted friendship. But the former is far more prominently Platonic, and even the latter is seldom conceived except as

connected with it. And the extraordinary importance assigned by Socrates himself, as well as Plato, to beauty of outward form, as the indication of a corresponding elevation of soul, combines them both.*

"Some few alone," says Plato in the *Phaedrus* 11, speaking of the imprisonment of the soul in the body; "preserve recollections sufficiently distinct. These, when they behold any image of things on high, are transported beyond themselves, and cannot repress their emotion; but they know not its cause, because they do not closely consider what passes within them. Justice, wisdom, all which soul can estimate, have lost their brilliance in the images we see of them here below; embarrassed ourselves by gross organs, it is with great difficulty that a few among us, when we approach these images, can recognise the model they represent. Beauty was then, indeed, resplendent, when among the choir of the blessed, our souls in the train of Jove, as others in the train of other gods, contemplated the glorious sight, initiated in mysteries the holiest of all,—mysteries which then, indeed, we rightly celebrated when enjoying all our essential perfections, and yet unknowing of sorrows to come, we gazed in rapture on those objects,—fair, perfect, simple, full of blessedness and peace, which unrolled to our eyes in the depths of the pure light,—no less pure ourselves, and free as yet from this tomb we call our body, which we drag along with us as the oyster drags its shelly prison!" "Pardon," he adds, "these fond delays devoted to the remembrance of happiness for ever lost. As for the Beautiful, it sparkled in that world among the other essences. Fallen into this sphere, we have recognised it more clearly than the rest, through the medium of the most luminous of our senses. Sight is the sublimest organ of the frame; it, however, perceives not wisdom; for our love would indeed be boundless could we apprehend the image of it, and of other lovely objects, as distinctly as we can visual beauty." He then describes with exquisite force of expression the trouble of spirit, the enthusiastic awe and reverence, which the apparition of this occupant of the celestial world in its earthly forms produces; but for this I must refer you to the original.

In the *Symposium* 12, the course of successive generalization by which the mind arrives at the first principle of

* It cannot be denied that this latter tenet has a tendency to promote the perversions which the subject has undergone. But as Plato himself has explicitly unfolded his views, it is but a very inferior stage of the ascending science of the Beautiful which concerns itself with beauty in its outward manifestations at all. It is the first step, and only the first.

11 [p. 350 A. ED.]
12 [p. 217 C, fol. ED.]
beauty is still more distinctly portrayed. Beginning with single visible objects, it extends to many, to all; it rises next to estimate the beauty of the soul, as infinitely exceeding all exterior developments; it soon recognises the same pervading principle in actions, in laws, in the manifold creations of moral energy. But this is only the portal to the higher beauty of the products of pure intelligence; nor is the ascending soul to be satisfied till, from the loftiest eminence of thought, it sees one primary beauty commanding the whole universe of being; and recognises but one science, the science that regards it! "Oh Socrates," continues his instructress,—for the sage professes to be only repeating the discourse of a Theban priestess,—"the true prize of life is the sight of the eternal beauty! Compared with such a sight as this, what would be the poor images of earth which so often trouble and perplex us? What, I ask you, would be the destiny of that mortal to whom it should be given to contemplate the unmingled beauty in all its purity and simplicity, no longer invested with perishable human accompaniments, but face to face to see and know the beauty unchangeable and divine? Think you he would have ground for complaint, who, fixing his eyes on such an object, should give himself solely to celestial communion with it? And is it not solely in the contemplation of the eternal beauty with that organ by which alone it can be seized, that he shall be enabled to produce, not images of virtue, because it is not to images he is attaching himself, but virtues real and genuine, because it is truth alone that he loves. Now it is to him that thus produces true virtue and preserves it that it belongs to be the favoured of God; it is to him more than to any other that it belongs to be immortal." Such a contemplation as this is a contemplation of God. It is the ultimate idea of beauty which is the subject of the mental vision; but "ideas, distinct in themselves, are bound in mysterious unity with the very essence of the supreme of all. He guides himself by the rational principles of the universe; but these principles are at the same time inseparable from his existence. To direct the thoughts to them is to be lost in Him. You will not, then, be surprised to find that the perfection of which virtue is the effort, is by Plato described as ὑπολογεῖς θεός, assimilation to God. This assimilation is the enfranchisement of the divine element of the soul. To approach Him as the substance of truth, is science; as the substance of goodness in truth, is wisdom; as the substance of beauty in goodness and truth, is love.

You will now, perhaps, have seen by what means it is

18 [Thucyd. p. 176 B. Ed.]