THE LYSIS:

A DIALOGUE

ON

FRIENDSHIP.
INTRODUCTION

THE LYSIS.

WHEN Socrates, says Ficinus, disputes with the sophists and their followers, he confutes false opinions, and signifies, rather than teaches, such as are true. This is evident from the Euthydemus, Protagoras, Meno, Hippias, Euthyphro, and Lyfis. But where he discoursed with his disciples, and those who were anxious to be instructed, he unfolds and teaches, as is evident from many of the preceding dialogues. In this Dialogue, therefore, in which he disputes concerning friendship among the disciples of the sophists, he is rather studious of confuting false opinions than of demonstrating such as are true.

But, that we may take a cursory view of the contents of the Lyfis, in the first place, Socrates reproves those who pervert the power of love, and, under the pretext of friendship, are subservient to base lust. In the second place, he admonishes those who, looking no higher than corporeal beauty, think themselves worthy to be beloved for this alone. And, in the last place, he indicates to the sagacious a certain path by which friendship may be investigated and discovered. Again, while Socrates ironically derides Hippothales and Ctesippus, he signifies that they were captivated by base love. And, while in their presence he prepares youth for moral discipline, he admonishes lovers how they should live together, and what kind of attachment they should entertain for each other. Having instructed lovers in the second part of the Dialogue, he instructs those that are the objects of love;
...by a long series of induction, teaches that wisdom and prudence ought to be explored by friends, which compose the true beauty of the soul, and not the shadowy form of this fleeting body. In the third place, he confutes, and first the opinion of Solon, who said that those who are beloved are friends; for these often hate their lovers. He adds, that neither are lovers only friends, because these are frequently the objects of hatred. And here he concludes that reciprocal benevolence should be called friendship. In the next place, he reproves Empedocles, who was of opinion that any kind of similitude is sufficient to produce friendship. This, however, the similitude of many arts shows to be false, which more frequently generates envy and hatred than friendship. In the last place, the assertion of Hesiod and Heraclitus is adduced, that dissimilars are friendly to each other.—That they are not, however, appears from this, that hatred and love, since they are dissimilars, will not be friendly, nor will a just and an unjust man; and of others in a similar manner. And, if it should be said that sometimes a thing desires that which is dissimilar to itself, as that which is dry, moisture, or that which is hot, the cold, the answer is, that it does not in this case love its contrary, but seeks after a restitution of itself from a contrary. For that which is preternaturally hot is reduced through cold to its proper temperament; so that it does not love cold, but through it desires a temperament accommodated to its nature.

Having confuted these assertions, Socrates, as if prophesying, introduces a certain opinion as his own, and says that there appear to him to be three genera of things, the good, the evil, and that which is neither good nor evil. But the evil, on account of diversity, cannot be a friend to the good, and the evil, through injustice, are injured by the evil. These, therefore, cannot be mutually friends. It is likewise impossible for him who is neither good nor evil to love the evil; for evil, since it is noxious, is always attended with hatred. It remains, therefore, that friendship must subsist between the good and the good, and between that which is neither, and the good. But here certain objections arise which Socrates openly introduces, but the solutions of which he occultly indicates. In the first place, the good is similar to the good; but it was said, in opposition to the opinion of Empedocles, that similars are not friendly to each other. It must, however, be observed, that it was not asserted that similars are by no means friendly; but it was denied that every kind...
kind of similitude is sufficient to the production of friendship. Again, when, in the second place, it is objected that the good man is sufficient to himself, that on this account he does not desire another, is without love, and therefore is not the friend of the good;—it must be observed that this absurdity does not follow from the doctrine of Plato, but from the assertions of Empedocles and Heraclitus superficially considered, in which the desire of love is not apparently distinguished from friendship. And as desire is a want, for it always tends to something unpossessed, it follows, from this doctrine, that friendship is always attended with desire. To admit this, however, would be to confound friendship with love. But, according to Plato, they are different, because they are directed to different ends: for friendship tends to the good, and love to the beautiful.

In short, friendship, considered with relation to man, is a union among worthy characters, arising from a similitude of disposition and pursuits. Love also is a union between the lover and the beloved; but it differs from the union of friendship in this, that the former is inseparable from indigence, from which likewise it originates; while, on the other hand, the latter arises from plenitude, with which it is constantly attended in proportion to the perfection which it possesses. In the friendships, indeed, of the most worthy men, this union is not without desire, and is consequently accompanied with want; but this is because the object of friendship is not in this case the highest good. Hence friendship with divinity is the only union in which a perfect plenitude is produced, desire dies, and indigence is unknown.

The character of this Dialogue, like that of the Theaetetus, is maieutic, and the conceptions here, of which Socrates is the midwife, as well as there, are abortive.
THE LYSIS.

THE PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES,

HIPPOTHALES,

CTESIPPUS,

MENEXENUS,

And LYSIS.

On going from the Academy, in a straight line to the Lyceum, which is indeed out of the walls, but close to them, when I arrived at the gate, where there is the fountain Panopis, I met with Hippothales the son of Hieronymus, and Ctesippus Pæanæus, and other young men who were assembled together with these. And Hippothales, on seeing me approaching, O Socrates, says he, whither are you going, and whence do you come?—I replied, I came from the Academy, and am going in a direct road to the Lyceum. But will you not come to us, says he? For it is worth while. I replied, Whither do you wish me to go, and to whom among you?—Hither, says he, shewing me a certain enclosure, and an open gate, opposite to the wall. Here we, and many other very worthy persons, pass away our time. I then asked him, What is this place, and what do you employ yourselves about?—It is a Palaestra, says he, newly built: but we spend our time for the most part in discourse, which we shall gladly communicate to you. You do well, said I. But who is the preceptor in that place?—Your associate and encomiast, says he, Miccus. By Jupiter, said I, he is not a vulgar man, but a sufficiently great sophist. Are you willing therefore, says he, to follow me, that you may see those that are assembled in that place?—But I should first of all gladly hear

1 Ctesippus was a son of Chabrias the Athenian general. After his father's death he was received into the house of Phocion, the friend of Chabrias. Phocion in vain attempted to correct his natural foibles and extravagancies. Plut. in Phoc.
for what purpose I am to enter, and who that beautiful person is.—To some of us, says he, Socrates, he does not appear to be beautiful.—But what does he appear to you to be, O Hippothales? Tell me this.—But he being thus interrogated, blushed.—And I said, O Hippothales, son of Hieronymus, you need no longer inform me whether you love or not: for I know that you not only love, but that you are far advanced in love. For, with respect to other things, I am vile and useless, but divinity has given me the ability of very rapidly knowing a lover, and the person beloved.—And on hearing this, he blushed in a still greater degree than before. Ctesippus therefore said, You are polite, Hippothales, because you blush, and refuse to tell Socrates the name of your beloved. But you will do nothing but commend him, if Socrates stays only a short time with you. As to our ears, Socrates, they are perfectly filled and rendered deaf with the name of Lysis: and when Hippothales has drunk largely, it is easy for us to think, when we are roufed from sleep, that we hear the name of Lysis. And the things which he relates concerning him in prose, though dire, are not altogether so, except when he robs us of our poems, and other writings; and what is still more dire, when he sings his loves with a wonderful voice, which we are under the necessity of enduring to hear. But now being asked by you, he blushes.—This youth then, it seems, I said, is Lysis. But I conjecture this; for I do not know it, from having heard his name.—They very seldom, says he, call him by his own name, but he is yet called by the name of his father, because he is a man very much known. But I well know, that you are far from being unacquainted with the form of the youth: for he may be sufficiently known from this alone.—I then said, Tell me whose son he is?—He is the son of Democrates, says he, who is the eldest son of Aæoneus.—Be it so then, said I, O Hippothales, that you have found this generous and juvenile love. But come, evince to me the things which you have shown to these persons, that I may see whether you know what a lover ought to say respecting the objects of his love, either to himself or to others.—Do you examine, says he, Socrates, any thing that he afferts? But do you deny that you love him, as he says?—I do not, said he. But I affirm that I do not compose any thing, either in prose or verse, with a view to my amours.—He is not well, says Ctesippus, but is delirious and insane.—Upon this, I said, O Hippothales, I neither request to hear any verses, nor any songs, which you may have
have composed on the young man, but I desire to become acquainted with your thoughts, that I may know in what manner you conduct yourself in your amours.—Ctesippus here, says he, will tell you: for he accurately knows and remembers; since, as he says, he has heard me continually talking about him.—Entirely so, by the gods, says Ctesippus. Though indeed it is very ridiculous that he being a lover, and paying far more attention to the youth than others, should have nothing of his own to say. Would not even a boy say that this is ridiculous? For what the whole city proclaims about Democrates, and Lysis the grandfather of the youth, and about all his ancestors, his wealth, his store of horses, his victories in the Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean games, and his contests with four horses, and with one horse, these are the very things which he celebrates. And besides these, he speaks of things still more common: for he lately related to us, in a certain poem, the reception of Hercules as a guest, viz. how an ancestor of Democrates and Lysis entertained Hercules on account of his alliance to him, through being also the offspring of Jupiter and the daughter of the prince of the people; —a circumstance, indeed, which even old women sing. He likewise celebrates, Socrates, many other such like particulars. And these are the things which he compels us to hear him relating and singing.—Upon hearing this, I said, O ridiculous Hippothales, before you have vanquished you make and sing an encomium on yourself.—But I neither make nor sing these things for myself, Socrates, says he.—I replied, You do not think that you do.—How do you mean?—These odes, I said, tend to you the most of all things. For if you should find a beloved person of this kind, your assertions and songs will be an ornament to you, and an encomium on yourself as a conqueror, for having made such an acquisition. But if you are deceived in this respect, by how much greater the encomiums are which you make on your beloved, by so much the more you will appear to be deprived of things beautiful and good, and become ridiculous. Whoever therefore, my friend, is wise in amatory affairs, will not praise his beloved till he is well acquainted with him, in consequence of being fearful of the event. For at the same time it must be observed, that such as are beautiful are filled with pride and ostentation when any one praises and extols them. Or do you not think this is the case?—He replied, I do.—Does it not therefore follow, that by how much the more
infolent they are, by so much the more difficult it is to catch them?—It is likely.—What kind of a hunter, therefore, would he appear to you to be, who should drive wild beasts out of their lurking places, and increase the difficulty of taking them?—Doubtless, a vile one.—And is it not a mark of great unskilfulness, to exasperate men, instead of alluring them by discourse and songs?—To me it appears to be so.—But consider, O Hippothales, whether you do not render yourself obnoxious to all these things through your poesy. Indeed, I think you are not willing to acknowledge that a man who injures himself in his poems can be a good poet.—I am not, by Jupiter, says he: for this would be very absurd. But on account of these things, Socrates, I communicate my thoughts to you. And consult with yourself, whether you have any thing else to offer, by which it may appear how a man by speaking and acting may become acceptable to the objects of his love.—This, I replied, is not easy to relate: but if you are willing to make Lyphis join us in discourse, perhaps I may be able to show you what ought to be said to him, instead of those things which they say you have asserted and sung.—He replied, there is nothing difficult in this. For if you enter this place together with Ctesippus, and sitting down discourse, I think that he will join us: for he is remarkably fond, Socrates, of hearing others converse. Observe too, that both young men and boys are mingled together in this place, as being engaged in Mercurial contests. He will therefore come to you: and if he does not, since he is familiar with Ctesippus, through Menexenus the cousin of Ctesippus, (for he is in the highest degree of intimacy with Menexenus,) let him call him, if he does not join us of his own accord.—I replied, it is proper to act in this manner: and at the same time, laying hold of Ctesippus, I entered the Palestra, and the others came after us. But on entering, we found that the boys were sacrificing, and that the particulars pertaining to the victims were nearly finished: but all of them were playing at dice, and properly dressed. Many of them, therefore, were playing out of the Palestra in the porch; but some of them in a corner of the place, where they put off their clothes, were playing with a great multitude of dice, and selecting them from certain little baskets. But others stood round these, beholding them; among whom was Lyphis, who was standing crowned, among the boys and young men, and transcending all of them in the beauty of his person. Nor did he alone deserve to be heard for his beauty, but because he was worthy
and good. But we, withdrawing from the crowd, seated ourselves opposite to him: for the place where we sat was quiet; and we there entered into conversation with each other. Lyfis, therefore, turning round, often looked at us; and it was evident that he desired to join us; but, in the mean time, he hesitated, and was averse to come to us alone. Afterwards Menexenus came from the porch, in the midst of the games, and as soon as he saw me and Ctesippus, came and seated himself by us. Lyfis, therefore, seeing him, followed, and sat down with Menexenus. Others likewise came; but Hippothales, after he saw that many were assembled in this place, desiring to be concealed, betook himself to a part where he thought he should not be seen by Lyfis, fearing lest he should be offended with him; and, standing in this manner, he heard the discourse. And I, beholding Menexenus, said, O son of Demophon, which of you is the elder?—He replied, we are not certain.—I then said, Do you therefore contend which of you is the more generous?—Entirely so, said he.—And in a similar manner, likewise, which of you is the more beautiful?—At this question both of them laughed.—But I said, I do not also ask you which of you is the more rich, for you are friends: are you not? They replied, entirely so.—The possessions of friends, therefore, are said to be common; so that about this you will not, in any respect, disagree, if this assertion about friendship is true.—To this they assented.—But after this, as I was endeavouring to ask, which of them was the more just and wise, a certain person interrupted us, by telling Menexenus that he was called by the master of the Gymnasiunm. But it appeared to me that he was called by the sacrificer. Menexenus therefore left us; and I thus interrogated Lyfis:

Inform me, O Lyfis, if your father and your mother very much love you?—He replied, entirely so.—Do they not, therefore, wish you to be most happy?—Undoubtedly they do.—Does that man appear to you to be happy who is in a state of subjection, and who is not permitted to do any thing which he desires to do?—By Jupiter, says he, to me he does not.—If, therefore, your father and your mother love you, and wish that you may be happy, they will certainly, by every possible means, endeavour that you may become so.—How is it possible they should not, said he.—Do they, therefore, permit you to do what you please, and in no respect oppose your desires?—By Jupiter, says he, Socrates, they oppose me in very many things.—How do you say? I replied.
plied.—At the same time that they wish you to be blessed, do they prevent you from acting as you please? But answer me this question: If you should desire to ride in some one of your father’s chariots, and for this purpose should take the reins, when he is going to contend in the games, would he not suffer you? or would he prevent you?—By Jupiter, says he, he would not suffer me. —But would he not permit some one to do this?—There is a certain charioteer who is hired for this purpose by my father.—How do you say? Would your father rather suffer a mercenary to do what he pleases to the horses than you, and, besides this, pay him for so doing?—But what then? says he.—But I think he would permit you to drive the yoked mules, and, if you were willing, to take the whip and strike them.—Why should he be permit me to do this? says he.—Why not? said I. Is no one permitted to strike them?—Yes, said he, the muleteer, very much so.—Is he a slave, or free-born?—A slave.—It seems, therefore, that your parents think more highly of a slave than of you who are their son, and commit their affairs to him rather than to you, and that they permit him to do what he pleases, but do not give this liberty to you. And farther still, answer me this question, Do they suffer you to govern yourself? or neither do they permit you to do this?—For how, says he, should they permit me? Who then governs you?—The pædagogue, says he.—Does he do this, being a slave?—But what then? he is our slave, says he.—But I replied, Is it not a dire thing for one who is free-born to be governed by a slave? And what does this pædagogue when he governs you do?—He leads me, says he, to my master.—And do not these masters also govern you?—Certainly, entirely so.—Your father, therefore, voluntarily places over you many despots and governors. But when you return home to your mother, does she suffer you to do what you please, that you may be blessed, either about the wool or the web, when she weaves? For she doubtless does not prevent you from touching the two-handed sword, or the shuttle, or any other instrument subservient to the working of wool.—But he laughing replied, By Jupiter, Socrates, she not only prevents me, but beats me if I touch them.—By Hercules, said I, have you in any respect injured your father or your mother?—Not I, by Jupiter, said he.—On what account then do they in so dire a manner prevent you from being happy, and from doing what you please? And why every day do they educate you so as to be in subjection to some one, and, in one word, do not in the least suffer you to gratify
gratify your desires? So that, as it seems, neither are such great riches of any advantage to you (since every one has dominion over them rather than you), nor even your body, though it is so noble, but this also is fed and taken care of by another. But you, O Lysis, have no authority over any one, nor do you do any thing that you desire to do.—For I am not yet old enough, Socrates, says he.—But see whether it is not this which prevents you, O son of Democrats. For thus much I think both your father and mother will concede to you, and will not wait till you are more advanced in years. I mean, when they wish any thing to be read to or written for them, they will, I think, order you to do this the first in the house, or will they not?—Entirely so, says he.—Are you therefore allowed, in this case, to write which of the letters you please first, and which second? And are you allowed to read in the same manner? And again, when you take up a lyre, does neither your father nor your mother prevent you from stretching and relaxing the chords as much as you please, and from gently touching and striking them with the plectrum? or do they prevent you?—They certainly do not.—What then is the cause, Lysis, that they do not prevent you in these things, but prevent you in those which we just now mentioned?—Because, I think, says he, I know the one, but am ignorant of the other.—Be it so, I replied, O most excellent youth. Your father, therefore, does not wait for age, to give you permission to do as you please in all things; but on whatever day it shall appear to him that you are become more prudent, on this day he will permit you to govern yourself, and your own affairs.—I think he will, said he.—Be it so, I replied.—But what? Will not a neighbour conduct himself towards you in the same manner as your father? Whether do you think he will commit to you the government of his family, when he is of opinion that you are more skilled in æconomics than himself, or in this case govern it himself?—I think he will commit the government of it to me.—But what with respect to the Athenians? Do you not think that they will commit to you the management of their affairs, when they perceive that you are sufficiently wise?—I do.—But what with respect to the great king? Would he suffer his eldest son, who will succeed to the government of all Asia, to throw into broth whatever he pleases, rather than us, if going to him we should convince him that we were more skilled in the preparation of a banquet than his son?—He replied, It is evident he would rather suffer us.—Is it not also clear that he would not permit
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permit his son to throw any thing, however trifling, into the broth, but that he would permit us, if we wished to throw in a quantity of salt, to do so?—Undoubtedly.—But what if his son should be diseased in his eyes? Would he therefore suffer him to meddle with his own eyes, at the same time that he thinks he is not a physician, or would he prohibit him?—He would prohibit him.—But if he considered us as good physicians, I think he would not prevent us, even though we should wish to open his eye-lids and scatter ashes on his eyes.—True.—Would he not, therefore, rather commit to us than to himself or his son every thing else in which we appeared to be more wise than either of them?—He replied, it is necessary, Socrates.—This then, I said, is the case, friend Lyfis, that all persons, both Greeks and Barbarians, men and women, will permit us to act as we please respecting things in which we are skilled, nor will any one voluntarily hinder us from so acting; but in these particulars we shall be free, and the governors of others. And these things will be ours, for we shall be benefited by them. But no one will permit us to act as we please respecting things of which we are ignorant; but all men will hinder us as much as they are able, not only strangers, but our parents, and whatever else may be more allied to us than these. And in these we shall become the servants of others, and they will be things foreign to us, for we shall derive no benefit from them. Do you agree that this will be the case?—I do.—Shall we, therefore, be friends to any one, and will any one love us in those things in which we are useless?—By no means, said he.—Now, therefore, neither your father nor any other person will ever love you, so far as you are useless.—It does not appear he will, said he.—If then you become wise, O boy, all men will be your friends, and will be familiar with you; for in this case you will be useful and good. But if you do not, neither will any other person, nor your father nor mother, nor any of your kindred, be your friend, or be familiar with you. Is it possible, therefore, that any one can think highly of himself with respect to things in which he has not yet acquired any skill?—How can he? said he.—If, therefore, you require a master, you are not yet wise.—True.—And hence you are not magnanimous, if you are yet unwise.—By Jupiter, says he, Socrates, I do not appear to myself to be so.

Upon hearing him say this, I looked at Hippothales, and was very near committing an error; for it occurred to me to say, after this manner, O Hippothales,
pothales, it is requisite to discourse with those of a puerile age, viz. humbling and reprieving them, and not, as you do, flattering and rendering them effeminate. But perceiving him anxious and distressed, on account of what had been said, I recollected that, a little while since, he wished to conceal himself from Lyfis; I therefore recovered myself, and was silent. In the mean time Menexenus came again, and seated himself near Lyfis, in the place whence he rose before. Lyfis, therefore, in a very playful and friendly manner, but without Menexenus observing him, said to me, O Socrates, tell Menexenus what you have told me.—And I replied, You should relate these things yourself to Menexenus, for you have heard me with very great attention.—Entirely so, says he.—Endeavour, therefore, I replied, to recollect these particulars as much as possible, that you may clearly tell him the whole. But if you should happen to forget any one of them, you may again inquire of me the first time that you meet with me.—I will by all means do so, said he, Socrates; of this you may be well assured. But you should say something else to him, that I also may hear, till it is time to return home.—I replied, this must be done, since you command: but see how you will be able to defend me, if Menexenus should endeavour to confute me. Or do you not know that he is contentious?—Very much so, says he, by Jupiter; and on this account I wish to hear you discourse with him.—I replied, Do you desire this, in order that I may become ridiculous?—By Jupiter I do not, said he, but in order that you may punish him.—I replied, This is a thing not easy to accomplish: for he is a skilful man, and the discipule of Ctesippus. And besides, do not you see Ctesippus himself is present?—Be not at all concerned at this, Socrates, said he; but come, discourse with him.—I replied, We will discourse.—As, therefore, we were thus speaking to each other, Ctesippus said, Why are you thus feasting alone, and do not impart your discourse to us?—But indeed, I replied, we shall impart it; for Lyfis here does not understand something which I have said, but thinks that Menexenus will understand it, and therefore orders me to interrogate him.—Why then, said he, do you not interrogate him?—I replied, But I will.—Give me an answer, then, Menexenus, to that which I shall ask you; for from my childhood I have had a desire of a certain possession, just as another person may have had of a different thing; for one man desires to possess horses, another dogs, another gold, and another honours; but I was indifferent with respect to these things,
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but was affected in a very amatory manner with respect to the possession of friends. Hence I was more desirous of finding a good friend than the most excellent quail or cock; and, by Jupiter, I preferred this to the best horse or dog. I likewise think, by the dog, that I should prefer the possession of an associate far beyond the wealth of Darius, or even Darius himself: such a lover of an associate am I. Perceiving, therefore, you and Lysis, I was immediately struck, and proclaimed you happy, because, young as you are, you have so rapidly and easily acquired this possession; you with such celerity having made him so much your friend, and he you. But I am so far from this possession, that I do not even know after what manner one man becomes the friend of another. But in this I wish to be informed by you, who are a skilful person: Tell me, therefore, when any one loves another, which of the two becomes the friend of the other? Whether the lover becomes the friend of the beloved, or the beloved of the lover? Or is there in this case no difference?—It does not appear to me, said he, that there is any difference.—To this I replied, How do you say? Do both therefore become friends of each other, if one alone loves the other?—It appears so to me, said he.—But what? May there not be a lover who is not in his turn beloved by the object of his love?—There may.—Is it not possible, therefore, that a lover may be hated? which lovers sometimes appear to suffer from the objects of their love: for though they most ardently love, they are not beloved in return, but, on the contrary, are sometimes hated. Or does not this appear to you to be true?—Very much so, said he.—In a case of this kind, therefore, I replied, does not the one love, and is not the other beloved?—Yes.—Which then of these is the friend of the other? Is the lover the friend of the beloved, whether he is loved in return, or hated, or the beloved of the lover? Or in this case, is neither the friend of neither, since a mutual love does not subsist between them?—It appears so.—Now, therefore, the case appears to us to be otherwise than what it appeared to us before. For then it seemed, that if one alone loved, both were friends; but now, that neither is a friend, unless both mutually love.—This appears to be the case.—No one, therefore, is a friend to the object of his love, unless he is beloved in return.—It does not appear that any one is.—Neither, therefore, are those the friends of horses, whom horses do not love in return; nor are those the friends of quails and dogs, of wine and gymnastic, who are not mutually beloved by these; nor are those friends of wisdom, whom wisdom does not love in return:
return: for each of these is a lover without being a friend. The poet therefore speaks falsely who says, “Happy the man that possesses beautiful boys, horses with solid hoofs, hunting dogs, and a foreign guest.” Does he appear to you to speak the truth?—Yes.—The beloved, therefore, is the friend of the lover, as it seems, O Menexenus, whether he loves or whether he hates; just as children recently born, partly do not yet love, and partly hate when they are chastized by their mother or father; and at the very time in which they hate, they are in the highest degree beloved by their parents.—It appears to me, said he, that this is the case.—The lover, therefore, from this reasoning, will not be the friend, but the beloved.—It appears so.—Hence too, he who is hated is an enemy, but not he who hates.—So it appears.—Many, therefore, are beloved by their enemies and hated by their friends; and are friends to their enemies, but enemies to their friends; if the beloved is a friend, and not the lover. Though it is very absurd, my friend, or rather, I think, impossible, to be an enemy to a friend, and a friend to an enemy.—You seem, said he, to speak the truth, Socrates.—If, therefore, this is impossible, the lover will be the friend of the beloved.—So it appears.—Again, therefore, he who hates will be the enemy of him who is hated.—It is necessary.—It happens, therefore, that it is necessary for us to acknowledge the same things as we assented to before, that a man is often the friend of one who is not his friend, and that he is often the friend of his enemy, when either he loves and is not beloved, or loves one by whom he is hated. It likewise often happens that a man is an enemy to one who is not his enemy, or even to one who is his friend; when any one loves him by whom he is hated, or hates him by whom he is loved.—So it appears, said he.—I replied, What then shall we say, if neither lovers, nor those that are beloved, are friends, nor yet lovers and the beloved? Shall we say that certain others besides these become friends to each other?—By Jupiter, said he, Socrates, I do not well know what to reply.—Consider, therefore, Menexenus, whether our investigation has been perfectly right.—Lyfis replied, To me it appears so, Socrates; and at the same time that he said this he blushed: for he appeared to me unwilling to avoid what was said, through the very great attention which he paid to the discourse. I, therefore, being willing that Menexenus should cease from speaking, and being delighted with his philosophy, thus transferred my discourse to Lyfis,
Lysis, and said, O Lysis, what you have asserted appears to me to be true; I mean that if we have rightly considered, we shall not in any respect have wandered from the truth. But we will proceed no further in this way: for that consideration appears to me to be difficult like a rough road. But it seems to me requisite to proceed in the path in which we have now entered, speculating the assertions of the poets: for these are, with respect to us, as the fathers and leaders of wisdom. They say, therefore, not badly, with reference to such as are friends, that divinity makes them to be friends, by conducting them to each other. But I think they thus speak:

Likefeis to likefeis, God for ever leads,
And makes it known.

Or have you not met with these verses?—I have, said he.—Have you, therefore, likewise met with the writings of the wisest of men, in which it is said, that the similar is always necessarily a friend to the similar? But these men are those that discourse and write about nature and the universe.—He replied, What you say is true.—Whether or no, therefore, do they speak well?—Perhaps so, said he.—I replied, Perhaps the half of this is true, and perhaps also the whole. But we do not understand them: for it seems to us, that by how much nearer a depraved man approaches to one depraved, and by how much the more frequently he converses with him, by so much the more inimical will he become: for he will act unjustly. But it is impossible that those can be friends who injure, and are injured. Is it not so?—He replied, It is.—On this account, the half of this saying will not be true, since the depraved are similar to each other.—True.—But they appear to me to say, that the good are similar and friends to each other; but that the wicked, (as it is said concerning them,) are never similar, not even to themselves, but are stupid and unstable. But he who is dissimilar to, and dissent from himself, can never be similar to, or become the friend of another. Or does it not appear to you?—To me it does, he said.—It seems to me, therefore, my friend, that those who say the similar is a friend to the similar, obscurely signify this, that he alone who is good, is a friend to the good, but that he who is wicked can never arrive at true friendship, either with the good or
the wicked. Does this also appear to you to be the case?—It does.—We
now, therefore, have those that are friends: for our discourse now signifies
to us, that those are friends that are worthy.—It appears entirely so to me,
said he.—And to me also, I replied. But, notwithstanding this, there is
something difficult in the affair. Come then, by Jupiter, and see what I
suspect to be the case. He who is similar, so far as he is similar, is a friend
to the similar, and such a one is useful to such a one. Or rather thus: Is
any kind of the similar, of any advantage to any kind of the similar? Or is
it able to do any injury to the similar, which it does not do to itself? Or
to suffer any thing which it does not also suffer from itself? But how can
such things as these, which are not able to afford any assistance to each other,
be loved by each other?—They cannot.—But how can he who does not
love be a friend?—By no means.—But perhaps the similar is not a friend
to the similar; but the good is a friend to the good, so far as he is good, and
not so far as he is similar.—Perhaps so.—But what? Is not he who is good,
so far as he is good, sufficient to himself?—Yes.—But he who is sufficient
to himself, is not indigent of any thing, so far as he possesses sufficiency.—
Undoubtedly.—And he who is not indigent of any thing, will not love
any thing.—He will not.—But he who does not love, will not be a friend—
Certainly not.—How then will the good be friends to the good, who neither
when absent desire each other (for they are sufficient to themselves when
apart), nor when present are indigent of each other? By what artifice can
these possess a great esteem for each other?—By none, said he.—But those
will not be friends who do not very much esteem each other.—True.—Con-
sider then, O Lyfis, in what respect we are deceived. Are we therefore de-
ceived in a certain whole?—But how? said he.—I once heard a person assert,
and I now very well remember it, that the similar was hostile to the similar,
and the good to the good. And he who asserted this, produced Hesiod 1 as
a witness, who says, "The potter is hostile to the potter, the finger to the
finger, and the mendicant to the mendicant." And it appeared to him that
all other things necessarily fitted in this manner; and that things most
similar to each other, were in the highest degree filled with envy, emulation,
and hatred; but such as are most dissimilar with friendship. For he

1 Op. et Di. v. 25.
was of opinion that the poor man was necessarily a friend to the rich, and
the weak to the strong, for the sake of help: that in like manner the sick
man was a friend to the physician; and that every one who was ignorant,
loved and was a friend to the man endued with knowledge. He likewise
added something still more magnificent, that the similar is so far from being
a friend to the similar, that the very contrary to this takes place. For that
which is most contrary, is especially a friend to that which is most contrary.
For every thing desires a nature of this kind, but not that which is similar.
Thus the dry desires the moist; the cold, the hot; the bitter, the sweet;
the acute, the obtuse; the void, the full; and the full, the void; and the
like takes place in other things. For the contrary is aliment to the con­
trary, but the similar does not in any respect enjoy the similar. And indeed,
my friend, he who afferted these things appeared to be an elegant man: for
he spoke well. But how does he appear to us to have spoken?—Well,
Menexenus replied, as it seems on the first view.—Shall we say, therefore,
that the contrary is especially a friend to the contrary?— Entirely so.—Be it
so, I replied, O Menexenus: but is not this prodigious? And will not those
all-wise men, who are skilful in contradicting, gladly rise up against us im­
mEDIATELY, and ask, if friendship is not most contrary to hatred? What
shall we say, in answer to them? Is it not necessary to acknowledge that
their assertion is true?—It is necessary.—Will they therefore say, that an
enemy is a friend to a friend, or that a friend is a friend to an enemy?—He
replied, they will say neither of these things.—But is the just a friend to the
unjust, or the temperate to the intemperate, or the good to the bad?—It
does not appear to me that this is the case.—But, I replied, if any one is a
friend to any one, according to contrariety, it is necessary that these also
should be friends.—It is necessary.—Neither, therefore, is the similar a friend
to the similar, nor that which is contrary to that which is contrary.—It does
not appear that it is.—Further still, let us also consider this, lest we should
be still more deceived; I mean that a friend in reality is none of these, but
that what is neither good nor evil may sometimes become the friend of the
good.—How do you say? he replied.—By Jupiter, said I, I do not know;
for I am in reality staggered by the ambiguity of the discourse. And it ap­
ppears, according to the antient proverb, that a friend is a beautiful thing. It

rames,
resemble, however, something soft, smooth, and fat; on which account perhaps it easily eludes us, and glides away, as being a thing of this kind. For I say that the good is beautiful. Do you not think so?—I do.—I say therefore, prophesying, that that which is neither good nor evil, is the friend of the beautiful and the good. But hear what it is that induces me thus to prophesy. There appear to me to be three certain genera of things, the good, the evil, and that which is neither good nor evil. But how does it appear to you?—The same, said he; and that neither the good is a friend to the good, nor the evil to the evil, nor the good to the evil; as neither did our former discourse suffer us to say.—It remains, therefore, if any thing is a friend to another, that that which is neither good nor evil, must be a friend either to the good, or to something which resembles itself. For nothing can become a friend to the evil.—True.—And we just now said, that neither is the similar a friend to the similar. Did we not?—Yes.—Hence to that which is neither good nor evil, that will not be a friend, which is itself neither good nor evil.—It does not appear that it will.—That which is neither good nor evil, therefore, alone happens to become a friend to the good alone.—It is necessary, as it seems.—Is therefore that which we have now said, I replied, O boys, well explained? If then we wish to understand, a healthy body has not any occasion for the medicinal art, nor does it require any assistance: for it possesses sufficiency. So that no healthy person is a friend to the physician through health. Or is he?—No one.—But the diseased, I think, is a friend to the physician through disease.—Undoubtedly.—But disease is an evil; and the medicinal art is useful and good.—It is.—But the body, so far as body, is neither good nor bad.—True.—But through disease, the body is compelled to embrace and love the medicinal art.—It appears so to me.—That, therefore, which is neither evil nor good, becomes a friend to the good, through the presence of evil.—So it seems.—But it is evident that it becomes a friend to the good, prior to its becoming evil through the evil which it possesses. For it does not become evil, instead of the good which it desires, and of which it is the friend. For we have said it is impossible, that the evil can be a friend to the good.—It is impossible.—But consider what I say. For I say that some things are such as that which is present to them; but that this is not the case with other things. Thus, if any one wishes to be
be anointed with a certain colour, the inunction is after a manner present to him who is anointed.—Entirely so.—Whether therefore, after being anointed with the colour, does he remain the same as he was before?—He replied, I do not understand you.—Consider thus, then I said. If any one should besmear your hairs which are yellow with white lead, would they then be white, or only appear to be so?—He replied, They would only appear to be so.—But whiteness would be present with them.—It would.—And yet at the same time your hairs would not be in any respect more white than they were before; but though whiteness is present, they will neither be white nor black.—True.—But when, my friend, old age causes them to be of this colour, then they will become such as the colour which is present to them, viz. white through the presence of whiteness.—Undoubtedly.—This then is what I now ask, Whether that to which any thing is present, is, by possession, such as the thing which is present? Or whether this is the case, if the thing is present after a certain manner, but otherwise not?—Thus, rather, he replied.—In like manner, that which is neither evil nor good, sometimes when evil is present, is not yet evil; but there is a time when it becomes so.—Entirely so.—When, therefore, it is not yet evil, though evil is present, this very presence of evil causes it to desire good; but this presence which causes it to be evil, deprives it of the desire, and at the same time friendship of good. For it is now no longer neither evil nor good, but is evil. But it was shown that the good is not a friend to the evil.—It is not.—Hence we must say, that those who are wise must no longer philosophize¹, whether they are gods or men; nor again, those who are so ignorant, that they are vicious. For no one who is vicious and void of discipline can philosophize. Tho’s therefore remain, who possess indeed this evil, ignorance, but are not yet stupid and void of all discipline, but who yet think they do not know those things of which they are ignorant. On which account, in a certain respect, those that are neither good, nor bad, philosophize: for such as are bad do not philosophize, nor such as are good. For it has appeared to us, that neither is the contrary a friend to the contrary, nor the similar to the similar. Or do you not remember that this

¹ For philosophy, as is shown in the speech of Diotima in the Banquet, is a medium between wisdom and ignorance.
was affirmed by us above?—He replied, I perfectly remember.——Have we not therefore, O Lysis and Menexenus, more than any thing discovered what is a friend, and what is not? For we have said, that both according to the soul, and according to the body, and every where, that which is neither evil nor good, is a friend to the good through the presence of evil.—They in every respect admitted that these things were so. And I indeed was very glad, like a hunter having gladly obtained that of which I was in search. But afterwards, I know not how, a most absurd suspicion came into my mind, that the things which we had affirmed to were not true. And being immediately uneasy on this account, I said, It is strange, Lysis and Menexenus, but we seem to be enriched with a dream.—Why so? said Menexenus.—I am afraid, I replied, lest we have met with false assertions, as with arrogant men, in our inquiry about friendship.—How? he replied.—To which I answered, let us consider thus. Is he who is a friend, a friend to any one or not?—Necessarily so, said he.—Whether, therefore, is he a friend for the sake of nothing, and through nothing, or for the sake of something, and through something?—The latter.—Is that thing then a friend, for the sake of which a friend is a friend to a friend, or is it neither a friend nor an enemy?—He replied, I do not perfectly apprehend you.—It is likely, I said. But thus perhaps you will follow me; and I think that I also shall better understand what I say. We have just now said that the sick is a friend to the physician. Did we not?—Yes.—Is he not therefore through disease, and for the sake of health, a friend to the physician?—Yes.—And is not disease an evil?—Undoubtedly.—But what of health? I replied. Is it good or evil, or neither?—It is good, said he.—We have therefore said, as it seems, that the body is neither good, nor bad, through disease; but that through disease it is a friend to the medicinal art. We have likewise affirmed that the medicinal art is good; but that it obtains friendship for the sake of health: and that health is good. Is it not?—Yes.—But is health a friend, or not a friend?—A friend.—And is not disease an enemy?—Entirely so.—Hence that which is neither evil nor good, through evil and an enemy, is the friend of good, for the sake of good and a friend.—It appears so.—A friend therefore is a friend for the sake of a friend, through an enemy.—So it seems.—Be it so, I replied. But since, O boys, we have arrived thus far, let us diligently attend
attend left we should be deceived. For we shall bid farewell to the assertion,
that a friend becomes the friend of a friend, and that the similar is a friend
to the similar; for this we have said is impossible. But at the same time,
let us consider as follows, lest what is now asserted should deceive us. Do
we not say, that the medicinal art is a friend for the sake of health?—Yes.—
And therefore that health is a friend?— Entirely so.—If then it is a friend,
it is for the sake of something. —It is. —But it is the friend of something,
from what we have assented to before. —Entirely so.—Will not therefore that
again be a friend, for the sake of a friend? —Yes.—Is it not therefore
necessary that thus proceeding, we should reject what we have said, and
arrive at a certain principle, which is not referred to another friend, but
brings us to that which is the first friend, and for the sake of which we say
all other things are friends? —It is necessary. —This then is what I say, that
we should be cautious lest we are deceived by all those other particulars
which we assert to be friends for the sake of the first friend, and which are
as it were certain images of it; while, in the mean time, this first friend is
truly a friend. For we should thus consider: That which any one very
much esteems, (as, for instance, a father sometimes his son,) he honours
before all other things. But a man of this kind, on account of thus highly
esteeming his son, will also, on his account, highly esteem something else.
Thus, for instance, if he perceives that he drinks hemlock, he will very
much esteem wine, because he thinks that this will save his son. Or will he
not? —Undoubtedly, he replied. —Will he not therefore also highly value
the vessel which contains the wine? —Entirely so. —But will he then no less
esteem the earthen cup, or three cups of wine, than his son? Or is the
case thus? The whole of the endeavour, in an affair of this kind, does not
regard those things which are procured for the sake of something else, but
that for the sake of which all such things are procured. Nor is the assertion
which we frequently make true, that we very much esteem gold and
silver; but in this case, that which we highly esteem, is that for the sake
of which gold, and all other preparatives, are procured. Shall we not say so?—
By all means. —The same thing therefore may be said respecting a friend:
for such things as we say are friends to us, when they subsist for the sake of
a friend, we improperly denominate. But that appears to be a friend in
reality,
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reality, in which all those that are called friendships end.—This, said he, seems to be the case.—Hence that which is in reality a friend, is not a friend, for the sake of a certain friend.—True.—The assertion therefore is to be rejected, that a friend is a friend, for the sake of a certain friend. But is a friend, therefore, a good thing?—It appears so to me.—Is the good then beloved though evil? And is the case thus? Since the things of which we now speak are three, good, evil, and that which is neither good nor evil, if two of these are received, but evil entirely departs, and has not any connection either with body, or soul, or any thing else, which we say is in itself neither good nor evil, in this case will good be perfectly useless to us? For if nothing any longer injures us, we shall not be indigent of any assistance whatever. And thus it will then become manifest that we have fought after, and loved good on account of evil; good being the medicine of evil; but evil being a disease. But when there is no disease, there will be no occasion for medicine. Does good thus naturally subsist, and is it thus beloved, on account of evil, by us who are situated between evil and good? And is it of no use itself, for its own sake?—He replied, It seems to subsist in this manner.—That friend, therefore, in which all other things end, which we say are friends for the sake of another friend, is not in any respect similar to these. For these are called friends for the sake of a friend; but that which is in reality a friend, appears to be naturally in every respect contrary to this: for we have seen that this is a friend for the sake of an enemy. But if an enemy should be present, it would no longer as it seems be a friend to us.—He replied, It does not appear to me that it would, as it is now said.—But, by Jupiter, said I, if evil should be extirpated, would there no longer be any hunger or thirst, or any thing else of the like kind? Or would there be hunger, but yet not noxious, since there would be men and other animals, and thirst, and other appetites, but without being evil, in consequence of evil being abolished? Or shall we say that the inquiry is ridiculous, what would then be, or would not be? For who knows? This however we know, that at present it is possible to be injured by being hungry, and it is also possible to be benefited. Or is it not?—Entirely so.—Does it not therefore follow, that when we are hungry, or desire the gratification of any other appetite, our desire may be sometimes beneficial, and sometimes noxious, and sometimes
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times neither?—Very much so.—If, therefore, evils were destroyed, what would be the advantage, if things which are not evil, were destroyed together with such as are evil?—There would be none.—There would be appetites, therefore, which are neither good nor evil, even if evils were destroyed.—It appears so.—Is it therefore possible, that he who desires and loves any thing, should not be the friend of that which he desires and loves?—It does not appear to me that it is.—Whenevils therefore are destroyed, certain friendly persons, as it seems, will still remain.—They will.—But if evil were the cause of friendship, no one would be a friend to another, when evil is destroyed. For the cause being taken away, that of which it was the cause can no longer have an existence.—Right.—Was it not therefore acknowledged by us, that a friend loved something, and on account of something? And did we not then think, that through evil, that which is neither good nor evil loves good?—True.—But now, as it seems, something else appears to be the cause of loving and being beloved.—So it seems.—Is then, in reality, desire, as we said, the cause of friendship? And is that which desires, the friend of that which it desires, and then, when it desires? And is he whom we before asserted to be a friend, a mere trifle, like a very prolix poem?—It appears so, said he.—But, I replied, he who desires, desires that of which he is indigent. Or does he not?—Yes.—Is not then that which is indigent, the friend of that of which it is indigent?—It appears so to me.—But every one becomes indigent of that of which he is deprived.—Undoubtedly.—Hence, as it seems, love, friendship, and desire, respect that which is domestic and allied to them. This appears to be the case, O Menexenus and Lysis.—They admitted it was so.—You, therefore, if you were friends to each other, would be naturally mutually allied. They replied, And very much so.—And hence, I said, if any one person desires or loves another, O boys, he can never either desire, or love, or be a friend, unless he is allied to the object of his love, either according to his soul, or a certain custom of his soul, or according to manners, or according to species. —Menexenus said, Entirely so; but Lysis was silent.—But I replied, It appears to be necessary for us, to love that which is naturally allied to us.—It seems so, he said.—It is necessary therefore, that he who is a genuine, and not a pretended
pretended lover, should be beloved by the objects of his love.—To this Lyris and Menexenus scarcely assented: but Hippothales, through the pleasure which he experienced, exhibited all-various colours. And I being willing to consider the assertion, said, If that which is domestic and allied differs from that which is similar, we have declared, as it appears to me, O Lyris and Menexenus, what a friend is: but if the similar and the allied are the same, it is not easy to reject the former assertion, that the similar is not useless to the similar, according to similitude; but to acknowledge that a friend is useless, is inelegant. Are you willing therefore, I added, since we are as it were intoxicated by discourse, that we should grant and say that the allied is something different from the similar?—Entirely so.—Whether, therefore, shall we admit that good is allied, but evil foreign to every one? Or shall we say that evil is allied to evil, but good to good? and that a thing which is neither good nor evil, is allied to that which is neither good nor evil?—Each of these appeared to us to be allied to each.—Again therefore I said, O boys, we have fallen upon those assertions which we first made respecting friendship. For an unjust man will be no less a friend to the unjust, and the vicious to the vicious, than the good to the good.—So it seems, he said.—But what? if we should say the good and the allied are the same, will any thing else follow, than that the good alone is a friend to the good?—Nothing else.—But this assertion also we thought was confuted by us. Or do you not remember?—We do remember.—What further then can we employ in our discourse?—It is evident nothing further.—Like wise men, therefore, in courts of justice, we ought to repeat all that has been said: for if neither those that are beloved, nor lovers, nor the similar, nor the dissimilar, nor the good, nor the allied, nor any other such particulars as we have discoursed, (for I do not remember any further, on account of their multitude);—if then no one of these is a friend, I have not any thing more to say. When I had thus said, intending afterwards to excite some one who was more advanced in years, the pedagogues of Lyris and Menexenus approaching like certain daemons, together with the brothers of these two, called to them, and ordered them to return home: for it was then late. At first, therefore, both we, and those that surrounded us, drove them away: but they paid no attention to us,
but speaking in a barbaric manner were indignant and continued no less calling to the boys. Being vanquished therefore by their importunity, and it appearing to us, that as they had been subdued in the Mercurial feast, they would not have any thing else to offer, we dissolved the conference. At the same time, after they had departed, I said to Lyfis and Menexenus, We are become ridiculous, I who am an old man, and you who are boys. For they, now they have left us, will say, that we think ourselves to be friends to each other (for I rank myself among you), though at the same time we have not yet been able to find what a friend is.

THE END OF THE LYSIS.