THE FIRST ALCIBIADES,
A DIALOGUE
CONCERNING
THE NATURE OF MAN.
THE most peculiar and firm principle, says Proclus, of all the dialogues of Plato, and of the whole theory of that philosopher, is the knowledge of our own nature; for, this being properly established as an hypothesis, we shall be able accurately to learn the good which is adapted to us, and the evil which opposes this good. For, as the essences of things are different, so also are their proper perfections; and this according to a subjection of essence. For, whether being and the good proceed, as Aristotle says, from the same Vesta and first fountain, it is certainly necessary that perfection should be imparted to every thing according to the measures of essence; or whether good proceeds from a cause more antient and more characterized by unity, but essence and being are imparted to things from another cause; still, as every thing participates of being more obscurely and more clearly, in the same degree must it participate of good; first beings, in a greater and more perfect manner; but those that rank in the middle orders, secondarily; and the last of things according to an ultimate subsistence. For, how otherwise can things participate of deity and providence, and a distribution according to their desert? For it must not be admitted that intellect can lead things into order, and impart to each a convenient measure, but that the good, or the ineffable principle of things, which is more antient than intellect, should make its communications in a disordered manner; viz. that it should impart to causes and things caused the same portion of goodness, and distribute to the same things according to being the perfections of more primary and subordinate natures. For it neither was lawful, says Timæus, nor is, for the best of natures to effect any thing but that which is most beautiful and most commensurate. But the same good is not most commensurate to first and secondary

1 The whole of this Introduction is extracted from the MS. Commentary of Proclus on this dialogue; excepting some occasional elucidations by the translator.—T.
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natures; but, as the Athenian guest says, a distribution of inequality to things unequal, and of equality to things equal, of the greater to such as are greater, and of the lesser to such as are lesser, is of all things the most musical and the best.

According to this reasoning, therefore, good is different in different beings, and a certain good is naturally co-ordinated to the essence of every thing. Hence the perfection of intellect is in eternity¹, but of the rational soul in time: and the good of the rational soul consists in an energy according to intellect, but the good of body is in a subsistence according to nature; so that he who thinks that though the nature in these is different, yet the perfection is the same, has an erroneous conception of the truth of things.

According to every order of beings, therefore, essence ought to be known prior to perfection; for perfection is not of itself, but of essence, by which it is participated. Hence, with respect to the essence of a thing, we must first consider whether it belongs to impartible essences, such as intellectual natures, or to such as are divisible about bodies, viz. corporeal forms and qualities, or to such as subsist between these. Likewise, whether it ranks among eternal entities, or such as subsist according to the whole of time, or such as are generated in a certain part of time. Again, whether it is simple, and subsists prior to composition, or is indeed a composite, but is always in the act of being bound with indissoluble bonds², or may again be resolved into those things from which it is composed. For, by thus considering every thing, we shall be able to understand in what its good consists. For, again, it is evident that the good of those natures which are allotted an impartible essence is eternal, but that the good of partible natures is conversant with time and motion; and that the good of things subsisting between these is to be considered according to the measures of subsistence and perfection; viz. that such a nature is indeed indigent of time, but of first time, which is able to measure incorporeal periods. So that the pure and genuine knowledge of ourselves, circumscripted in scient-

¹ For, the perceptions of intellect being intuitive, whatever it sees it sees collectively, at once, and without time.
² This is the case with the sensible universe, considered as a whole.
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cient boundaries, must, as we have said, be considered as the most proper principle of all philosophy, and of the doctrine of Plato. For, where is it proper to begin, except from the purification and perfection of ourselves, and whence the Delphic god exhorts us to begin? For, as those who enter the Eleusinian grove are ordered by an inscription not to enter into the adyta of the temple, if they are uninitiated in the highest of the mysteries, so the inscription KNOW THYSELF, on the Delphic temple, manifests, as it appears to me, the mode of returning to a divine nature, and the most useful path to purification, all but perspicuously asserting to the intelligent, that he who knows himself beginning from the Vestal hearth may be able to be conjoined with that divinity who unfolds into light the whole of truth, and is the leader of a cathartic life; but that he who is ignorant of himself, as being uninitiated both in the lesser and greater mysteries, is unadapted to participate the providence of Apollo. Hence then let us also begin conformably to the mandate of the god, and let us investigate in which of his dialogues Plato especially makes the speculation of our essence his principal design, that from hence we may also make the commencement of the Platonic writing. Can we then adduce any other writing of Plato except the First Alcibiades, and the conference of Socrates which is delivered in this dialogue? Where else shall we say our essence is so unfolded? Where besides are man and the nature of man investigated? To which we may add, that it is Socrates who engages in this first conversation with Alcibiades, and that it is he who says that the beginning of perfection is suspended from the contemplation of ourselves. For we are ignorant of ourselves in consequence of being involved in oblivion produced by the realms of generation, and agitated by the tumult of the irrational forms of life. In the mean time, we think that we know many things of which we are ignorant, because we essentially possess innate reasons of things.

This dialogue therefore is the beginning of all philosophy, in the same manner as the knowledge of ourselves. Hence many logical and ethical theorems are scattered in it, together with such as contribute to the entire speculation of felicity. It likewise contains information with respect to many things which contribute to physiology, and to those dogmas which lead us to the truth concerning divine natures themselves. Hence too the divine
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divine Iamblichus assigned this dialogue the first rank, in the ten dialogues, in which he was of opinion the whole philosophy of Plato was contained.

Of the particulars exhibited in this dialogue, some precede and others follow the principal design, which is the knowledge of ourselves. For the hypothesis of twofold ignorance\(^1\), exhortation, and the like precede; but the demonstration of virtue and felicity, and the rejection of the multitude of arts, as being ignorant of themselves, of things pertaining to themselves, and in short of all things,—and every thing else of this kind, have a consequent order. But the most perfect and leading design of the whole conversation is the speculation of our own essence. So that he will not err who establishes the care and knowledge of ourselves, as the end of the dialogue.

Again, the amatory form of life is particularly indicated by Socrates in this dialogue. For the beginning is made from hence; and he proceeds perfecting the young man till he renders him a lover of his providential care, which is the leading good of the amatory art. And in short, through all the divisions of the dialogue, he always preserves that which is adapted to an amatory life. As there are three sciences, then, which Socrates appears to have testified that he possessed, viz. the dialectic, the maieutic, (i. e. obstetric,) and the amatory, we shall find the form of the dialectic and the peculiarity of the maieutic science in this dialogue, but the effects of the amatory science predominate in it. For, when Socrates is calling forth the conceptions of Alcibiades, he still acts conformably to the amatory character; and when he employs the dialectic science, he does not depart from the peculiarity of amatory arguments. Just as in the Theætætus he is maieutic, is principally characterized according to this, and proceeds as far as to a purification of the false opinions of Theætætus; but, having effected this, he dismisses him, as being now able of himself to know the truth, which is the business of the maieutic science, as he himself afferts in that dialogue. Thus also he first indicates the amatory science in this dialogue, with which both the dialectic and maieutic are

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\(^1\) Two-fold ignorance takes place when a man is ignorant that he is ignorant; and this was the case with Alcibiades in the first part of this dialogue, and is the disease of the multitude.
milled. For everywhere Socrates introduces discourses adapted to
the subject persons. And as every kind of good subsists in a divine
nature, which is variously possessed by different beings according to the
natural aptitude of each, in like manner Socrates, who comprehends all
sciences in himself, employs a different science at different times, accord­
ing to the aptitude of the recipients; elevating one through the amatory
science; exciting another to the reminiscence of the eternal reasons of the
soul through the maieutic science; and conducting another according to
the dialectic method to the speculation of beings. Some too he conjoins
to the beautiful itself, others to the first wisdom, and others to the good
itself. For through the amatory science we are led to the beautiful;
through the maieutic, by calling forth our latent reasons, we become wise.
in things of which we were ignorant; and through the dialectic science
we ascend as far as to the good.

Lastly, it will be found by those who are deeply skilled in the philosophy
of Plato, that each of his dialogues contains that which the universe con­
tains. Hence, in every dialogue, one thing is analogous to the good, another
to intellect, another to soul, another to form, and another to matter. In
this dialogue therefore it must be said, that an assimilation to a divine na­
ture is analogous to the good; the knowledge of ourselves to intellect; the
multitude of the demonstrations leading us to the conclusion, and in short
everything syllogistic in the dialogue, to soul; the character of the diction,
and whatever else pertains to the power of speech, to form; and the
persons, the occasion, and that which is called by rhetoricians the
hypothesis, to matter.

THE
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE,
SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES.

SCENE, (most probably) THE LYCEUM.

SOCRATES.

SON of Clinias! you wonder, I suppose, that I, who was the earliest of your admirers¹, now, when all the rest have forsaken you, am the only one who still retains unalterably the same sentiments; and yet, that for so many years I have never spoken so much as a word to you, whilst the others were pressing through crowds of people to converse with you. This reserve and distance in my behaviour have been owing to no human regards, but to an impediment thrown in my way by a daemoniacal nature², the power

¹ Socrates, we are told by Plutarch, had discovered in the countenance of Alcibiades, then in his puerile age, the signs of an ingenuous and noble disposition. Having thence conceived expectations of the boy's becoming an extraordinary man, he had from that time, as we are told in this dialogue, been a constant observer of all his motions, sayings and actions. When Alcibiades was grown up to his full stature, he was followed and surrounded, wherever he went, by such as admired the handsomeness of his person. They flattered his vanity; but the higher opinion they raised in him of himself, the more he thought himself above them. His conduct towards them was suitable to his thoughts, was such as might become an absolute lord toward his vassals. See Plutarch's Life of Alcibiades.—S.

² As there is no vacuum in corporeal, so neither in incorporeal natures. Between divine essences, therefore, which are the first of things, and partial essences such as ours, which are nothing more than the dregs of the rational nature, there must necessarily be a middle rank of beings, in order that divinity may be connected with man, and that the progression of things may form an entire whole, suspended like the golden chain of Homer from the summit of Olympus.
power and force of which you shall by and by be made acquainted with. But now, seeing that this power no longer operates to hinder my approach, I am

Olympus. This middle rank of beings, considered according to a twofold division, consists of daemons and heroes, the latter of which is proximate to partial souls such as ours, and the former to divine natures, just as air and water subsist between fire and earth. Hence whatever is ineffable and occult in the gods, daemons and heroes express and unfold. They likewise conciliate all things, and are the sources of the harmonic consent and sympathy of all things with each other. They transmit divine gifts to us, and equally carry back ours to the divinities. But the characteristics of divine natures are unity, permanency in themselves, a subsistence as an immovable cause of motion, transcendent providence, and which possefs nothing in common with the subjects of their providential energies; and these characteristics are preferred in them according to essence, power and energy. On the other hand, the characteristics of partial souls are, a declination to multitude and motion, a conjunction with the gods, an aptitude to receive something from other natures, and to mingle together all things in itself, and through itself; and these characteristics they also possefs according to essence, power and energy. Such then being the peculiarities of the two extremes, we shall find that those of daemons are, to contain in themselves the gifts of divine natures, in a more inferior manner indeed than the gods, but yet so as to comprehend the conditions of subordinate natures, under the idea of a divine essence. In other words, the prerogatives of deity characterize, and absorb as it were by their powerful light, whatever daemons possefs peculiar to inferior beings. Hence they are multiplied indeed, but unitedly—mingled, but yet so that the unmingled predominates—and are moved, but with stability. On the contrary, heroes possefs unity, identity, permanency, and every excellence, under the condition of multitude, motion, and mixture; viz. the prerogatives of subordinate predominate in these over the characteristics of superior natures. In short, daemons and heroes are composed from the properties of the two extremes—gods and partial souls; but in daemons there is more of the divine, and in heroes more of the human nature.

Having premised thus much, the Platonic reader will, I doubt not, gratefully accept the following admirable account of daemons in general, and also of the daemon of Socrates, from the MS. Commentary of Proclus on this dialogue.

"Let us now speak in the first place concerning daemons in general; in the next place, concerning those that are allotted us in common; and, in the third place, concerning the daemon of Socrates. For it is always requisite that demonstrations should begin from things more universal, and proceed from these as far as to individuals. For this mode of proceeding is natural, and is more adapted to science. Daemons therefore, deriving their first subsistence from the vivific goddæs; and flowing from thence as from a certain fountain, are allotted an essence characterized by soul. This essence in those of a superior order is more intellectual and more perfect according to hyparxis; in those of a middle order, it is more rational; and in those which rank in the third degree, and which subsist at the extremity of the daemon-

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1 i.e. Juno.  
2 i.e. the summit of essence.  

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I am come thus to accost you; and am in good hopes too, that for the future the daemon will give no opposition to my desire of conversing with

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with you. All this while, however, being but a spectator, I have been able tolerably well to observe and consider your behaviour with regard to

"In the next place let us speak concerning the daemons which are allotted mankind. For of these daemons, which as we have said rank in the middle order, the first and highest are divine daemons, and who often appear as gods, through their transcendent similitude to the divinities. For, in short, that which is first in every order preserves the form of the nature prior to itself. Thus, the first intellect is a god, and the most antient of souls is intellectual: and hence of daemons the highest genus, as being proximate to the gods, is uniform and divine. The next to these in order are those daemons who participate of an intellectual idiom, and preside over the ascents and descents of souls, and who unfold into light and deliver to all things the productions of the gods. The third are those who distribute the productions of divine souls to secondary natures, and complete the bond of those that receive defluxions from thence. The fourth are those that transmit the efficacious powers of whole natures to things generated and corrupted, and who inspire partial natures with life, order, reasons, and the all-various perfect operations which things mortal are able to effect. The fifth are corporeal, and bind together the extremes in bodies. For, how can perpetual accord with corruptible bodies, and efficient with effects, except through this medium? For it is this ultimate middle nature which has dominion over corporeal goods, and provides for all natural prerogatives. The sixth in order are those that revolve about matter, connect the powers which descend from celestial to sublunary matter, perpetually guard this matter, and defend the shadowy representation of forms which it contains.

"Daemons therefore, as Diotima also says, being many and all-various, the highest of them conjoin souls proceeding from their father, to their leading gods: for every god, as we have said, is the leader in the first place of daemons, and in the next of partial souls. For the Demiurgus disseminated these, as Timæus says, into the sun and moon, and the other instruments of time. These divine daemons, therefore, are those which are essentially allotted to souls, and conjoin them to their proper leaders: and every soul, though it revolves together with its leading deity, requires a daemon of this kind. But daemons of the second rank preside over the ascents and descents of souls; and from these the souls of the multitude derive their elections. For the most perfect souls, who are conversant with generation in an undisturbed manner, as they choose a life conformable to their presiding god, so they live according to a divine daemon, who conjoined them to their proper deity when they dwelt on high. Hence the Egyptian priest admired Plotinus, as being governed by a divine daemon. To souls therefore who live as those that will shortly return to the intelligible world whence they came, the supernal is the same with the daemon which attends them here; but to imperfect souls the essential is different from the daemon that attends them at their birth.

"If these things then are rightly asserted, we must not assent to those who make our rational soul a daemon. For a daemon is different from man, as Diotima says, who places daemons between gods and men, and as Socrates also evinces when he divides a daemoniacal oppositely to the human nature: 'for,' says he, 'not a human but a daemoniacal obstacle
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to your admirers. And I find, that, though they have been numerous, and such persons too as thought highly of themselves, there is not one whom
detains me.' But man is a soul using the body as an instrument. A daemon, therefore, is not the same with the rational soul.

"This also is evident from Plato in the Timaeus, where he says that intellect has in us the relation of a daemon. But this is only true as far as pertains to analogy. For a daemon according to essence is different from a daemon according to analogy. For in many instances that which proximately presides, subsisting in the order of a daemon with respect to that which is inferior, is called a daemon. Thus Jupiter in Orpheus calls his father Saturn an illustrious daemon; and Plato, in the Timaeus, calls those gods who proximately preside over, and orderly distribute the realms of generation, daemons: 'for,' says he, 'to speak concerning other daemons, and to know their generation, exceeds the ability of human nature.' But a daemon according to analogy is that which proximately presides over any thing, though it should be a god, or though it should be some one of the natures posterior to the gods. And the soul that through similitude to the daemoniacal genus produces energies more wonderful than those which belong to human nature, and which suspends the whole of its life from daemons, is a daemon nata echein, according to habitude, i.e. proximity or alliance. Thus, as it appears to me, Socrates in the Republic calls those daemons, who have lived well, and who in consequence of this are transferred to a better condition of being, and to more holy places. But an essential daemon is neither called a daemon through habitude to secondary natures, nor through an assimilation to something different from itself; but is allotted this peculiarity from himself, and is defined by a certain summit, or flower of essence, (hyparxis,) by appropriate powers, and by different modes of energies. In short, the rational soul is called in the Timaeus the daemon of the animal. But we investigate the daemon of man, and not of the animal; that which governs the rational soul itself, and not its instrument; and that which leads the soul to its judges, after the dissolution of the animal, as Socrates says in the Phædo. For, when the animal is no more, the daemon which the soul was allotted while connected with the body, conducts it to its judge. For, if the soul possesses that daemon while living in the body, which is said to lead it to judgment after death, this daemon must be the daemon of the man, and not of the animal alone. To which we may add, that, beginning from on high, it governs the whole of our composition.

"Nor again, dismissing the rational soul, must it be said that a daemon is that which energizes in the soul: as, for instance, that in those who live according to reason, reason is the daemon; in those that live according to anger, the irascible part; and in those that live according

1 Amongst these was Anytus, who not long after became a bitter enemy to the great philosopher. And probably this was one of the motives of his enmity, some suspicion that Socrates had supplantcd him in the favour and friendship of Alcibiades. For a suspicion of this sort always begets envy in little minds; and from envy always springs the most malicious hatred.—S.
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whom you have not driven away from you by your superior haughtiness and imagined elevation. The reasons of your being exalted so highly according to desire, the deiderative part. Nor must it be said that the nature which proximately precedes over that which energizes in our life, is a daemon: as, for instance, that reason is the daemon of the irascible, and anger of those that live according to desire. For, in the first place, to assert that daemons are parts of our soul, is to admire human life in an improper degree, and oppose the division of Socrates in the Republic, who after gods and daemons places the heroic and human race, and blames the poets for introducing in their poems heroes in no respect better than men, but subject to similar passions. By this accusation, therefore, it is plain that Socrates was very far from thinking that daemons, who are of a sublimer order than heroes, are to be ranked among the parts and powers of the soul. For from this doctrine it will follow that things more excellent according to essence give completion to such as are subordinate. And in the second place, from this hypothesis, mutations of lives would also introduce multiform mutations of daemons. For the avaricious character is frequently changed into an ambitious life, this again into a life which is formed by right opinion, and this last into a scientific life. The daemon therefore will vary according to these changes: for the energizing part will be different at different times. If, therefore, either this energizing part itself is a daemon, or that part which has an arrangement prior to it, daemons will be changed together with the mutation of human life, and the same person will have many daemons in one life; which is of all things the most impossible. For the soul never changes in one life the government of its daemon; but it is the same daemon which predominates over us till we are brought before the judges of our conduct, as also Socrates asserts in the Phædo.

"Again, those who consider a partial intellect, or that intellect which subsists at the extremity of the intellectual order, as the same with the daemon which is assigned to man, appear to me to confound the intellectual idiom with the daemoniacal essence. For all daemons subsist in the extent of souls, and rank as the next in order to divine souls; but the intellectual order is different from that of soul, and is neither allotted the same essence, nor power, nor energy.

"Further still: this also may be said, that souls enjoy intellect then only when they convert themselves to it, receive its light, and conjoin their own with intellectual energy; but they experience the presiding care of a daemoniacal nature through the whole of life, and in every thing which proceeds from fate and providence. For it is the daemon that governs the whole of our life, and that fulfills the elections which we made prior to generation, together with the gifts of fate, and of those gods that predile over fate. It is likewise the daemon that supplies and measures the illuminations from providence. And as souls, indeed, we are suspended from intellect,

Here is painted the most distinguishing feature in the character of Alcibiades. For Plutarch assures us, that the strongest of his passions, though all of them were vehement, was a love of superiority and pre-eminence in all things. And Aelian in Var. Hist. l. 4. c. 16. represents him as the pattern of arrogance; as if no person could ever in this quality exceed him.—S.
highly in your own opinion, I am desirous of laying before you. They are these: You presume, that in no affair whatever you need assistance from intellect, but as souls using the body we require the aid of a daemon. Hence Plato, in the Phædrus, calls intellect the governor of the soul; but he everywhere calls a daemon the inspector and guardian of mankind. And no one who considers the affair rightly, will find any other one and proximate providence of every thing pertaining to us, besides that of a daemon. For intellect, as we have said, is participated by the rational soul, but not by the body; and nature is participated by the body, but not by the dianoetic part. And further still, the rational soul rules over anger and desire, but it has no dominion over fortuitous events. But the daemon alone moves, governs, and orderly disposes, all our affairs. For he gives perfection to reason, measures the passions, inspires nature, connects the body, supplies things fortuitous, accomplishes the decrees of fate, and imparts the gifts of providence. In short, he is the king of every thing in and about us, and is the pilot of the whole of our life. And thus much concerning our allotted daemons.

"In the next place, with respect to the daemon of Socrates, these three things are to be particularly considered. First, that he not only ranks as a daemon, but also as a god: for in the course of this dialogue he clearly says, 'I have long been of opinion that the god did not as yet direct me to hold any conversation with you.'

"He calls the same power, therefore, a daemon and a god. And in the Apology he more clearly evinces that this daemon is allotted a divine transcendency, considered as ranking in a daemoniacal nature. And this is what we before said, that the daemons of divine souls, and who make choice of an intellectual and anagogic life, are divine, transcending the whole of a daemoniacal genus, and being the first participants of the gods. For, as is a daemon among gods, such also is a god among daemons. But among the divinities the hyparxis is divine; but in daemons, on the contrary, the idiom of their essence is daemoniacal, but the analogy which they bear to divinity evinces their essence to be godlike. For, on account of their transcendency with respect to other daemons, they frequently appear as gods. With great propriety, therefore, does Socrates call his daemon a god: for he belonged to the first and highest daemons. Hence Socrates was most perfect, being governed by such a presiding power, and conducting himself by the will of such a leader and guardian of his life. This then was one of the illustrious prerogatives of the daemon of Socrates. The second was this: that Socrates perceived a certain voice proceeding from his daemon. For this is attested by him in the Thætætus and in the Phædrus. And this voice is the signal from the daemon, which he speaks of in the Thætæs: and again in the Phædrus, when he was about to pass over the river, he experienced the accustomed signal from the daemon. What, then, does Socrates indicate by these assertions, and what was the voice through which he says the daemon signified to him his will?

"In the first place, we must say that Socrates, through his dianoetic power, and his science of things, enjoyed the inspiration of his daemon, who continually recalled him to divine love. In the second place, in the affairs of life, Socrates supernally directed his providential attention to more imperfect souls; and according to the energy of his daemon, he received the light proceeding
from any other party: for that what you have of your own, whether of outward advantages or inward accomplishments, is so great as to be all-sufficient.

proceeding from thence, neither in his dianoetic part alone, nor in his doxaistic powers, but also in his spirit, the illumination of the daemon suddenly diffusing itself through the whole of his life, and now moving sense itself. For it is evident that reason, imagination, and sense, enjoy the same energy differently; and that each of our inward parts is passive to, and is moved by, the daemon in a peculiar manner. The voice, therefore, did not act upon Socrates externally with passivity; but the daemonic inspiration, proceeding inwardly through his whole soul, and diffusing itself as far as to the organs of sense, became at last a voice, which was rather recognized by consciousness (εγνώμονα) than by sense: for such are the illuminations of good daemons, and the gods.

"In the third place, let us consider the peculiarity of the daemon of Socrates: for it never exhorted, but perpetually recalled him. This also must again be referred to the Socratic life: for it is not a property common to our allotted daemons, but was the characteristic of the guardian of Socrates. We must say, therefore, that the beneficent and philanthropic disposition of Socrates, and his great promptitude with respect to the communication of good, did not require the exhortation of the daemon. For he was impelled from himself, and was ready at all times to impart to all men the most excellent life. But since many of those that came to him were unadapted to the pursuit of virtue and the science of wholes, his governing good daemon restrained him from a providential care of such as these. Just as a good charioteer alone restrains the impetus of a horse naturally well adapted for the race, but does not stimulate him, in consequence of his being excited to motion from himself, and not requiring the spur, but the bridle. And hence Socrates, from his great readiness to benefit those with whom he conversed, rather required a recalling than an exciting daemon. For the unaptitude of auditors, which is for the most part concealed from human sagacity, requires a daemonic discrimination; and the knowledge of favourable opportunities can by this alone be accurately announced to us. Socrates therefore being naturally impelled to good, alone required to be recalled in his unseasonable impulses.

"But further still, it may be said, that of daemons, some are allotted a purifying and undefiled power; others a generative; others a perfective; and others a demiurgic power: and, in short, they are divided according to the characteristic peculiarities of the gods, and the powers under which they are arranged. Each, likewise, according to his hyparxis, incites the object of his providential care to a blessed life; some of them moving us to an attention to inferior concerns; and others restraining us from action, and an energy verging to externals. It appears, therefore, that the daemon of Socrates being allotted this peculiarity, viz. cathartic, and the source of an undefiled life, and being arranged under this power of Apollo, and uniformly presiding over the whole of purification, separated also Socrates from too much commerce with the vulgar, and a life extending itself into multitude. But it led him into the depths of his soul, and an energy undefiled by subordinate natures: and hence it never exhorted, but perpetually recalled him.

1 i.e. the powers belonging to opinion, or that part of the soul which knows that a thing is, but not why it is.

4 For,
sufficient. In the first place, you think yourself excelling in the handsomeness of your person and in the fineness of your figure. And in this opinion it is evident to every one who has eyes that you are not mistaken. In the next place, you dwell on these thoughts: that you are descended from families the most illustrious in the state to which you belong; that this state is the greatest of any in Greece; that you have friends here, and relations on your father’s side, very numerous and very powerful, ready to assist you on every occasion; and that your relations on your mother’s side are not inferior to them, either in power or in number. But a greater strength than from all these whom I have mentioned, taken together, you think that you derive from Pericles, the son of Xanthippus, whom your father left guardian to yourself and to your brother: Pericles, who is able to do what he pleases; and that, not only at Athens, but throughout all Greece, and with many and great families abroad. To all these advantages I shall add the greatness of your estate; though, indeed, on this advantage you seem to value yourself less than you do.

For, what else is to recall, than to withdraw him from the multitude to inward energy? And of what is this the peculiarity except of purification? Indeed it appears to me, that, as Orpheus places the Apolloniacal monad over king Bacchus, which recalls him from a progression into Titanic multitude and a desertion of his royal throne, in like manner the demon of Socrates conducted him to an intellectual place of survey, and restrained his association with the multitude. For the demon is analogous to Apollo, being his attendant, but the intellect of Socrates to Bacchus: for our intellect is the progeny of the power of this divinity.”—T.

1 That Alcibiades, says Proclus in his MS. Commentary on this dialogue, was large and beautiful, is evident from his being called the general object of the love of all Greece; and is also evident from the saying of Antisthenes, that if Achilles was not such as Alcibiades, he was not truly beautiful; and from Hermœ being fashioned according to his form. "Οτι δε αυτός ὁ Ἀλκιβιάδης εκείνος και καλὸς, δηλοὶ μεν και το κοινον αυτὸν ερωμενον καλεσθαι της Ἑλλαδος ἀχιλλος" δηλοι δε το Ἀντισθενος ειτων, ὡς ει μη τιστος την Ἀχιλλος, ου αρα τη οντυς καλος. δηλοι δε και τη της Ἑρμος πλατεσα εκα το ειδε αντι — Γ.

2 For an account of the noble descent of Alcibiades, see Pausan. lib. 1. Thucyd. lib. 6. Ισορητ. περι Σίμων. Andocid. in Orat. 4th.—T.

3 History testifies that Alcibiades from his childhood paid but little attention to the acquisition of wealth. Indeed, according to Plato, one of the greatest arguments of being well born is a contempt of wealth; and hence, in the Republic, he makes this to be one of the elements of the philosophic nature. For an aptitude to virtue is inconsistent with an attachment to riches. Indeed, since it is requisite that a genuine lover of virtue should despise the body, is it not much more necessary that he should despise the goods of the body?

But,
do on any other. Elevated as you are in your own mind on these accounts, you have looked down on your admirers: and they, conscious of their comparative meanness, have bowed their heads, and have retired.

But, assuming a more elevated exordium, let us consider from what conceptions souls become so much attached to beauty and magnitude of body, to nobility, and power: for these are images extended to souls of realities themselves, which the intelligent despise, but the stupid embrace with avidity. We must say, therefore, that beauty and magnitude appear in the first of the divine orders;—the former rendering all divine natures lovely, and desirable to secondary beings; and the latter causing them to transcend mundane wholes, and to be exempt from their proper progeny. For magnitude, according to Plato, considered as a divine idea, is that cause by which every where one thing transcends another. Of those two great principles likewise, bound and infinity, which are next in dignity and power to the ineffable principle of things, bound is the source of beauty, and infinity of magnitude. Hence the alliance of beauty to the former, as being the form of forms, and as swimming on the light of all intelligible forms; but of magnitude to the latter, from its incomprehensibility, from its embracing all things and subduing all things. From the first principles, therefore, beauty and magnitude proceed through all the middle orders, as far as to the apparent world, which, according to Timæus, they perfectly render the greatest and the most beautiful of sensible gods. Souls therefore, according to their spontaneous innate conceptions, pre-assume that these shine forth in divine natures; and hence they admire beauty and magnitude in mortal bodies, as possessing a resemblance of their divine originals. However, through their ignorance of the true archetypes, they are detained by, and alone admire, the obscure and fleeting imitations of real beauty and magnitude.

In the second place, with respect to nobility, this also first subsists in divine natures. For things which derive their subsistence from more elevated causes transcend according to genus those which are generated in secondary ranks. This is also evident from Homer, who makes Juno say to Jupiter:

...... thence is my race derived, whence thine:

and in consequence of this she wishes to possess an equal dominion in the universe with Jupiter. According to this conception, you may also say that in us the rational is more noble than the irrational soul, because, according to Plato in the Timæus, the artificer of the universe gave subsistence to the former—but the junior gods, or those powers that preside over the mundane spheres, to the latter. Natural succession is the image of this nobility; to which when souls alone direct their attention, they become filled with vain conceptions, and are ignorant of what Plato affirms in the Theætetus, that it is by no means wonderful, in the infinity of time past, if he who is able to enumerate five-and-twenty noble ancestors, should find, by ascending higher in antiquity, that these progenitors were descended from as many slaves. But the stable and perpetual alliance of souls is suspended from divine natures, about which they are diffeminated, and from divine powers under which they are arranged. For the attendants of more exalted deities are more noble, as likewise are those powers which are suspended from greater divinities, according to an allotment in the universe.—T.
This you are very sensible of: and therefore I well know that you wonder what I can have in my thoughts, or what hopes I can entertain, seeing that I quit you not, but continue my attachment to you still, when your other admirers have all forsaken you.

Alcibiades: This however, Socrates, perhaps you do not know, that you have been a little beforehand with me. For I really had it in my mind to address you first, and to ask you these very questions: What can possibly be your meaning, and with what views or expectations is it, that you continually press on me, and, wherever I am, are assiduous to be there yourself? for I do in truth wonder, what your business can be with me, and should be very glad to be informed.

Socrates: You will hear me then, 'tis to be supposed, with willingness and attention, if you really are desirous, as you say you are, of knowing what I have in my thoughts. I speak therefore as to a person disposed to hear, and to stay till he has heard all.

Alcibiades: I am entirely so disposed: it is your part to speak.

Socrates: But observe this: you must not wonder, if, as I found it difficult to make a beginning, I should find it no less difficult to make an end.

Alcibiades: My good man, say all you have to say; for I shall not fail to attend to you.

Socrates: I must say it then: and though it is a hard task for any man to address the person whom he loves or admires, if that person be superior to flattery, yet I must adventure boldly to speak my mind. If, Alcibiades, I had observed you satisfied with those advantages of yours, which I just now enumerated; if you had appeared to indulge the fancy of spending your whole life in the enjoyment of them; I persuade myself, that my love and admiration of you would have long since left me. But that you entertain thoughts very different from such as those, I shall now show, and shall lay your own mind open before yourself. By these means you will also plainly perceive, how constantly and closely my mind has attended to you. My opinion of you then is this: That, if any of the gods were to put this question to you,—"Alcibiades!" were he to say, "whether do you choose to live in the possession of all the things which are at present yours; or do you prefer immediate death, if you are not permitted ever to acquire things greater?" in this case, it appears to me that you would make
death your option. But what kind of expectations you live in, I shall now declare. You think, that, if you speedily make your appearance before the Athenian people in assembly, (and this you purpose to do within a few days,) you shall be able to convince them, that you merit higher honours than were ever bestowed on Pericles, or any other person in any age: and having convinced them of this, you think that you will arrive at the chief power in the state; and if here at home, that you will then have the greatest weight and influence abroad; and not only so with the rest of the Grecian states, but with the barbarian nations too, as many as inhabit the same continent with us. And further: if the deity whom I before spoke of, allowing you larger limits, were to say to you, that "you must be contented with being the master here in Europe; for that 'twill not be permitted you to pass over into Asia, nor to concern yourself with the administration of any affairs there," it appears to me, that neither on these terms, thus limited, would you think life eligible; nor on any terms, indeed, that fell short of filling, in a manner, the whole world with your renown, and of being every where lord and master. I believe you deem no man that ever lived, excepting Cyrus and Xerxes, worth the speaking of. In fine, that you entertain such hopes as I have mentioned, I know with certainty, and speak not from mere conjecture. Now you, perhaps, conscious of the truth of what I have spoken, might say, What is all this to the account you promised to give me, of the reasons for which your attachment to me still continues? I will tell you then, dear son of Clinias and Dinomache! That all these thoughts of yours should ever come to an end, is impossible without my help,—so great power I think myself to have with regard to your affairs and to yourself too. For this reason, I have long been of opinion, that the god did not as yet permit me to hold any conversation with you; and I waited for the time when he would give me leave. For, as you entertain hopes of proving to the people, that your value to them is equal to whatever they can give you; and as you expect that, having proved this point, you shall immediately obtain whatever power you desire; in the same manner do I expect to have the greatest power and influence over

1 That is, the daemon of Socrates. See the note at the beginning of the dialogue concerning daemons.—T.
you, when I shall have proved that I am valuable to you more than any other thing is; and that neither guardian, nor relation, nor any other person, is able to procure you the power you long for, except myself; with the assistance, however, of the god. So long therefore as you were yet too young, and before you had your mind filled with those swelling hopes, I believe that the god would not permit me to have discourse with you, because you would not have regarded me, and I consequently should have discoursed in vain; but that he has now given me free leave, for that you would now hearken to me.

Alc. Much more unaccountable and absurd do you appear to me now, Socrates, since you have begun to open yourself, than when you followed me every where without speaking to me a word: and yet you had all the appearance of being a man of that sort then. As to what you have said, whether I entertain those thoughts in my mind, or not, you, it seems, know with certainty: so that, were I to say I did not, the denial would not avail me, nor persuade you to believe me. Admitting it then, and supposing that I indulge the hopes you mentioned ever so much, how they may be accomplished by means of you, and that without your help they never can, are you able to prove to me?

Soc. Do you ask me, whether I am able to prove it to you in a long harangue, such a one as you are accustomed to hear? I have no abilities in that way. But yet I should be able, as I think, to prove to you, that those pretensions of mine are not vain, if you would be willing but to do me one small piece of service.

Alc. If that service be not difficult to be done, I am willing.

Soc. Do you think it difficult, or not, to make answers to such questions as are proposed to you?

Alc. Not difficult.

Soc. Be ready then to answer.

Alc. Do you then propose your questions.

Soc. May I propose them, with a supposition that you have those thoughts in your mind which I attribute to you?

* In the Greek text, as it is printed, the word σει is here omitted, but seems necessary to be inferred, and the passage to be read thus, ὅτι πάντως μάλλον αἰδος σει μνή, κ. ι. λ. so as to correspond, as it ought, with these words in the preceding part of the sentence, ὅτι αὖται πάντως αἰδος μ.—S.
Alc. Be it so, if you choose it; that I may know what further you have to say.

Soc. Well then. You have it in your mind, as I said, to appear in presence of the Athenians within a short time, with intention to harangue them and give them your advice. If therefore, when you are just ready to mount the rostrum, I were to stop you, and to say thus, "Since the Athenians are here met in assembly, on purpose to deliberate on some of their affairs, what, I pray you, are to be the subjects of their deliberation, now that you rise up to give them your counsel? Must not the subjects be such as you are better acquainted with than they?" what answer would you make me?

Alc. I certainly should answer, that the subjects were such as I knew better than others who were present.

Soc. On those subjects, then, which you happen to have knowledge in you are a good counsellor?

Alc. Without doubt.

Soc. Have you knowledge in those things only which you have either learnt from others, or found out yourself?

Alc. What things other than those is it possible that I should have any knowledge in?

Soc. And is it possible that ever you should have learnt, or have found out, any thing which you was not willing to learn, or to search out by yourself?

Alc. It is not.

Soc. And was you ever at any time willing to learn, or did you ever at any time seek to know, any things in which you imagined yourself to be already knowing?

Alc. No, certainly.

Soc. In those things which you now happen to know, was there once a time when you did not think yourself knowing?

Alc. That must have been.

Soc. Now, what the things are which you have learnt, I tolerably well know. But if you have been taught any thing without my knowledge, tell me what. To the best of my memory, you have been taught grammar, the gymnic exercises, and to play on stringed instruments of music.
music: for on wind-instruments, besides, you refused to learn 1. This is the sum total of all your knowledge; unless you have learnt any thing else in some place or other, which I have not discovered: and I think, that neither by day nor yet by night did you ever stir out of doors but I was acquainted with all your motions.

ALC. 'Tis true that I have not gone to any other masters than to such as taught the arts which you have mentioned.

Soc. Well then. When the Athenians are consulting together about the grammar of their language, how to write or speak it with propriety, at these times is it that you will rise up to give them your advice?

ALC. By Jove, not I.

Soc. But is it then when they are in debate about striking chords on the lyre?

ALC. By no means should I make a speech on such a subject.

Soc. It cannot be on the subject of wrestling neither: because they never use to deliberate on this subject in their public assemblies.

ALC. Certainly not.

Soc. On what subject, then, of their consultations is it that you intend the giving them your advice? It cannot be when building is the subject.

ALC. No, certainly.

Soc. Because in this case a builder would give them better advice than you could.

ALC. True.

Soc. Nor yet is it when they consult together concerning divination.

ALC. It is not.

Soc. For a diviner would in this case be a better counsellor than you.

ALC. Without doubt.

Soc. And that, whether he was a tall or a short man 2; whether his person

1 Alleging, that the performances on such instruments were illiberal, and unbecoming to a gentleman; that they were ungraceful, and distorting to the face; and could not, like those on stringed instruments, such as the lyre, be accompanied by the voice of the performer. See Plutarch's Life of Alcibiades; and A. Gellius, lib. 15. c. 17.—S.

2 These external advantages of person and of birth, in any speaker, always dazzle the eyes and imagination of the vulgar, and divert their attention, as well from the matter of the speech as from the manner in which it is spoken. The most ignorant and barbarian nations too, in
PERSON was handsome or deformed; and whether his family was noble or ignoble.

ALC. How should it be otherwise?

SOC. For to give good advice in any case whatever, belongs, I suppose, only to a person skilled in the subject, and not to a fine gentleman.

ALC. Beyond all question.

SOC. And whether the man who gives them his advice be rich or poor, it will make no difference to the Athenians, when they are consulting about the health of the city; but they will always inquire after a physician only to consult with.

ALC. They will be right in so doing.

SOC. Now, on what subject is it, when they are met in consultation together, that you will do right in rising up and giving them your counsel?

ALC. 'Tis when they are in consultation, Socrates, about their own affairs.

SOC. About increasing their navy, do you mean? what sort of vessels they should provide, and in what manner they should have them built?

ALC. I mean no such thing, Socrates.

SOC. Because you are ignorant, I presume, in the art of shipbuilding. Is not this the reason? Or is there any other, why you would choose in such a consultation to sit silent?

ALC. That is the only reason.

SOC. What affairs of their own then do you mean?

ALC. I mean, Socrates, when they are deliberating about the making war, or the making peace; or concerning any other affairs of state.

SOC. Do you mean, when they are deliberating on these points, with whom 'tis proper for them to make peace, and with whom to engage in war, and in what way 'tis proper to carry on that war? Is this what you mean?

ALL ages, have always been observed to lay the greatest stress on those circumstances, in choosing a king, a leader in war, or magistrates and counselors in time of peace. Alcibiades was now too young and inexperienced to judge of men by better standards than those used by the vulgar and the ignorant, or to know the superior advantages of mental abilities and knowledge. The size of an understanding, the beauty of a soul, or the divine origin of the human mind, he had no more thought of, than he would have done had he been bred a plowboy, or born a Hottentot.—S.
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ALC. It is.

Soc. And you will agree, that 'tis proper to make peace or war with those people with whom 'tis best so to do?

ALC. Certainly.

Soc. And at that time when 'tis best?

ALC. By all means.

Soc. And to continue it so long as 'tis best to continue it?

ALC. To be sure.

Soc. Now, suppose that the Athenians were deliberating about the exercise of wrestling, with what sort of persons it is proper to come to close quarters, and with whom to engage at arm's length, and in what way, would you give the best counsel in this case, or would a master of the exercises?

ALC. Such a master, certainly.

Soc. Can you tell me now, what end such a master would have in his view, when he gave his counsel on these points, with whom it is proper to wrestle closely, and with whom not so? at what times it is proper, and in what manner? My meaning is to ask you these questions: Whether is it proper to wrestle closely with those persons with whom it is best so to wrestle, or is it not?

ALC. It is.

Soc. Whether as much also as is best?

ALC. As much.

Soc. Whether at those times too when 'tis best?

ALC. Without doubt.

Soc. But further: Ought not a finger sometimes, in singing, to touch his lute, and to move his feet?

ALC. He ought.

Soc. Ought he not to do so at those times when 'tis best so to do?

ALC. Certainly.

Soc. And to continue the doing so as long as 'tis best to continue it?

ALC. I agree.

Soc. Well now. Since you agree with me that there is a best in both these actions, in fingerling the lute whilst singing, and in the exercise of close wrestling, by what name call you that which is the best in fingerling the lute?
lute? As that which is the best in wrestling I call gymnastic, what name now do you give to that which is best done in that other action?

Alc. I do not apprehend your meaning.

Soc. Try to copy after the pattern which I shall now give you. Supposing, then, that I had been asked this question, “In wrestling, how is that performed which is performed best?” I should answer, ’Tis performed in every respect rightly. Now, in wrestling, that performance is right which is according to the rules of art. Is it not?

Alc. It is.

Soc. And the art, in this case, is it not gymnastic?

Alc. Without dispute.

Soc. I said, that that which is the best in wrestling is gymnastic.

Alc. You did.

Soc. And was it not well said?

Alc. I think it was.

Soc. Come then. Do you in like manner (for it would not ill become you likewise to discourse well) say, in the first place, What is the art, to which belong the playing on the harp, the singing, and the moving at the same time, rightly all; the whole of this art, by what name is it called? Are you not yet able to tell?

Alc. Indeed I am not.

Soc. Try in this way then. What goddesses are those who preside over this art?

Alc. The muses mean you, Socrates?

Soc. I do. Consider now, what name is given to their art—a name derived from them.

Alc. I suppose you mean music.

Soc. The very thing. What then is that which is performed rightly, according to this art? Just as in the other case I told you, that whatever was performed rightly according to the rules of that other art, was gymnastic; in this case now, after the same manner, whatever is

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¹ That is, gymnastically performed, or a gymnastic performance. We have thus translated the Greek in this place, on a supposition that the words ἐπὶ γυμναστικῶς ought to be here read, instead.
is performed agreeably to the rules of this art, how do you say it must be performed?

Alc. Musically, I think.

Soc. You say well. Let us now proceed further; and tell me, what name you give to that which is best in making war; and what name to that which is best in making peace: just as, in the former cases, the best in one of them you called the more musical, in the other the more gymnastic. Try now in these cases likewise to name what is the best.

Alc. I find myself quite unable to tell what it is.

Soc. 'Tis a shame to you that you are so. For, suppose you were speaking and giving your opinion concerning the superiority of one kind of food to another, and should say, that such or such a kind of food was the best at this season, and such or such a quantity of it; and suppose a man should thereupon question you thus, "What do you mean by the best, Alcibiades?" on these subjects you would be able to give him an answer, and to tell him, that by the best you meant the most wholesome; and this you would say, notwithstanding that you do not profess to be a physician. And yet, on a subject which you profess to have the knowledge of, and rise up to give your judgment and advice on, as if you had this knowledge, are you not ashamed, when you are questioned, as I think you are, on this very subject, to be unable to give an answer, and to tell what is that which is the best? And must not this inability appear to others shameful in you?

instead of τυ γυμναστικη. Let the learned reader judge, whether our supposition be well founded or not, after he has read a little further on in the original.—S.

3 This passage in the original, as printed severally by Aldus, Walder, Henry Peters, and Henry Stephens, runs thus:—ωσπερ εκει εφ' ἐκαστῃ ελεγες τῷ ομοίῳ, ὅτι μουσικώτερον καὶ επὶ τῷ ἐτερῷ, ὅτι γυμναστικώτερον. But if we conjecture rightly, it should be printed thus: ὡσπερ εκει εφ' ἐκαστῃ ελεγες TO AMEINON. 'ΕΝΙ, δ', τῷ μουσικώτερον καὶ επὶ τῷ ἐτερῳ, δ', τῷ γυμναστικώτερον. Our conjecture is favoured by the Latin translation, which Ficinus made from a MS. copy of Plato. Long since we wrote this, we have found the following emendation of this passage, made by Cornarius, in his Eclogæ, ὡσπερ εκει εφ' ΕΤΕΡΩΝ ελεγες TO AMEINON, ὅτι μουσικώτερον. τ. 1. And this way of reading the sentence we should prefer to our own conjecture, but that ours is quite agreeable to the translation of Ficinus, followed herein by Dacier; and also that the error is thus more easily accounted for, and the alteration of the text less.—S.

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ALC. Certainly it must.

Soc. Consider thoughtfully now, and tell me, What is the end or aim of that which is done best in the making or the continuing of peace, and likewise in the going to war with those with whom it is proper?

ALC. Well, I do consider; but cannot think of what it is.

Soc. Know you not, when we go to war, what it is which both the parties accuse each other of during their military preparations, and what names they give to the causes of their quarrels?

ALC. I do. They accuse each other of deceiving, or of offering violence, or of taking away some of their possessions.

Soc. But observe: How do they say they have been thus treated? Try to tell me what difference there is in the manner of this treatment they give to each other.

ALC. Do you mean, whether they thus treat each other justly or unjustly?

Soc. This is the very difference I mean.

ALC. These different manners of ill treatment differ totally and entirely.

Soc. Well then. With whom would you counsel the Athenians to engage in war? whether with those who treat them ill unjustly, or with those who treat them as they deserve?

ALC. A question, this, of very serious import. For, if any man should entertain a thought of the propriety of going to war with such as act uprightly, he would not dare to own it.

Soc. Because it is not lawful, I suppose, to engage in such a war.

ALC. By no means is it so, neither seems it to be beautiful.

Soc. With a view therefore to these things 1, and to what is just, you will make your speeches to the people.

1 These things evidently mean the lawful and the beautiful, mentioned immediately before. The sentence in the original, as printed, is this; πρὸς ταύτα ἄβα καὶ ἄν τὸ δικαίον τὰς λόγους τοιαύτης. In which the words καὶ ἄν are undoubtedly transposed, and should be read ἄν καὶ. The transposition not being discovered by Stephens obliged him to change the word ταύτα into τάτα, as belonging to τὸ δικαίον, and therefore made to agree with it. This alteration supposes καὶ ἄν, lawful and beautiful, to be words merely synonymous with δικαίον, just, consequently superfluous, and introduced to no purpose. The transposition must have been more antient than any MS. of Plato now remaining; for it has corrupted not only the oldest editions, but the oldest translations too; infecting of course all those which came after.—S. ALC.
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Alc. There is a necessity for bringing my arguments from these topics.

Soc. That best then, concerning which I just now asked you what it was,—the best on these subjects,—whether it is proper to go to war or not, with whom it is proper, and with whom not,—at what times it is proper, and when not,—does the best on these subjects appear to be any other thing than which is the most agreeable to justice? or does it not?

Alc. It appears to be no other thing.

Soc. How is this, friend Alcibiades? Is it a secret to yourself, that you are ignorant in the science of justice? or else, Is it a secret to me, that you have learnt it, and have gone to some master, who has taught you to distinguish between what is the most agreeable to justice, and what is the most repugnant to it? If this which I last mentioned be the case, who is this master? Tell me; that I too may go and learn of him, through your recommendation.

Alc. You banter, Socrates.

Soc. Not so; by the guardian-god of friendship to both of us, you and me, whose deity I would least of all invoke for witness to a falsehood! If then you have any master who teaches you that science, let me know who he is.

Alc. And what if I have not? Do you think that I could by no other means have attained the knowledge of what is just, and what is unjust?

Soc. I think that you would, if you had discovered it by yourself.

Alc. Are you then of opinion that I could not have discovered it by myself?

Soc. I am entirely of opinion that you might, if ever you had sought for it.

Alc. Do you presume, then, that I have never sought for it?

Soc. I should presume that you had, if ever you had thought yourself ignorant of it.

Alc. Was there not then a time when I so thought?

Soc.

\footnote{In the Greek, as printed, the words are these,—Εινάς ἦν ἐπὶ ἐπι ἐπι ἐπι ἐπι ἐπι. We here suppose that the ἦν immediately before ἐπι ought to be omitted: and our supposition is favoured by Ficinus's...}
Soc. Well said. Can you tell me, then, at what time you did not imagine yourself to know what things are just, and what are unjust? For, come, let me ask you: Was it last year, when you inquired into these subjects, and did not imagine yourself already knowing in them? or did you at that time think that you had such knowledge? Answer truly now, that our argument may come to some conclusion.

Alc. Well then. I did at that time presume myself to be knowing in those subjects.

Soc. And in all the third year back from this present, in all the fourth too, and all the fifth, did you not presume of yourself the same?

Alc. I did.

Soc. And earlier than the time I mentioned last, you was but a boy.

Alc. True.

Soc. And in your days of boyhood I am well assured that you thought yourself knowing in those subjects.

Alc. How are you so sure of that?

Soc. Often in the schools, when you was a boy, and in other places too whenever you was playing at dice, or was a party in any other play, I have heard you talking about what things were just or unjust—not as if you had any doubts on those subjects, but very strenuously and boldly pronouncing, that such or such a one of your play-mates was a wicked boy, and a rogue, and was guilty of a piece of injustice. Is not all this true?

Alc. Well. But what else was I to do, when any of them injured me?

Soc. Right. But if you had happened to be ignorant of this very point,
whether you was injured or not, would you say, "What in such a case was I to do?"

**ALC.** But, by Jove, I was not ignorant of that point; for I clearly saw that I was injured.

**SOC.** You thought yourself, it seems, therefore, when you was a boy, knowing in the science of what is just and what is unjust?

**ALC.** I did so; and knowing in it I was too.

**SOC.** At what time was it that you first discovered it? for certainly it was not at a time when you thought yourself knowing in it.

**ALC.** That, 'tis clear, could not be.

**SOC.** At what time then was it that you thought yourself ignorant in it? Consider: but that time you will never find.

**ALC.** By Jove, Socrates, I am not able to tell when.

**SOC.** You did not acquire that knowledge, then, by any discovery of your own?

**ALC.** That does not at all appear to have been the case.

**SOC.** And besides, you acknowledged but just before, that you did not acquire it by being taught. If then you neither discovered it of yourself, nor was taught it by any other person, how or whence have you this knowledge?

**ALC.** Well. But I was wrong in my answers, when I supposed that I had found out that knowledge by myself.

**SOC.** In what way then did you acquire it?

**ALC.** I learnt it, I presume, in the same way in which others do.

**SOC.** We are now come round again to the same question as before: From whom did you learn it? Inform me.

**ALC.** From the people.

**SOC.** To no good teachers have you recourse for the origin of your knowledge, in referring it to the people.

**ALC.** Why so? Are not they capable of teaching?

**SOC.** Not so much as what movements are proper, and what improper, to make in a game at tables. And yet the knowledge of these

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1 We have here followed the text, as it is printed by Stephens, where we read αὐτοὶ. The other editors give us αὐτοί.—S.
things is meaner and more inconsiderable, in my opinion, than the knowledge of what things are just, and what are unjust. Do not you think so too?

ALC. I do.

Soc. Incapable, therefore, as they are of teaching meaner things, can they teach things higher and of more importance?

ALC. I think they can. Nay, it is certain that they are capable of teaching many things of more importance than the movements in a game at tables.

Soc. What things do you mean?

ALC. Such as, for instance, to speak the Greek language: for I myself learnt it from them. Nor could I name any other teacher of that language that I ever had; but must refer my being able to speak it to those very persons who you say are no good teachers.

Soc. Well, my noble sir: in this matter, indeed, the people are good teachers, and as such may justly be recommended.

ALC. Why particularly in this?

Soc. Because in this they possess all the requisites necessary to every good teacher.

ALC. What requisites do you mean?

Soc. Do you not know, that those who are to teach any thing must in the first place have the knowledge of it themselves? Must they not?

ALC. Without doubt.

Soc. And must not all those who have the knowledge of any thing agree together on that subject, and not differ in their opinions of it?

ALC. Certainly.

Soc. But where they differ among themselves in their opinions, would you say that they have, all of them, knowledge in those subjects?

ALC. Certainly not.

Soc. Of such things, then, how can they be good teachers?

ALC. By no means can they.

Soc. Well now, Do the people seem to you to differ among themselves about the meaning of the words stone and wood? Ask whom you will, are they not all agreed in the same opinion? And when they are bid to take up a stone,
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Stone, or a piece of wood, do they not all go to the same kind of things? And do they not all apprehend alike, what kind of things every other such word signifies? For I presume this is what you mean by knowledge of the Greek language: is it not?

Alc. It is.

Soc. Now, on these subjects, as we said before, do not the people of our city agree among themselves? And among the several cities of Greece is there any difference of opinion? Do the same words, in different places, signify different things?

Alc. They do not.

Soc. On these subjects, therefore, agreeably to our argument, the people should be good teachers.

Alc. It is true.

Soc. If then we had a mind to have any person instructed in this matter, we should do right in sending him, for such instruction, amongst the multitude of the people?

Alc. Quite right.

Soc. But what if we had a mind to have that person taught, not only to know men from horses by the different words denoting them in the Greek language, but, beside this, to know what horses are fit for the race, and what are unfit? is the multitude able to teach this also?

Alc. Certainly, not.

Soc. And you admit this to be a sufficient proof of their ignorance in this matter, and of their inability to teach, that they agree not in their opinions on this head?

Alc. I do.

Soc. And what if we would have him learn, not only by what word in our language men are distinguished from other things, but, further, to know what men are healthy and who are unhealthy? whether should we deem the multitude to be the proper teachers for him?

Alc. By no means.

Soc. And it would be an evidence to you of their being bad teachers on this subject, if you saw them disagreeing in their opinions?

Alc. It would.
Soc. And how is it now on the subject of justice? Do you find the multitude agreeing one with another, or even the same person always of the same mind, concerning either men or actions, who are the honest, or what is just?

Alc. Less than on any other subject, by Jove, Socrates, are they agreed with regard to this.

Soc. What? do you then think they differ on this subject more than upon any other?

Alc. By far do they.

Soc. You have never, I suppose, seen or heard of men, in any age, who contended for their several opinions concerning the wholesome and the unwholesome in food, with so much zeal as to fight and kill one another on that account?

Alc. Never.

Soc. But concerning just and unjust in actions, that their disputes have carried them to such extremities, I am sure, if you have not seen, you have at least heard from many reports, and particularly from those of Homer; for you have heard both the Odyssey and the Iliad read to you.

Alc. Thoroughly well, Socrates, am I versed in both.

Soc. And is not the subject of both these poems the diversity of opinions with regard to what is just and what is unjust?

Alc. It is.

Soc. And did not this diversity of opinions produce fighting and slaughter between the Greeks and Trojans, and between Ulysses and the wooers of Penelope?

Alc. True.

Soc. And I believe that the deaths of those Athenians, Lacedaemonians and Boeotians, who perished at Tanagra, and of those who afterwards died...

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1 The first battle of Tanagra, in which the Lacedaemonians prevailed over the Athenians, was uncommonly fierce, and very many were slain, of the victorious army as well as of the vanquished. For so we are expressly told by Thucydides, in lib. 1. § 108; by Plutarch, in the Life of Cimon; and by Diodorus Siculus, in lib. 11. ad ann. 3. Olympiad. 85. The next year, in a second battle at the same place, the Athenians were successful; and the gallantry of their behaviour in it was equal, says the historian last cited, to that of their exploits at Marathon and Plataea. But the first battle of Tanagra seems to be here meant, and not the second, as Messieurs Le Fevre and Dacier imagined. For the purpose of Plato was to show, not the valour exhibited, but the blood shed, in fighting about right and wrong;—S.
died at Coronea, amongst whom was Clinias your father, were not owing to differences on any other subject than this, what was just and what unjust.

Alc. You are in the right.

Soc. Shall we say then that these people had knowledge in that subject on which they differed with so much vehemence, as in support of their different opinions to suffer from each other the utmost effects of hatred?

Alc. It appears they had not.

Soc. Do you not then refer to such a sort of teachers as you yourself acknowledge to be ignorant?

Alc. I do, it seems.

Soc. How therefore is it probable that you should have the knowledge to discern what is just from what is unjust, when your account of them is so vague, and when you appear neither to have been taught that knowledge by any other person, nor to have found it out yourself?

Alc. According to what you say, 'tis not probable.

Soc. Are you sensible that what you said last was not said fairly, Alcibiades?

Alc. What was unfair?

Soc. Your assertion that I said those things of you which were said.

Alc. What? did not you say that I had not the knowledge to discern what was just from what was unjust?

Soc. Not I, indeed.

Alc. Who was it then that said so? was it I myself?

Soc. It was.

Alc. Make that appear.

Soc. You will see it in this way: If I ask you concerning one and two, which is the greater number, you will say that two is.

Alc. I shall.

1 The battle of Coronea between the Athenians and the Boeotians, in the 2d year of the 83d Olympiad, was not less fierce than the first battle at Tanagra, and much more unfortunate to the Athenians; a great part of their army being slain, together with Tolmides the commander of it in chief; and all who remained alive being taken prisoners; as we learn from Thucydides, in lib. 1. § 113; and from Diodorus, in lib. 12. ad ann. supradict.—S.

2 In the way of arguing by induction, that is, by inferring some universal proposition from many particular propositions acknowledged to be true, and comprehended in that universal.—S.
Soc. How much greater is it?
Alc. Greater by one.
Soc. Now whether of us is it who says that two is a greater number or more than one by one?
Alc. It is I myself.
Soc. Did not I ask the question, and did not you give an answer to it?
Alc. True: it was so.
Soc. On this subject, then, who appears to have made any assertion? Do I, who only asked a question? or do you, who gave the answer?
Alc. I.
Soc. And if I ask you how many letters compose the name of Socrates, and you tell me, which of us is it who declares how many?
Alc. I.
Soc. In a word, whenever any question is asked, and an answer to it is given, say, who is it that makes an assertion, the party that asks the question, or the party that gives the answer?
Alc. The party that gives the answer, in my opinion, Socrates.
Soc. Through the whole of our past discourse was not I the party that asked the questions?
Alc. You were.
Soc. And was not you the party that gave the answers?
Alc. I was.
Soc. Well then. Whether of us two made the assertions?
Alc. From what I have admitted, Socrates, I myself appear to have been that person.
Soc. In those assertions was it not said that Alcibiades, the son of Clinias, had not the knowledge to discern what was just and what was unjust, but imagined that he had; and that he was about going into the assembly to give the Athenians his counsel and advice upon subjects which he knew nothing of? Is not this true?
Alc. It appears so to be.
Soc. That which Euripides says may therefore well be applied to the condition

* Monf. Dacier in this place rightly refers us to the Hippolytus of the poet here cited. For in one of the scenes of that tragedy, Phaedra, being ashamed to confess to her old nurse that
condition you are now in, Alcibiades. You are in danger of being found
to have heard all this which has been said of you from yourself, and not
from me. For, not I, but you, was the assertor of it; and you lay the
blame of it on me without reason.

Alc. Indeed, Socrates, you are in the right.

Soc. Mad therefore is the undertaking, my good sir, which you enter­
tain thoughts of attempting, to teach others what you are ignorant of your­s­
self from your having neglected to learn it.

Alc. I believe, Socrates, that the Athenians, as well as other Grecian
states, seldom deliberate in council about justice or injustice in any affair
before them; because these things they presume obvious and plain to all
men. Laying aside therefore the consideration of this point, they con­
sider which way it will be most for their interest to take. For I suppose
that justice and interest are not the same thing; seeing that many have
found it their interest to have done things the most unjust, and that others
have gained no advantage from having acted with honesty.

Soc. Well. Suppose interest to be a thing ever so different from justice,
do you imagine now that you know what is a man's interest, and why this
or that thing is so?

Alc. What should hinder me, Socrates, from knowing it? unless you
will make a doubt of this too, by asking me, from whom I learned this know-
ledge, or how I discovered it myself.

Soc. How strangely you deal with me in this2? If you say any thing
wrong, when 'tis possible to prove it wrong by the same arguments used in

Hippolytus was the object of her love, and yet unwilling to conceal it from her, describes him, 
without naming him, in terms so pointed, that the nurse could not possibly mistake the person. 
Upon which the nurse asking her if she means Hippolytus, Phaedra answers in verse 352,

\[\text{This from yourself you hear, and not from me. — S.}\]

1 That is, in evading the proofs of your ignorance, and thus endeavouring to avoid the necessity
of your confessing it.—In our translation of this short sentence, we have supposed that it ought
to be immediately followed by a mark of interrogation, or rather by a mark of admiration; and
ought not to be read as part of a longer sentence, either interrogative, according to the version
of Serranus, or assertive, according to that of Ficinus, and all the editions of the Greek original. 
The version of Cornarius is herein agreeable to that our supposition.—S.
confuting what you before said amis, you would have new matter introduced, and different arguments made use of, to prove you in the wrong again: as if the former proofs were worn out like old clothes, and you could no longer put them on, but one must bring you a fresh proof never used before. But without taking further notice of your evasions, I shall repeat the same question, and ask you from what learning you came to know what was a man’s interest, and who taught you this knowledge; and all the other questions asked before I ask you again, summing them up in one. It is evident now, that your answers will amount to the very same as they did before; and that you will not be able to shew by what means you attained the knowledge of what is advantageous to a man; or conducive to his good; either how you found it out yourself, or from whom you learned it. However, seeing that you are squeamish, and decline the tasting of the same arguments again, I wave the inquiry into this point, whether you have or not the knowledge of what is the interest of the Athenians. But this other point, whether the same actions are just and advantageous; or whether what 'tis just to do, differs from what 'tis a man’s interest to do; why should not you prove, by putting questions to me, in the same manner as I did to you? or, if you had rather, make a discourse upon that subject wholly by yourself.

A L C. But I know not if I should be able, Socrates, to make such a discourse to you.

Soc. Why, my good friend, suppose me to be the assembly and the people. And, were you addressing your discourse to them, it would be proper for you to persuade every single man of them. Would it not?

A L C. It would.

Soc. Does it not belong, then, to the same person to be able to persuade one single man by himself, and to persuade many men assembled together, in speaking on any subject with which he is well acquainted? as, for instance, a teacher of grammar is equally well able to persuade one man and many men, when letters are the subject of his discourse.

A L C. True.

Soc. And when numbers are the subject, would not the same person, who persuades many, persuade one as well?

A L C. He would.
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Soc. And must not this person be one who is well acquainted with numbers? must he not be an arithmetician?

Alc. Most certainly.

Soc. And would not you also, in speaking on any subjects, if you are able to persuade many of the truth of what you say, be able to persuade a single one?

Alc. 'Tis probable that I should.

Soc. But these subjects it is plain must be such as you are well acquainted with.

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Soc. Is there any other difference, then, between a speaker in the assembly of the people and a speaker in such conversation as this of ours, than merely so much as this—the former endeavours to persuade a collection of many men—the latter to persuade men one by one?

Alc. There appears to be no other.

Soc. Come then. Since it apparently belongs to the same person to persuade a multitude and to persuade a single man, practice your skill on me, and undertake to prove to me that in some cases that which is just is not a man's interest.

Alc. You are very saucy, Socrates.

Soc. And I am now going to be so saucy as to convince you of the truth of a position quite contrary to that which you decline the proving of to me.

Alc. Begin then.

Soc. Do you but answer to the questions which I shall put to you.

Alc. Not so: but do you yourself say plainly what you have to say.

Soc. Why so? Would you not choose to be entirely well persuaded of the truth of it, if it be true?

Alc. By all means, certainly.

Soc. And would you not, if you yourself were to assert it, have the most entire persuasion of its truth?

Alc. I think so.

Soc. Answer then to my questions: and if you do not hear from your own mouth, that to act justly is to act for one's own advantage, believe no other person who asserts that position.
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ALC. I shall not; and I consent to answer your questions. For no harm I think will come to me that way.

Soc. You think as if you had the spirit of divination. Tell me, then: Do you say that some just actions are advantageous to the man who performs them, and that some are not so?

ALC. I do.

Soc. And do you say also, that some just actions are beautiful, and that some are not so?

ALC. What mean you by this question?

Soc. Whether did you ever think that a man acted basely and yet justly at the same time?

ALC. I never thought so.

Soc. You think then that all actions which are just are also beautiful?

ALC. I do.

Soc. But what, as to actions which are beautiful? Whether do you think that all of these are good to the performer, or that some of them are so, and some not so?

ALC. For my part, Socrates, I think that some beautiful actions are evil to the performer of them.

Soc. And that some base actions are good to the performer?

ALC. I do.

Soc. Do you mean such actions as these?—Many men by aiding in battle some friend or near relation have been wounded mortally; whilst others, by withholding their aid when they ought to have given it, have come off safe and sound:

ALC. A just instance of what I mean.

Soc. That aid then of theirs you call beautiful with respect to their endeavours to save those whom they ought to defend. Now such an action proceeds from fortitude, does it not?

ALC. It does.

Soc. But evil you call it also with respect to the wounds and death which it procured them, do you not?

ALC. I do.

Soc. And are not fortitude and death two different things?

ALC. Certainly.
Soc. To aid a friend, therefore, is not both beautiful and evil in the same respect?

Alc. It appears that 'tis not.

Soc. Consider now whether it be not good in the same respect in which it is beautiful; as in this particular which we mentioned. For, with respect to fortitude, you agreed with me that 'twas beautiful and handsome to give such aid. This very thing then, fortitude, consider whether it be a good or an evil. And consider it in this way;—which kind of things would you choose to have your own, whether good things or evil things?

Alc. Good things.

Soc. And would you not choose the best things too?

Alc. Most of all things.

Soc. And would you not choose to part with them least of all?

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Soc. What say you then of fortitude? at what price would you choose to part with it?

Alc. I would not accept of life, not I, to live a coward.

Soc. You think, then, that cowardice is evil in the utmost degree?

Alc. That do I.

Soc. On a par, as it seems, with death.

Alc. It is so.

Soc. Are not life and fortitude the most of all things opposite to death and cowardice?

Alc. They are.

Soc. And would you choose to have those most of all things, and these least of all things?

Alc. Certainly.

Soc. Is it because you deem those the best of all things, and these the worst?

Alc. For this very reason.

Soc. Viewing then the giving of aid in battle to such as are dear to us in that light in which it appears beautiful—viewing it with regard to the
practice of that virtue which you acknowledge to be one of the best of things, you gave it the epithet of beautiful?

ALC. It appears I did so.

Soc. But with regard to its operating evil, the evil of death, you gave it the epithet of evil?

ALC. True.

Soc. Is it not then just and right to denominate every action thus? If, with regard to the evil which it operates, you call it evil, ought it not, with regard to the good which it operates, to be also called good?

ALC. I think it ought.

Soc. In the same respect, then, in which it is good, is it not beautiful? and in the same respect in which it is evil, is it not base?

ALC. It is.

Soc. In saying, then, that the aiding of our friends in battle is an action beautiful indeed, but that yet 'tis evil, you say exactly the same thing as if you called it an action, good indeed, but yet evil.

ALC. I think you are in the right, Socrates.

Soc. Nothing therefore which is beautiful, so far as it is beautiful, is evil; nor is any thing which is base, so far as it is base, good.

ALC. Evidently it is not.

Soc. Further now consider it in this way:—whoever acts beautifully, does he not act well too?

ALC. He does.

Soc. And those who act well, are they not happy?

ALC. Without doubt.

Soc. And are they not happy by being possessed of good things?

ALC. Most certainly,

Soc. And are they not possessed of these good things by acting well and beautifully?

ALC. They are.

Soc. To act well, therefore, is in the rank of good things?

ALC. Beyond a doubt.

1 In translating this sentence, we have supposed that the right reading here is προσευτός, and not, as it is printed, προσευτός—S.
Soc. And is not acting well a beautiful thing also?

Alc. It is.

Soc. Again therefore we have found, that one and the same thing is both beautiful and good?

Alc. We have.

Soc. Whatever then we should find to be a beautiful thing, we shall find it to be a good thing too, according to this reasoning?

Alc. It must be so.

Soc. And what are good things advantageous? or are they not?

Alc. They are.

Soc. Do you remember, now, what we agreed in concerning things which are just?

Alc. I imagine that you mean this,—that those persons who do things which are just must of necessity do things which at the same time are beautiful.

Soc. And did we not agree in this too,—that those who do things which are beautiful do things which are also good?

Alc. We did.

Soc. And good things, you say, are advantageous?

Alc. True.

Soc. Things therefore which are just, O Alcibiades! are things which are advantageous.

Alc. It seems they are.

Soc. Well now; are not you the person who afferts these things? and am not I the questioner concerning them?

Alc. So it appears.

Soc. Whoever then rises up to speak in any council, whether it be of Athenians or Peparethians, imagining that he discerns what is just and

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9 It appears from the translations made by Ficinus and Cornarius, that the Greek of this sentence, in the manuscripts from which they translated, was written thus:—'Ο, τι άν αρα τότε περίμεν
καλον, και αυτίν είρητομεν κ. τ. λ. And we hope it will hereafter be so printed. For the absurdity of this sentence in the translation by Serranus, was evidently occasioned by his following the printed editions, and his regarding more the language of Cicero than the reasoning or philosophy of Plato.—S.
what is unjust, if he should say that he knows justice to be sometimes evil
and detrimental, would you not laugh at his pretensions to knowledge?
since you yourself are found to be the very person who asserts that the same
things are both just and advantageous?

Alc. Now, by the Gods, Socrates, for my part, I know not what to
say to it; but am quite like a man distracted. For sometimes I am of one
opinion, just while you are putting your questions to me, and presently
after am of another.

Soc. Are you ignorant now, my friend, what condition you are in?

Alc. Entirely ignorant.

Soc. Do you imagine, then, that if any person were to ask you, how
many eyes you had, whether two or three,—or how many hands, whether
two or four,—or any other such question,—you would sometimes answer
one thing, and at other times another? or would you always give the same
answer?

Alc. I confess that I am now doubtful of myself; but I do believe
that I should always give the same answer.

Soc. And is not your knowledge of the subject the cause of that con-
sistency there would be in your answers?

Alc. I believe it is.

Soc. When therefore you give contrary answers to one and the same
question, without choosing to prevaricate, 'tis evident that you have no
knowledge of the subject.

Alc. Probably so.

Soc. Now you say that, to questions concerning things just or unjust,
beautiful or base, good or evil, advantageous or otherwise, you should
answer sometimes one thing and sometimes another. Is it not then
evident, that your ignorance in these subjects is the cause of this incon-
sistency of yours?

Alc. It appears so to me myself.

Soc. Is not this then the true state of the case? On every subject which
a man has not the knowledge of, must not his soul be wavering in her
opinions?

Alc. Most undoubtedly.
Soc. Well now. Do you know by what means you may mount up to heaven?

Alc. By Jupiter, not I.

Soc. Is your opinion doubtful and wavering on this subject?

Alc. Not at all.

Soc. Do you know the reason why it is not? or shall I tell it you?

Alc. Do you tell me.

Soc. 'Tis this, my friend: it is because you neither know nor imagine that you know the way up to heaven.

Alc. How is that the reason? Explain yourself.

Soc. Let you and I consider it together. Concerning any affairs which you are ignorant of, and are at the same time convinced that you are so, do you waver in your opinions? For instance, in the affair of dressing meats and making sauces, you are, I presume, well acquainted with your ignorance.

Alc. Perfectly well.

Soc. Do you form any opinions then yourself on these affairs of cookery, and waver in those opinions? or do you leave those matters to such as are skilled in them?

Alc. I do as you mentioned last.

Soc. And what if you were in a ship under sail, would you form any opinion, whether the rudder ought to be turned toward the ship or from it, and be unsettled in that opinion for want of knowledge in the affair? or would you leave it to the pilot, and not trouble yourself about it?

Alc. To the pilot I should leave it.

Soc. Concerning affairs then which you are ignorant of, and are no stranger to your own ignorance in those respects, you are not wavering in your opinions?

Alc. I believe I am not.

Soc. Do you perceive that errors, committed in the doing of any

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1 This sentence is affirmative, and not, as it has hitherto been always printed, interrogative.—S.
2 In supposing this sentence to be interrogative, we have followed the two Basil editions and Ficinus's translation, as Le Fevre has also done. But Dacier chose to follow the other editions and translations, in making it a conclusive assertion.—S.
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thing, are all to be ascribed to this kind of ignorance in a man,—his imagining that he knows what he knows not?

ALC. How do you mean?

SOC. Whenever we undertake to act in any affair, it is only when we imagine we know what to do.

ALC. Certainly.

SOC. And such as have no opinion of their own knowledge in the affair resign it up to others to act for them.

ALC. How should they do otherwise?

SOC. Ignorant persons of this kind live therefore without committing errors, because they give up the management of those affairs in which they are ignorant into the hands of others.

ALC. True.

SOC. What kind of persons, then, are those who err and act amiss? for certainly they are not such as know how to act.

ALC. By no means.

SOC. Since then they are neither the knowing, nor those of the ignorant who know that they are ignorant, are any other persons left than of that kind who are ignorant, but imagine themselves knowing?

ALC. None other than these.

SOC. This kind of ignorance, therefore, is the cause of wrong doings, and is the only kind which is culpable.

ALC. Very true.

SOC. And where it concerns things of greatest moment, is it not in these cases the most of any mischievous and shameful?

ALC. By far the most so.

SOC. Well then. Can you name any things of greater moment than those which are honest, and beautiful, and good, and advantageous?

ALC. Certainly none.

SOC. Is it not on these subjects that you acknowledge yourself to waver in your opinions?

ALC. It is.

* In the printed original we here read πολλά γε. But we have made no scruple of adopting the marginal reading of Harry Stephens, πολύ γε.—S.
Soc. And, if you are thus wavering, is it not evident from our past conclusions, not only that you are ignorant in subjects of the greatest moment, but that amidst this ignorance you imagine that you know them?

Alc. I fear it is so.

Soc. Fie upon it, Alcibiades! What a condition then are you in! a condition which I am loth to name: but however, since we are alone, it must be spoken out. You are involved, my good sir, in that kind of ignorance which is the most shameful, according to the result of our joint reasoning, and according to your own confession. From this kind of ignorance it is, that you are eager to engage in politics before you have learnt the elements of that science. Indeed, you are not the only person in this sad condition; for in the same state of ignorance are the numerous managers of our civil affairs, all of them, except perhaps Pericles, your guardian, and a few more.

Alc. And, Socrates, to confirm this opinion of yours, Pericles is said to have become wise, not spontaneously or of himself: on the contrary, 'tis reported of him that he had had the advantage of enjoying the conversation of many wise men, particularly of Pythocles and Anaxagoras; and even at this time, old as he is, he is intimate with Damon for this very purpose.

Soc. But what? have you ever seen a man who was wise in any art whatever, and yet was unable to make another man wise in the same art?

1 The character of Anaxagoras, or rather that of his philosophy, is well known to be this: that he applied himself chiefly, as all of the Ionic sect did, to the study of astronomy, and of the elements of outward nature. Pythocles and Damon, both of them, were such as the old Sophists in polymathy and extensive learning; but neither of them assumed the character of Sophist. Indeed, they were so far from making a public display of their general knowledge, like the Sophists, that, on the contrary, they endeavored to conceal it under the mask of some other character, professing only skill in music. We learn this, so far as relates to Damon, from Plutarch, in his Life of Pericles; and with regard to Pythocles, we are told the same by Plato himself in his Protagoras. But further, Aristotle, as cited by Plutarch, relates, in some of those works of his which are most unfortunately lost, that Pericles in fact became accomplished in music by studying it under Pythocles. And Plutarch tells us, on his own authority, that Damon was the director and instructor of Pericles in politics, and that he was banished from Athens by the people, ἀσ μαγευεμαν καὶ προετοιμαζε, as a person who busied himself in great affairs, meaning those relating to the constitution of the state, and as a friend to tyranny, meaning the arbitrary power of a single person.—S.
as, for instance, the master who taught you grammar was himself wise in that art; and in the same art he made you wise; as he also made every other person whom he undertook to teach. Did he not?

ALC. He did.

Soc. And you, who have learnt from him that kind of wisdom, would not you be able to teach it to another person?

ALC. Certainly I should.

Soc. And is not the same thing true of a music-master and of a master in the exercises?

ALC. Perfectly so.

Soc. For this undoubtedly is a fair proof of the knowledge of such as are knowing in any subject whatever, their being able to produce their scholars, and to show these to be knowing in the same.

ALC. I think so too.

Soc. Well then. Can you name to me any one whom Pericles has made a wise man? his own sons has he? to begin with them.

ALC. But what if the sons of Pericles were silly fellows, Socrates?

Soc. Clinias then, your brother?

ALC. Why should you mention Clinias, a man out of his senses?

Soc. Since Clinias then is out of his senses, and since the sons of Pericles were silly fellows, to what defect in your disposition shall we impute the little care taken by Pericles to improve you?

ALC. I presume that I myself am in the fault, that of not giving due attention to him.

Soc. But name any person else, an Athenian or a foreigner, either a slave or a free man, who is indebted to the instructions of Pericles for becoming wiser than he was: as I can name to you those, who from the lessons of Zeno¹ have improved in wisdom,—Pythodorus² the son.

¹ Zeno the Eleatic is here meant, the disciple of Parmenides.—For an account of the wisdom meant in the latter part of this sentence, see the Parmenides, and the introduction to it.—T.

² This is the same Pythodorus at whose house Plato lays the scene of his dialogue named Parmenides.—S.
of Isolochus, and Callias, the son of Calliades; each of whom, at the price of a hundred minæ, paid to Zeno, became eminent for wisdom.


Soc. Very well. What then do you think of doing about yourself? whether to rest satisfied in the condition which you are now in, or to apply yourself to some means of improvement?

Alc. Concerning this, Socrates, I would consult with you. For I apprehend what you have said, and admit the truth of it. Those who have the administration of the state, except a few of them, seem indeed to me too not to have had a proper education.

Soc. Well; and what conclusion do you draw from thence?

Alc. This,—that if they, through their education, were well qualified to govern, a man who should undertake to enter the lists in contest with them, ought to come to the engagement duly prepared by discipline and exercise, as in other combats. But now, seeing that such persons as these, raw and undisposed as they are, have attained to the management of state-affairs, what need is there for a man to exercise himself in such matters, or to give himself the trouble of acquiring knowledge in them? For I well know, that by dint of natural abilities I shall excel them by far, and get above them.

Soc. Fie upon it, my fine young gentleman! What a declaration is this which you have made! how unworthy of your personal qualities, and of the other advantages you are possess of!

Alc. I should be glad, Socrates, to know why you think it unworthy of me, and in what respect.

Soc. You offer an affront, not only to the regard which I have for you, but to the opinion too which you have of yourself.

Alc. How so?

Soc. In that you think of entering the lists to contend with these men here at Athens.

* This Callias had the command of the army sent by the Athenians for the recovery of Potidaea; but he was slain in the first battle, before that city. See Thucydides, lib. 1. and Diodorus, lib. 12.—S.

* In English money, 322. 18s. 4d. the very same price at which Protagoras and Gorgias valued their sophistical instructions in polymathy and false oratory.—S.

Alc.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES. 57

ALC. Whom then am I to contend with?
Soc. Does this question become a man to ask who thinks his mind to be great and elevated?
ALC. How do you mean? Is it not with these very persons that I am to stand in competition?
Soc. Let me ask you this question;—Whether, if you had any thoughts of commanding a ship of war, would you deem it sufficient for you to excel the mariners who were to be under your command, in the skill belonging to a commander? or, presuming yourself qualified with this due præ-excellence, would you direct your eye to those only whom you are in fact to combat against,—and not, as you now do, to such as are to combat together with you? For to these men certainly you ought to be so much superior, that they should never be your associates in competition against any, but your inferior assistants in combating against the enemy;—if you really think of exhibiting any noble exploits worthy of yourself and of your country.
ALC. And such a thought I assure you that I entertain.
Soc. Is it then at all worthy of you, to be contented with being a better man than your fellow-soldiers,—and not to have your eye directed toward the leaders of those whom you have to struggle with, studying how to become a better man than they, and employing yourself in exercises which are proper with a view to them?

1 Aldus erroneously printed this sentence in the Greek original without a mark of interrogation; and in this error he was blindly followed by Stephens. The Basil editions, however, both of them, are here rightly printed, in agreement with the translations by Ficinus and Cornarius, and as the sense evidently requires.—S.
2 Here again the two Basil editions are right in giving us ἑν τοῦ; where Aldus and Stephens have been so regardless of the sense as to print ἑν τω.—S.
3 In the Greek, as printed, we here read στρατηγοῦς; but perhaps we ought to read συστρατηγοῦς, that the word may correspond with that just before, to which it alludes, συναγωνισμος.—S.
4 In the Greek editions ἰδέας; but we suppose the right reading to be ἰδας.—S.
5 All the Latin translators rightly presume this sentence to be interrogative: though in all the editions of the Greek it is carelessly made affective. The secret meaning of Socrates in what he here says, agreeably to the tenor of all his philosophy, we apprehend to be this;—that we ought not to set before us the characters of any particular men, who are all of them full of imperfections like ourselves, for the standards of our moral conduct; but should have constantly in our view, so as to copy after, the ideal and perfect patterns of moral excellence.—S.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

ALC. What persons do you mean, Socrates?
Soc. Do you not know, that our city is every now and then at war with the Lacedaemonians, and with the Great King?

ALC. True.
Soc. If then you have it in your mind to be the leader of this city, would you not think rightly in thinking that you will have the kings of Sparta and of Persia to contend against?

ALC. I suspect that you are in the right.

Soc. And yet you, my good sir, on the contrary, are to fix your view on Midias, a feeder of quails, and on other such persons, who undertake

1 The kings of Persia were so called by the Grecians, from the time that Cyrus, heir to the then small kingdom of Persia, having succeeded to the kingdom of Media by the death of his uncle without issue, conquered Assyria, subdued Asia Minor, and acquired the dominion of all those countries which constitute the now large monarchy of Persia.—S.

2 We entirely agree in opinion with Monf. Le Ferre, that this is purely ironical, and therefore not interrogative.—S.

3 The Grecian quails, being μακροεισ or fighting-birds, were finely trained and fed, for the purpose of ὀπτυργομαχία, fighting one with another, by such sort of persons as took delight in such sort of sports. The manner of them was this: Matches being made, and wagers laid by those gentlemen quail-feeders, who were themselves owners of the birds, a circle was drawn in the quail-pit, or gaming-room, within which circle were set the combatant-birds: and in the battle, to which they were provoked by their wise masters, whichever bird drove his antagonist beyond the circle was held to be the conqueror.—Another Grecian sport with the poor quails, a sport still more boyish than the ὀπτυργομαχία, was the ὀπτυρνουστια, in which the hardiness of those birds was tried by the ὀπτυρνουστα, the fillip of a man's finger on their heads; and sometimes by plucking from it a feather: the birds that endured these trials without flinching or retiring out of the circle, won the wager for their cruel masters.—See Meursius de Ludis Graecorum, pag. 45. Julius Pollux, lib. 9. cap. 7. and Suidas in vocibus ὀπτυρνουστα, and ὀπτυρνουστια.—Midias, here mentioned by Plato, was so much addicted to these sports, that in the comedy of Aristophanes, named Ομήρος, the ambassador to Athens from the aërial city of the birds reports to them on his return, that several of the leading men at Athens had taken the names of different birds, and amongst them Midias that of quail.—Socrates therefore, in the passage now before us, ridicules Alcibiades, who affected the same taste for these quail matches, for thus emulating Midias, and setting up him for a pattern of his imitation.—The Romans, who copied after the Grecians in all their vices and follies more exactly than they did in their arts, sciences, and wisdom, were so fond of quail-fighting, that the wife and good Marcus Antoninus, sensible how much it was beneath his dignity as a man, an emperor, and a philosopher, acknowledges himself obliged to Diogenes the painter to dissuade him in his youth from giving into this fashionable folly. Lib. 1. § 6.—This note is intended chiefly for the benefit of our countrymen the Noble Cockers.—S.
to manage affairs of state, still wearing the badge of slavery (as the women would term it) in their souls, through their ignorance of the Muses; and not having yet thrown it off, but retaining their old sentiments, and manners still barbarian, are come to flatter the people, not to govern them. Ought you now to emulate these men whom I am speaking of, and disregard yourself? Ought you to neglect the acquiring of all such knowledge, as only is acquired through learning, when you have so great a combat to sustain? Or ought you to omit the exercising yourself in all such actions as are well performed only through practice? Should you not be furnished with all the qualifications requisite for the government of the state before you undertake to govern it?

ALC. Indeed, Socrates, I believe you are in the right: but however, I imagine the commanders of the Spartan armies, and the Persian monarch, to be just such men as the others whom you have mentioned.

Soc. But, my very good sir, consider this imagination of yours, what evils attend on it.

ALC. In what respects?

Soc. In the first place, What opinion concerning your antagonists do you think would engage you to take most care about yourself? whether the opinion of their being formidable, or the contrary?

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1 In the Greek, αὐθαπατοῦντα τρίχα, flavish hair. It was the distinguishing badge of slavery in men, amongst the Grecians and the Romans, the wearing their own hair on their heads. When they had their freedom given them by their masters, their heads were shaved, and they wore from that time a cap, or narrow-brimmed hat, thence called the cap of liberty. For this point, see Anti-pater Theodor. Marcilius in his Commentary on Persius, sat. 5. v. 82.—S.

2 This seems to be perfectly well illustrated by Olympiodorus, (whose comment on this dialogue is extant in MS. abroad,) in the following passage, cited by L. Cæsare in his commentary on Persius, sat. 5. v. 116. Περιγραφή τῆς γυναικῆς τῆς τινος ἅπατον μαθητὴν των ἑλευθερωμένων ἄνδρων, καὶ τημεροτότων εἰς τὴν δικαιοπρεπίτητα, (not δικαιοπρεπίτητα, as it is absurdly printed,) ὅτι ἐχει τινα αὐθαπατοῦντα τρίχα ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ, ταύτη σείτος τινος τῆς δυναμείς ἰδίος (printed τρίχα, which is explaining idem per idem) τεχνής. "The women had a saying, which they used to slaves made free, but still retaining the manners which belonged to slaves,—‘You wear your flavish hair on your head still;’ that is, You still retain your flavish habits.”—This proverbial saying was it seems, by the Athenian ladies, the authors of it, applied also to men whom they saw ill-bred and illiterate. —The application of it was afterwards extended further to a mobile multitude, gathered together and governed by their passions: for so we learn from Suidas, in phrase αὐθαπατοῦντα τρίχα.—See Erasmi Adagia, pag. 426. and the Greek Proverbs collected by Schottus, with his scholia thereon, pag. 357.—S.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

ALC. The opinion without doubt of their being formidable.
Soc. And do you think it would do you any harm to take care about yourself?
ALC. None at all; but on the contrary great good.
Soc. The want of this great good, then, is one of the evils which attend on that imagination?
ALC. It is true.
Soc. Consider if there be not probably another too; and that is the falsity of it.
ALC. How do you prove that?
Soc. Whether is it probable that persons, the most excellent in their natural dispositions, are to be found amongst those who descend from ancestors the noblest? or is it not?
ALC. Undoubtedly it is.

* We are astonished to find φωυς here printed in all the editions of Plato. The sense evidently requires us to read φως: and it appears also from the Latin translation made by Ficinus, and from that also by Cornarius, that they read φως in the manuscripts from which they made their translations.—Had Le Fevre been aware of this, he would have spared himself the trouble of writing a long note to prove that hereditary monarchs and great lords are not always the best of men.—Socrates here is not asking who probably are the best men, (for this would be to anticipate the conclusion of his reasoning, in the very beginning of it,) but, who probably have the best natural dispositions.—S.

* With this agrees the opinion of Aristotle in his Politics, lib. 3. cap. 8. Βελτίως ειναι τους εκ βελτίων ευγενείς τας εστὶν αρετὴ γενόμενες. It is likely that from the best ancestors should spring the best men. For to be well-born is to be of a good or virtuous family, (that is, nobility is family-virtue.) The reasonableness of this opinion the great master of all lyric poetry proves by analogy from brute animals in these verses of the 4th ode of his 4th book:

Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis.
Est in juvencis, est in equis patrum
Virtus; nec imbellm feroces
Progenerant aquile columbam:

Brave men are offsprings of the brave and good.
Heifers and horses still retain
The virtue of their sires: in vain
May one expect to find a timorous brood,
Such as the weak unwarlike dove,
Sprung from an eagle fierce, the daring bird of Jove.—S.

Soc.
Soc. And is it not probable that such as have excellent dispositions from nature, if they meet with a suitable education, should become accomplished in virtue?

Alc. Of necessity they must.

Soc. Let us consider now, in comparing their advantages with our own, whether the kings of Sparta and of Persia seem to be descended from meaner ancestors than we are. Know we not that those are descendants of Hercules, and these of Achæmenes? that the begetting of Hercules is attributed to Jupiter, and the ancestry of Achæmenes to Perseus the son of Jupiter?

Alc. And the family which I am of, O Socrates! descends from Euryfaces; and the descent of Eury faces was from Jupiter.

Soc. And the family which I am of, my noble Alcibiades! descends from Daedalus; and the descent of Daedalus was from Vulcan, the son of Jupiter. But the pedigree of those with whom we set ourselves in comparison, beginning from the persons who now reign, exhibits a race of kings, all of them sons of kings, in a direct line quite up to Jupiter; those whom I first mentioned, kings of Argos and Lacedæmon; the others, kings of Persia perpetually, and often of all Asia, as they are at present: whereas we are but private men, ourselves and our fathers. If you then were to boast of your ancestors, and pompously say that Salamis was the hereditary dominion of Eury faces, or, to ascend higher in your ancestry, that Æacus governed in his native country Ægina, can you imagine how ridiculous you would appear in the eyes of Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes?

1 The Greek, as printed, is in this place evidently deficient. For, immediately after the words τὸ Ἰπποκράτης τὸ γένος, that the words ἤτο θύτα Αἰαί are dropped, and ought to be restored, there needs no proof to any who are at all acquainted with the antient fables of the Greeks. They well know that Hercules was never supposed to be descended from Perseus, as he is here made to be in the printed Greek text.—S.

2 Meaning the Lesser Asia, now called Natolia.—S.

3 Salamis and Ægina being but small islands in the Saronic bay, opposite to Attica.—Æacus had Ægina in sovereignty by inheritance from his mother. How it came not to descend to Eury faces from his great-grandfather Æacus, and how his grandfather Telamon came to be lord of Salamis, may be accounted for easily from what we read in the Metamorphoses of Antoninus Liberalis, cap. 38.—S.

4 Artaxerxes, at the supposed time of this dialogue, was the reigning king of Persia.—S.
Consider besides, whether we may not be found inferior to those great men, not only in the pride of ancestry, but also in the care taken of our birth and breeding. Are you not sensible of the singular advantages which attend the progeny of the Spartan kings in this respect, that their wives have a guard of state appointed for them by the Ephori; to the end that no king of theirs may be the issue of stolen embraces, or have for his real father any other man than a descendant of Hercules? And as to the Persian king, so greatly is he our superior with regard to this point, that none of his subjects entertain the least suspicion of his having any other father than the king his predecessor. The comfort therefore of the king of Persia is under no restraint but that of her own dread of the evil consequences should she dishonour the king’s bed. Further, when the king’s eldest son, the heir apparent to the crown, is born, all the king’s subjects in the city of his residence keep that day an original feast-day: and from thenceforward the anniversary of that day is celebrated with sacrifices and feasts by all Asia. But when we came first into the world, alas, Alcibiades! our very neighbours! as the comic poet says, little knew what happened. After this the child is

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2 These were the supreme judicial magistrates in Lacedæmon: they were also the guardians and protectors of the laws, the kingdom, and the common weal.—S.

3 This Lacedæmonian law, or custom, is not, so far as we can find, recorded by any other ancient writer. And such of the moderns as treat of Grecian antiquities, wherever they mention it, only cite the passage of Plato now before us. But how careful the Ephori were, not to suffer any person to sit on either of their regal thrones, who was not descended in the male line from either Euryytheæus or his brother Procles, their first kings of the race of Hercules, we may conjecture from two remarkable instances; one of them recorded by Herodotus, the other, by Plutarch, and both of them by Paufanias in Laconia.—The first is the case of Demaratus, the son of Aristæus, who was barred of his hereditary right to the crown, because his mother Timeæa was delivered of him seven months after her marriage with king Aristæus: for it was thence concluded by the Ephori, that he was begotten by his mother’s former husband, who had parted from her about seven months before the birth of her son.—The other case is that of Leotychidas, who was by the Ephori excluded from the succession to the crown, because king Agis, his nominal and legal father, had been absent from the queen his consort more than ten months before she was brought to bed.—It must, however, be acknowledged, that other concurring circumstances were not wanting to induce a reasonable suspicion of the queen’s unfaithfulness to the king’s bed in each of these cases.—S.

3 We are no less in the dark as to the name of this poet than we are to the verse of his here alluded to.—Mon. Le Fevre, in a note to his translation of this passage, refers to Plutarch’s Life of Phocion, where Demades tells his son, at whose marriage kings and great lords assisted, that when
is brought up, not by some insignificant nurse, but by the best eunuchs about the king's person. And these have it in their charge to take care of the royal infant in every respect, but especially to contrive the means of his becoming as handsome as possible in his person, by so fashioning his pliant limbs, and giving such a direction to their growth, that they may be straight: and for executing this office well they are highly honoured. When the young princes have attained the age of seven years, they are provided with horses and with riding-masters, and are initiated in the exercise of hunting. At fourteen years of age they are put into the hands of those who are called the royal preceptors. And these are chosen out from such as are deemed the most excellent of the Persians, men of mature age, four in number; excelling severally in wisdom, justice, temperance, and fortitude. By the first of these they are taught the magic of Zoro-

the himself was married, not a soul among the neighbours knew any thing of the matter. And out of this passage in Plutarch, where neither verse nor poet is cited, the ingenious critic has made a verse, to which he supposes that Plato here alludes.—S.

1 That eunuchs were highly valued at the court of Persia, and purchased at a great price, we learn from Herodotus, in lib. 6. where he assigns this reason for it, the reputation of their fidelity in all things committed to their trust. See other reasons in Rycaut’s Present State of the Ottoman Empire, b. 1. ch. 9. and in L’Esprit des Lois, l. 15. c. 18.—S.

2 The following account of magic, by Proclus, originally formed, as it appears to me, a part of the Commentary written by him on the present passage. For the MS. Commentary of Proclus, which is at present extant on this Dialogue, does not extend to more than a third part of it; and this Dissertation on Magic, which is only extant in Latin, was published by Ficinus, the translator, immediately after his Excerpta from this Commentary. So that it seems highly probable that the manuscript from which Ficinus translated his Excerpta, was much more perfect than that which is now extant, in consequence of containing this account of the magic of the antients.

4 In the same manner as lovers gradually advance from that beauty which is apparent in sensible forms, to that which is divine; so the antient priests, when they considered that there was a certain alliance and sympathy in natural things to each other, and of things manifest to occult powers, and discovered that all things subsist in all, they fabricated a sacred science from this mutual sympathy and similarity. Thus they recognized things suprême in such as are subordinate, and the subordinate in the supreme: in the celestial regions, terrene properties subsisting in a causal and celestial manner; and in earth celestial properties, but according to a terrene condition. For how shall we account for those plants called heliotropes, that is, attendants on the sun, moving in correspondence with the revolution of its orb; but selenitropes, or attendants on the moon, turning in exact conformity with her motion? It is because all things pray,
after 1 the son of Oromazes 2, by which magic is meant the worship of the Gods: and the same person instructs them likewise in the art of government.

He pray, and compose hymns to the leaders of their respective orders; but some intellectually, and others rationally; some in a natural, and others after a sensible manner. Hence the sun-flower, as far as it is able, moves in a circular dance towards the sun; so that, if any one could hear the pulsation made by its circuit in the air, he would perceive something composed by a found of this kind, in honour of its king, such as a plant is capable of framing. Hence we may behold the sun and moon in the earth, but according to a terrene quality; but in the celestial regions, all plants, and stones, and animals, possessing an intellectual life according to a celestial nature. Now the ancients, having contemplated this mutual sympathy of things, applied for occult purposes both celestial and terrene natures, by means of which through a certain similitude they deduced divine virtues into this inferior abode. For indeed similitude itself is a sufficient cause of binding things together in union and content. Thus, if a piece of paper is heated, and afterwards placed near a lamp, though it does not touch the fire, the paper will be suddenly inflamed, and the flame will descend from the superior to the inferior parts. This heated paper we may compare to a certain relation of inferiors to superiors; and its approximation to the lamp, to the opportune use of things according to time, place, and matter. But the procession of fire into the paper aptly represents the presence of divine light, to that nature which is capable of its reception. Lastly, the inflammation of the paper may be compared to the deification of mortals, and to the illumination of material natures, which are afterwards carried upwards like the enkindled paper, from a certain participation of divine seed.

"Again, the lotus before the rising of the sun folds its leaves into itself, but gradually expands them on its rising; unfolding them in proportion to the sun's ascent to the zenith; but as gradually contracting them as the sun descends to the west. Hence this plant, by the expansion and contraction of its leaves, appears no less to honour the sun than men by the gesture of their eye-lids and the motion of their lips. But this imitation and certain participation of supernal light is not only visible in plants, which possess but a vestige of life, but likewise in particular stones. Thus the sun-stone, by its golden rays, imitates those of the sun; but the stone

1 Who Zoroafter was, and in what age he lived, is totally uncertain. A great variety of different opinions on these points is found amongst learned writers; the probability of any one of which opinions above the rest, it is an idle study we think to search for; so long as it remains doubtful whether any one man exiled who was distinguished by that name from other men addicted to the same studies. For the learned in the eastern languages tell us that the name Zoroafter signifies an observer of the stars. We have therefore no occasion to be puzzled with uncertainties, when we read of different men living in different ages, and different countries of the east, all of them called by the same name Zoroafter, if the name was general, and given to every man famous for his knowledge in astronomy.—S.

2 This was the name given by the Persians to the supreme being, the sole author of all good to all.—S.
He who excels in the science of justice teaches them to follow truth in every part of their conduct throughout life. The person who excels in temperance ensures the young prince not to be governed by sensual pleasure of any kind, that he may acquire the habits of a free man, and of a real king;

...stone called the eye of heaven, or of the sun, has a figure similar to the pupil of an eye, and a ray shines from the middle of the pupil. Thus too the lunar stone, which has a figure similar to the moon when horned, by a certain change of itself, follows the lunar motion. Lastly, the stone called heliofelenus, i.e. of the sun and moon, imitates after a manner the congress of those luminaries, which it images by its colour. So that all things are full of divine natures; terrestrial natures receiving the plenitude of such as are celestial, but celestial of supercelestial essences*; while every order of things proceeds gradually in a beautiful descent from the highest to the lowest. For whatever is collected into one above the order of things, is afterwards dilated in descending, various souls being distributed under their various ruling divinities.

...In the next place, there are many solar animals, such as lions and cocks, which participate, according to their nature, of a certain solar divinity; whence it is wonderful how much inferiors yield to superiors in the same order, though they do not yield in magnitude and power. Hence, they report that a cock is very much feared, and as it were reverenced, by a lion; the reason of which we cannot assign from matter or sense, but from the contemplation alone of a supernal order: for thus we shall find that the presence of the solar virtue accords more with a cock than a lion. This will be evident from considering that the cock, as it were, with certain hymns, applauds and calls to the rising sun, when he bends his course to us from the antipodes; and that solar angels sometimes appear in forms of this kind, who, though they are without shape, yet present themselves to us who are connected with shape, in some sensible form. Sometimes too, there are demons with a leonine front, who, when a cock is placed before them, unless they are of a solar order, suddenly disappear; and this, because those natures which have an inferior rank in the same order, always reverence their superiors: just as many, on beholding the images of divine men, are accustomed, from the very view, to be fearful of perpetrating any thing base.

...In fine, some things turn round correspondent to the revolutions of the sun, as the plants which we have mentioned, and others after a manner imitate the solar rays, as the palm and the date; some the fiery nature of the sun, as the laurel; and others a different property. For, indeed, we may perceive the properties which are collected in the sun every where where distributed to subsequent natures constituted in a solar order; that is, to angels, demons, souls, animals, plants, and stones. Hence, the authors of the ancient priesthood discovered from things apparent the worship of superior powers, while they mingled some things and purified others. They mingled many things indeed together, because they saw that some simple substances possessed a divine property (though not taken singly) sufficient to call down that particular power, of which they were participants. Hence, by the mingling of many things together, they at-

* By supercelestial essences, understand natures which are not connected with a body.
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king; by governing first all his own appetites, instead of being their slave. And the fourth, he who excels in fortitude forms his royal pupil to be fearless and intrepid; for that his mind, under the power of fear, would be a slave. But, Alcibiades, for your preceptor Pericles appointed one of his domestics, too old to be fit for any other service, Zopyrus of Thrace. I would recount to you the other articles of the breeding and instruction

...traced upon us a supernal influx; and by the composition of one thing from many, they produced an assimilation to that one which is above many; and composed statues from the mixtures of various substances conspiring in sympathy and content. Besides this, they collected composite odours, by a divine art, into one, comprehending a multitude of powers, and symbolizing with the unity of a divine essence; considering, that division debilitates each of these, but that mingling them together, restores them to the idea of their exemplar.

"But sometimes one herb, or one stone, is sufficient to a divine operation. Thus, a thistle is sufficient to procure the sudden appearance of some superior power; but a laurel, racineum, or a thorny kind of sprig, the land and sea onion, the coral, the diamond, and the jasper, operate as a safeguard. The heart of a mole is subservient to divination, but sulphur and marine water to purification. Hence, the antient priests, by the mutual relation and sympathy of things to one another, collected their virtues into one, but expelled them by repugnancy and antipathy; purifying, when it was requisite, with sulphur and bitumen, and sprinkling with marine water. For sulphur purifies from the sharpness of its odour; but marine water on account of its fiery portion. Besides this, in the worship of the Gods, they offered animals, and other substances congruous to their nature; and received, in the first place, the powers of daemons, as proximate to natural substances and operations; and by these natural substance they convoked into their presence those powers to which they approached. Afterwards, they proceeded from daemons to the powers and energies of the Gods; partly, indeed, from daemonical instruction, but partly by their own industry, interpreting convenient symbols, and ascending to a proper intelligence of the Gods. And lastly, laying aside natural substances and their operations, they received themselves into the communion and fellowship of the Gods."

Should it be objected by those who disbelieve in the existence of magic, that plants, animals, and stones, no longer possess those wonderful sympathetic powers which are mentioned by Proclus in the above extract, the same answer must be given as to the objectors to the antient oracles, and is as follows:—As in the realms of generation, or in other words, the sublunar region, wholes, viz. the spheres of the different elements, remain perpetually according to nature; but their parts are sometimes according, and sometimes contrary, to nature; this must be true of the parts of the earth. When those circulations, therefore, take place, during which the parts of the earth subsist according to nature, and which are justly called, by Plato, fertile periods, the powers of plants, animals, and stones, magically sympathize with superior natures; but during those circulations in which the parts of the earth subsist contrary to nature, as at present, and which Plato calls barren periods, those powers no longer possess a magic sympathy, and consequently are no longer capable of producing magical operations.—T.
given to your antagonists, if the narration would not be too long; and besides this, the articles already mentioned are sufficient indications of those others which they infer and draw along with them. But your birth, Alcibiades, your breeding and institution, or any other circumstances attending you, scarce any one of the Athenians is at all solicitous about, unless there be some man who happens to have an especial regard for you. Further; if you would consider the treasures of the Persian kings, the sumptuous furniture of their palaces and tables, their wardrobes of apparel, the long trains of their garments, and the fragrancy of their unguents, their numerous retinue of attendants, and the rest of their magnificence, in comparing all this with what you have of the same kind yourself, you would evidently perceive how much you fall short of them, and would be ashamed at the comparison. If, on the other hand, you would consider the Lacedaemonians, their sobriety and modesty, how simple their way of living, and how easily they are satisfied, their magnanimity and observance of order, their manly endurance of pain and love of labour, their emulation to excel, and their love of honour, you would think yourself a child to them in all these excellencies. Besides this, if you make riches any part of your consideration, and in this respect imagine yourself a person of consequence, let us not pass over this point neither unexamined; if by any means you can be made sensible in what rank you stand. If you choose then to consider the Lacedaemonians with regard to wealth, you will find that what we have here in Attica falls far short of theirs. For the lands which they possess in their own country, and in Messenia, are such as that no person here would dispute their superiority in this respect, whether he considers the quantity or the value of those lands, the number of their other slaves, besides such as the Helotes ¹, or the number of their horses, and other cattle in the pasture-

¹ The Helotes, properly so-called, were descended from the ancient inhabitants of Helos, a maritime town in Lacedaemon, near the mouth of the river Eurotas, under the dominion of Menelaus at the time of the Trojan war. It was afterwards besieged and taken by the Heraclidae, and their Dorian army, who had before conquered all the rest of Lacedaemon. The Helotes were thus made captives to their conquerors, by whom they were condemned, they and their posterity for ever, to till the lands of these Dorians (then become proprietors of the territory of Lacedaemon) as their vassals, and in lieu of the produce to pay a certain and fixed rent to their lords.
pasture-grounds of Messenia. But, setting aside all this, you will find that, as to gold and silver, there is not so much amongst all the Grecians as there is amongst the Lacedaemonians in private hands. For gold and silver have now for many generations been flowing into them from all parts of Greece, and often too from foreign countries; but there is no reflux any way 1. That therefore which the fox said to the lion in a fable of Æsop's, may justly

lords and masters; not unlike to tenants in villedage under the feudal laws in after ages. To the like hard conditions did these Lacedaemonians, long afterward, subject their own kindred and neighbours of Messenia, at the end of many long struggles between them, on the Lacedaemonian side, for the conquest of a country better than their own; on the other side for the preservation of their lands and liberties. The Messenians, being thus reduced to the same state of vassalage with the Helotes, were often comprehended under this latter name; as appears from Pausanias, in lib. 3, p. 201 ed. Hanov. as also appears from Thucydides, in lib. 1, p. 101. The scholiast to this great historian informs us further, that the Lacedaemonians δια του διαφορου ων πολεμίσαν (for so this last word ought to be read, and not ασιτίας, as it is absurdly printed,) because of the hatred which they always bore to the Helotes, were used to call their slaves by that name, in the way of contemptuousness and contumely. But Plato in the passage now before us, uses more accuracy: for meaning to include all the vassals, by whose labour in the lands much wealth accrued to the Lacedaemonians, he calls them, not πολεμίσαν Helotes, but ἡπότατος, such as the Helotes. Just as Pausanias, in lib. 4, p. 259, means by το τιμωρίας, such a vassal-state as that of the Helotes. Plato, by other slaves, means such as were acquired by purchase, or by conquest unconditional, them and their offspring; and of these, such as were not employed in domestic services, but were set to work in agriculture and other country-labour: for Socrates is here speaking only of the value of the Lacedaemonian estates in land arising from such labour.—S.

1 The Lacedaemonians were abundantly supplied with all the necessaries of life from their own lands; and being by their laws restrained from all splendour and magnificence, from all delicacy and luxury, as well in their houses and the furniture of them, as in their apparel and the provisions of their tables, they could have no occasion to purchase for their own use any foreign trinkets or commodities. Indeed sumptuary laws were almost unnecessary in their commonwealth, through the force and effect of another law, by which they were prohibited not only from using any coined money, whether of gold, silver, or copper, in their home-traffic, but even from having any such useless treasure in their houses. The only money permitted to pass current amongst them was of their own making; it consisted in pieces of iron, of a conical form, so peculiarly tempered as to be of no other use. These pieces, therefore, having no real value, and a nominal value no where but in Laconia, would not be taken by any foreigners in exchange for merchandise. On the other hand, all the corn and cattle produced or bred in the fertile fields and fine pastures of Messenia, all the copper and iron dug out of the rich mountains of Laconia, and manufactured by the great number of those Helotes who
justly be applied to them; the footsteps of money coming into Lacedaemon are easy to be discovered, as being all turned towards it; but the tracks of money going out of it are no where to be discerned. Thus it may easily be conceived, that of all the Grecians the richest in gold and silver are the Lacedaemonians, and that of all the Lacedaemonians the richest is their king. For of such comings-in a larger share, and oftener, is received by kings than by other men. And besides this, the taxes paid by the Lacedaemonians to their kings bring them in a large revenue. But whatever wealth the Lacedaemonians have, though great if compared with that of any other Grecians, yet in comparison with the riches of the Persians, and especially of their king, 'tis nothing. For I once heard a man of credit, who had been at the capital city of Persia, say, that in going up to it, he travelled almost a day's journey through a large and fertile territory, which the inhabitants of it called the Queen's Girdle; that there was another extensive tract of land called the Queen's Veil; and that many other fair and fruitful countries were appropriated to provide the rest of the queen's apparel; each of those countries having its name from that part of the apparel which the revenue of it furnished. So that, were any person to tell the queen-mother, Amastris, the consort formerly of Xerxes, that the son of Dinomache had it in his head to lead an army against

who lived in the city of Sparta, and laboured not for their own profit, but for that of their masters—all this, except the little wanted at home, was sold abroad and paid for in gold and silver: which money was by the owners either deposited in the temple at Delphi, or intrusted to the custody of their neighbours, the Arcadians; (see Athenaeus, lib. 6. p. 233.) besides much of it, perhaps, buried under ground; (as silver is said to be at Pekin, and gold under the Stadt-houfe at Amsterdam) or concealed in secret places; an instance of which kind we have in the story of Gylippus, told by Plutarch in his Life of Lyfander.—S.

1 The fox's answer to the lion, in the well known fable to which this passage alludes, is cited by Horace, in Epift. 1. lib. 1.—S.

2 Only meaning here the revenue arising from their demefne-lands; more of which in quantity and better in quality, kings have than other men.—S.

3 That is, besides the profit arising from their demefne-lands.—S.

4 See the Letter Hippias.—S.

5 The same cuftom was in antient Egypt. For we read in Herodotus, lib. 2. p. 123, ed. Gronov., that the city of Anthylla, that is, the revenue of the crown arising from the taxes imposed on it, was assigned and set apart for the supplying of the queen-confort with shoes and slippers.—S.
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her son;—and were she told at the same time that Dinomache's whole attire might be worth perhaps fifty minae; supposing it to be of the most costly kind; and that this son of hers had land in the district of Erchia, containing not so much as three hundred acres; —she I suppose would wonder in what kind of things this Alcibiades could place so much confidence as to think of contending with Artaxerxes. And I imagine that she would say, it is impossible that this man should undertake such an affair with any other confidence than what he places in the prudence and skill which he is master of: for that the Grecians have nothing else worthy of account. Because if she was to hear further, that this same Alcibiades in the first place had not completed the twentieth year of his age; in the next place that he was utterly uninstructed; and besides this, that, when a friend of his advised him first to acquire the knowledge, the prudence, and the habits, necessary for the execution of his designs, before he offered to attack the king, he refused to hearken to this advice, and said, that even in his present condition he was prepared sufficiently; —I believe she would be astonished, and would ask, What kind of a thing it could be then in which the youth put his confidence? Upon this, were we to tell her,—In his handsome and fine person, in his birth and family, in his riches, and in the natural faculties of his mind,—she would think us, Alcibiades, out of our senses, when she reflected on all the advantages which her son enjoyed of the same kinds. No less do I imagine that Lampido, daughter of Leotychidas, wife of Archidamus, and mother of Agis, who, all of them in their turns, succeeded to the crown of Sparta, she too would wonder, in reflecting on their greatness, were she told, that you had taken it into your head to make war against her son, so ill instructed as you are. And now do you not think it shameful, if the wives of our

* Equal to 161 L. 19s. 2d. English money.—S.
* Meaning the most costly among such as were worn by Grecian women.—S.
* See Meursius in his Reliqua Attica, cap. 5.—S.
* Πλῆθος. A Greek πλῆθος contained 10,000 square feet: an English acre contains 4,840 square feet. So that the land-estate of Alcibiades, near Erchia, contained about 619 English acres.—S.
* This princess is called Lampido in the editions we have of Plutarch, probably from an antient error in the manuscripts, as Meursius in his treatise de Regno Laconico rightly seems to judge. By Herodotus she is called Lampto, lib. 6. p. 354, ed. Gronovii.—S.
enemies consider more prudently for us than we do for ourselves, what sort of persons we ought to be before we venture to attack such enemies? Hearken therefore, my good sir, to the advice which I give you, in agreement with the Delphic inscription, **Know thyself**: since your antagonists are to be, not those whom you imagine, but these whom I have told you of: and these you never can excel in any other point than skill and application; in which articles if you are found deficient, you will fail of that reputation and renown, as well with Grecians as Barbarians, which I think you long for with more ardour than any other man does for whatever is the object of his wishes.

**Alc.** Can you teach me then, O Socrates, what sort of application I ought to use? for you seem to be entirely right in all which you have spoken.

**Soc.** Something I have indeed to say upon that subject. But let us enter into a joint consultation, you and I, about the means of becoming, both of us, better men. For when I say, there is a necessity for instruction, I mean it of myself as well as of you: since only one difference there is between you and me.

**Alc.** What is that?

**Soc.** He who is my guardian is better and wiser than Pericles, who is yours.

**Alc.** And who is yours, O Socrates?

**Soc.** A GOD, O Alcibiades! he who permitted me not before this day to enter into any discourse with you: he it is, on whose dictates to me I rely, when I am bold to say, that you will acquire the renown you long for, by no other means than through me.

**Alc.** You are in jest, Socrates.

**Soc.** Perhaps so: but I speak the truth however in good earnest when I say that we stand in need of instruction, or rather, that all men want it; but that you and I have very especial need of it.

**Alc.** In saying that I have need of it, you are not mistaken.

**Soc.** Neither am I, in saying that I myself have.

**Alc.** What then must we do?

**Soc.** We must not despair, nor give ourselves up to indolence, my friend.
Alc. By no means, Socrates, does it become us so to do.

Soc. Indeed it does not. We must therefore consider of the affair, you and I together. Now then answer to my questions. We profess to be desirous of becoming as excellent as possible: do we not?

Alc. We do.

Soc. In what kind of excellence?

Alc. In that certainly which belongs to men of merit.

Soc. Of merit in what respect?

Alc. In the management of business and affairs, undoubtedly.

Soc. But what business do you mean? The business of a jockey?

Alc. Clearly not.

Soc. For then we should go for instruction to those who understand the management of horses.

Alc. Certainly we should.

Soc. Do you then mean of a mariner?

Alc. I do not.

Soc. For in that case we should apply to those who understand navigation.

Alc. Certainly so.

Soc. But what business or affairs then? and by what sort of men are these affairs managed?

Alc. I mean such affairs as are managed by men of honour and merit amongst the Athenians.

Soc. Men of honour and merit do you call such as have understanding, or such as are void of understanding?

Alc. Such as have understanding.

Soc. In whatever business a man has understanding, in that has he not merit?

Alc. He has.

Soc. And in whatever business he is void of understanding, is he not in that void of merit?

Alc. Without doubt.

Soc. Whether hath a shoemaker understanding in the business of making shoes?

Alc. He certainly has.

Soc.
Soc. In this respect therefore he has merit.

Alc. He has.

Soc. Well; but is not a shoemaker void of understanding in the business of making clothes?

Alc. No doubt of it.

Soc. In this respect therefore he is void of merit.

Alc. He is so.

Soc. The same man therefore, according to this account, is at the same time void of merit and possessed of merit.

Alc. It appears so.

Soc. Would you say, then, that men possessed of merit are at the same time void of merit?

Alc. That cannot be.

Soc. What kind of men then do you mean by the men of merit?

Alc. I mean such as have abilities to govern at Athens.

Soc. Not to govern horses, I presume.

Alc. No, certainly.

Soc. But to govern men.

Alc. That is my meaning.

Soc. But what men do you mean? Men who are sick?

Alc. I do not mean these.

Soc. Men then who are going a voyage?

Alc. I mean not such men.

Soc. Men then who are gathering the harvest?

Alc. Nor such neither.

Soc. But men who do nothing do you mean? or men who do something?

Alc. Men who do something.

Soc. Who do what? try if you can make me sensible of your precise meaning.

Alc. Well then. I mean men who have commerce one with another 1.

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1 In the Greek, Συμμπαλλων ταυτώς. But we apprehend that the pronoun ταυτώς can never follow the verb συνείσαλησ, (in connection with it,) in any sense ever given to that verb. Presuming therefore that the right reading is Συμμπαλλων αλλατίος we have translated agreeably to this presumption. In confirmation of which we find within a few lines after, Συμμπαλλων προς αλλατίος.—S.
and make use of one another's aid and assistance in that kind of life which we lead in cities.

Soc. You speak then of such as have abilities to govern men, who make use of other men to aid and assist them.

Alc. I do.

Soc. Do you mean the governing of men who make use of mariners in the rowing of galleys, and give them the proper orders?

Alc. I mean no such thing.

Soc. For ability to govern such men belongs to the commander of a galley.

Alc. True.

Soc. Do you then mean the governing of men who are musicians, and lead the song to other men, making use of chorus-singers and dancers?

Alc. I mean not this neither.

Soc. For this skill belongs to the master of the whole choir.

Alc. Right.

Soc. In speaking then of ability to govern men who make use of other men, what kind of use do you mean? or in what way?

Alc. Fellow-citizens, I mean, partakers of the same polity, and engaged in mutual commerce for mutual help and benefit. I speak of ability to govern these.

Soc. What art then is that which gives this ability? as if I were to ask you, on the subject just now mentioned—the knowing how to govern men embarked in the same voyage—What art is it that gives this knowledge?

Alc. The art of commanding ships.

Soc. And what science is that which gives the power of governing those others whom we mentioned,—those who have parts in the same song?

Alc. That which belongs, as just now you said, to the master of the whole choir.

Soc. And by what name do you call that science which gives ability to govern those who partake of the same polity?

Alc. Prudence I call it for my part, Socrates.

Soc. What? do you think then that want of prudence is proper for the commander of a ship?
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ALC. Certainly not so.

Soc. But rather that prudence is.

ALC. I think it is, so far as it regards the safety of those who are sailing in the ship.

Soc. It is well said: and that other science, that which you call prudence, what end does that regard?

ALC. The good government and safety of the commonwealth.

Soc. And what is it which the commonwealth enjoys when it is governed best and preserved in safety? and what is it from which it is then preserved? as, if you were to ask me this question, What is it which the body enjoys when it is best taken care of, and preserved in safety? and from what is it then preserved? I would say that then it enjoys health, and is preserved from disease. Are not you of the same opinion?

ALC. I am.

Soc. And, if you were to ask me further, What do the eyes enjoy when the best care is taken of them? and from what are they then preserved? I would answer in like manner as before, that they enjoyed their sight, and were preserved from blindness. So likewise of the ears; when they are preserved from deafness, and have their hearing perfect, they are then in their best condition, and are taken the best care of.

ALC. Right.

Soc. Well, now; what does the commonwealth enjoy, and from what is it preserved, when 'tis in its best condition, has the best care taken of it, and is best preserved?

ALC. It seems to me, Socrates, that the members of it then enjoy mutual amity, and are preserved from enmity and factions.

Soc. By amity do you mean their being of the same mind, or of different minds?

ALC. Their being of the same mind.

Soc. Now through what science is it that different civil states are of the same mind concerning numbers?

ALC. Through the science of arithmetic.

Soc. Well; and is it not through that very science that private persons are of the same mind one with another?
Ar. It is.
Soc. And that any person too, by himself, continues always in the same mind, is it not through his possessing that science?
Alc. It is.
Soc. And through what science is it that a single individual is always of the same mind concerning a span and a cubit, whether of the two is the greater measure? is it not through the science of mensuration?
Alc. Without doubt.
Soc. And is it not so too between different private persons and civil states?
Alc. It is.
Soc. And how concerning weights? does not the same hold true in this case?
Alc. I agree it does.
Soc. But now the sameness of mind which you speak of, what is that? What is the subject-matter of it? and through what science is it procured? I ask you likewise whether the same science which procures it for the public procures it no less for private persons; and whether it operates that effect in a man considered by himself as well as between one man and another.
Alc. Probably it does.
Soc. What science or art then is it? Do not labour for an answer, but speak readily what you think.
Alc. I think it to be such an amity and sameness of mind, that which we are speaking of, as there is between a father and a mother in loving their child, and as there is between brother and brother, and between man and wife.
Soc. Do you then think it possible, Alcibiades, for a man to be of the same mind with his wife on the subject of weaving, when he is ignorant and she is knowing in the art?
Alc. By no means.
Soc. Nor ought he neither. For 'tis a piece of knowledge belonging only to women.
Alc. Certainly.
Soc. Well; and can a woman be of the same mind with her husband on the subject of fighting in battle among the infantry, when she has never learnt the art?

Alc. Certainly she cannot.

Soc. For the knowledge of this you would perhaps say belonged only to men.

Alc. I should so.

Soc. Some pieces of knowledge, therefore, properly belong to women; others to men according to your account.

Alc. No doubt can be made of it.

Soc. On those subjects therefore which are not common to both the sexes there is no sameness of mind, between husbands and their wives.

Alc. There is not any.

Soc. Neither then is there any friendship; if friendship consist in sameness of mind.

Alc. It appears there is not.

Soc. So far therefore as women are attentive to their own business they are not beloved by their husbands.

Alc. It seems they are not.

Soc. Neither are men beloved by their wives,—so far as their minds are engaged in their own business.

Alc. It seems they are not.

Soc. Neither then do citizens live well together in cities, when each of them minds only his own business.

Alc. Nay, Socrates; for my part I imagine that they do,—so far as they are thus employed.

Soc. How say you? What, without friendship between them, by means of which we said that civil states were in a happy condition, and without which we said they could not flourish?

*In all the editions of Plato, we here read simply $\omega\nu\rho\tau\nu\kappa\alpha\iota$. In all the MSS. therefore, from which the first of them were printed, and in those also which Cicinus and Cornarius translated, there seems to have been an omission of the word $\nu\alpha$. We think it an omission because the same word is inserted in the very next sentence of Socrates, which the reasoning requires to correspond with this. Serranus alone, in his translation, appears to have seen the necessity of its being here restored.—S.*
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ALC. But it seems to me that friendship is on this very account produced between them, because every one gives his whole attention to his own business.

Soc. It did not seem so to you just now. But how do you explain at present what you said,—that friendship was produced by sameness of mind? Whether is it possible that fellow-citizens can be all of the same mind on subjects in which some of them are knowing, and others ignorant?

ALC. It is not possible.

Soc. And do they do their duty, and act as they ought, or not, when each of them attends to his own business?

ALC. As they ought, undoubtedly.

Soc. When the citizens then of any city act as they ought, and all of them do their duty, is not friendship produced between them?

ALC. It must be so I think, Socrates.

Soc. What kind of friendship, or sameness of mind, do you then mean, in the procuring of which you say that wisdom and prudence are requisite to make us men of virtue and merit? For I can neither learn from you what it is, nor what objects it regards. But sometimes it seems to regard the same objects, and sometimes not, according to your account of it.

ALC. Now by the Gods, Socrates, I know not what I mean, myself. But am in danger of appearing to have been, of a long time, in a shameful state of mind, without being sensible of it.

Soc. Now therefore you ought to take courage. For if fifty years of your life had elapsed before you had discovered the real state of your mind, an application of it to the care of yourself would have been a difficult task for you. But you are now at the very time of life in which such a discovery should be made, to be of any advantage to you.

ALC. What then am I to do, Socrates, now that I am made sensible of my condition?

Soc. Only to answer to the questions I shall put to you, Alcibiades. And if you will do so, you and I, by the favour of God, if any credit may be given to a prophecy of mine, shall both of us be the better for it.

ALC. Your prophecy shall be accomplished, as far as the accomplishment depends on my answering to your questions.

Soc.
Soc. Come on then. What is it to take care of oneself? That we may not falsely imagine, as we often do, that we are taking care of ourselves, and know not that all the while we are otherwise employed. And when is it that a man is taking that care? Whether when he is taking care of what appertains to him, is he then taking care of himself?

Alc. For my part I must own I think so.

Soc. And when is it, think you, that a man is taking care of his feet? whether is it then when he is taking care of the things appertaining to his feet?

Soc. I do not apprehend your meaning.

Soc. Do you acknowledge something to be appertaining to the hand,—a ring, for instance? Or does it appertain to any other part of the human body than a finger?

Alc. Certainly not.

Soc. And does not a shoe appertain to the foot in like manner?

Alc. It does.

Soc. Whether then at the time of our taking care of our shoes are we taking care immediately of our feet?

Alc. I do not quite apprehend you, Socrates.

Soc. Do you acknowledge that whatever be the subject of our care, a right care of it may be taken?

Alc. I do.

Soc. I ask you then, whether you think that a man takes a right care of whatever is the subject of his care, when he improves it and makes it better?

Alc. I answer Yes.

Soc. What art now is that by which our shoes are improved and made better?

Alc. The shoemaker's art.

Soc. By the shoemaker's art therefore it is that we take a right care of our shoes.

Alc. True.

* If, in the Greek, we here insert the particle ν or, there will be no occasion to separate these two questions of Socrates, so as to insert between them an affirmative answer of Alcibiades to the first question; as Ficinus does in his translation.—S.
Soc. And is it also by the shoemaker's art that we take a right care of our feet? or is it by that art by which we improve our feet and make them better?

Alc. It is by this art.

Soc. And do we not improve and make better our feet by the same art by which we improve and make better the rest of our body?

Alc. I believe we do.

Soc. And is not this the gymnastic art?

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Soc. By the gymnastic art therefore we take care of the foot, and by the shoemaker's art we take care of what is appertinent to the foot.

Alc. Exactly so.

Soc. And in like manner by the gymnastic art we take care of our hands, and by the art of engraving rings we take care of what is appertinent to the hand.

Alc. Certainly.

Soc. By the gymnastic art also we take care of our bodies; but 'tis by the weaver's art and some others that we take care of things appertinent to the body.

Alc. I agree with you entirely.

Soc. By one kind of knowledge therefore we take care of things themselves, and by a different kind of knowledge we take care of things only appertinent to those things which are the principal.

Alc. It appears so.

Soc. You are not therefore taking care of yourself when you are taking care only of the appertinences to yourself.

Alc. At that time 'tis very true I am not.

Soc. For one and the same art, it seems, doth not take care of a thing itself, and of the appertinences to that thing besides.

Alc. It appears to be not the same art.

Soc. Now then, by what kind of art might we take care of ourselves?

Alc. I have nothing to answer to this question.

Soc. So much, however, we are agreed in, that it is not an art by which we improve or better any thing which is ours; but an art by which we improve and better our very selves.

Alc.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

ALC. I acknowledge it.

Soc. Could we ever know what art would improve or amend a shoe, if we knew not what a shoe was?

ALC. Impossible.

Soc. Neither could we know what art would make better rings for the finger, if ignorant what a ring for the finger was.

ALC. True.

Soc. Well; and can we ever know what art would improve or make a man's self better, so long as we are ignorant of what we ourselves are?

ALC. Impossible.

Soc. Let me ask you, then, whether it happens to be an easy thing to know onefelf; and whether he was some person of mean attainments in knowledge, he who put up this inscription in the temple at Pytho *: or is it a piece of knowledge difficult to be attained, and not obvious to every one?

ALC. To me, Socrates, it has often seemed easy and obvious to every one, and often too, at other times, a thing of the greatest difficulty.

Soc. But whether in itself it be an easy thing or not, with respect to us, Alcibiades, the state of the case is this;—had we attained to that piece of knowledge, we should perhaps know what it is to take care of ourselves; but never can we know this so long as we remain ignorant of that.

ALC. These are truths which I acknowledge.

Soc. Come then. By what means might it be found what is the very self of every thing? for so we might perhaps find what we ourselves are: but so long as we continue in the dark as to that point, it will be no way possible to know ourselves.

ALC. You are certainly in the right.

* Pytho was another name for the city of Delphi, as we learn from Paufanias: a name more antient than the name Delphi, and on that very account retained by Homer and Apollonius of Rhodes. The passages to which we here refer may be seen cited together by Celsarius, in Geog. vol. 1. p. 721, edit. Cantab. An air of antiquity in the dission is observed by the best critics to be one of the sources of the sublime in epic poetry. And Plato treads every where in the steps of Homer while he is searching out all the sources of sublimity in style, to maintain throughout his writings the dignity of true philosophy, and, at the same time, to preserve its simplicity, and unadulterated beauty.

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Soc.
Soc. Attend now, I conjure you in the name of Jupiter: With whom is it that you are at this present time discoursing? Is it not with me?

Alc. It is.

Soc. And am not I discoursing with you?

Alc. You are.

Soc. It is Socrates then who is discoursing and arguing:

Alc. Quite true.

Soc. And Alcibiades is attentive to his arguments.

Alc. He is.

Soc. Is it not by reason that Socrates thus argues in discourse?

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Soc. And is not to argue in discourse the same thing as to reason?

Alc. Quite the same.

Soc. But is not the person who uses a thing, different from the thing, which he uses?

Alc. How do you mean?

Soc. As a shoemaker, for instance, cuts his leather with the shears, and the paring knife, and other tools.

Alc. Well; he does so.

Soc. Is not then the shoemaker, who cuts the leather and uses those tools in cutting it, different from the tools which he uses?

Alc. Without doubt.

Soc. Are not, in like manner, the instruments on which a musician plays, different things from the musician himself?

Alc. Certainly.

Soc. It was in this sense that just now I asked you whether you thought that, in all cases, the person who used a thing was different from the thing which he used.

Alc. I think he is.

Soc. Now then, to resume the instance of the shoemaker; what say we? does he cut the leather with his tools only, or also with his hands?

1 In the Greek we here read, — ἀλλά τιν παρέχει; Is it with any other person than with me?

But the answer of Alcibiades being in the affirmative is sufficient to show this reading to be wrong. It may be rectified by this small alteration; ἀλλὰ τιν παρέχει. Whether is it not with me?

Alc.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

Alc. With his hands also.

Soc. He therefore uses also these.

Alc. He does.

Soc. And does he not use his eyes also when he is cutting the leather?

Alc. He does.

Soc. And we are agreed, that the person who makes use of anythings different from the things which he makes use of.

Alc. We are.

Soc. The shoemaker then, and the musician, are different from the hands and eyes with which they perform their operations.

Alc. It is apparent.

Soc. And does not a man use also his whole body?

Alc. Most certainly.

Soc. Now the user is different from the thing used.

Alc. True.

Soc. A man therefore is a being different from his body.

Alc. It seems so.

Soc. What sort of being then is man?

Alc. I know not.

Soc. But you know that man is some being who makes use of the body.

Alc. True.

Soc. Does any being make use of the body other than the soul?

Alc. None other.

Soc. And does it not so do by governing the body?

Alc. It does.

Soc. Further. I suppose that no man would ever think otherwise than this.

Alc. Than what?

Soc. That a man himself was one of these three things.

Alc. What three things?

Soc. Soul, or body, or a compound of them both, constituting one whole.

Alc. What besides could be imagined?

Soc. Now we agreed that the being which governs the body is the man.

Alc. We did.

Soc. What being then is the man? Doth the body itself govern itself?
ALC. By no means.
Soc. For the body we said was governed.
ALC. True.
Soc. The body then cannot be that being which we are in search of.
ALC. It seems not.
Soc. But whether does the compound being govern the body? and whether is this the man?
ALC. Perhaps it is.
Soc. Least of any of the three can this be so. For of two parties, one of which is the party governed, there is no possibility that both of them should govern jointly.
ALC. Right.
Soc. Since then neither the body, nor the compound of soul and body together, is the man, it remains, I think, either that a man's self is nothing at all, or if it be any thing, it must be concluded that the man is no other thing than soul.
ALC. Clearly so.
Soc. Needs it then to be proved to you still more clearly, that the soul is the very man?
ALC. It needs not, by Jupiter: for the proofs already brought seem to me sufficient.
Soc. If it be proved tolerably well, though not accurately, 'tis sufficient for us. For we shall then perhaps, and not before, have an accurate knowledge of man's self, when we shall have discovered what we just now passed by as a matter which required much consideration.

Simplicius rightly understands Plato here to mean the rational soul. For the arguments produced in this part of the Dialogue, to show that the soul is a man's proper self, regard the rational soul only. This soul alone uses speech, as the instrument by which it makes known to others its mind and will. This alone uses argumentative speech, as an instrument to teach art and science, to correct error, to confute falsehood, and demonstrate truth. This alone uses the organical parts of the body, especially the hands and eyes, as instruments by which it operates in all the performances of the manual arts. This alone employs the whole body in its service, as the instrument of its will and pleasure; and is the sole governing and leading power in man, whether it govern well or ill, and whether it lead in the right way, or in the wrong; for the rest of the man must obey and follow. It governs well, and leads aright, through knowledge of itself; if this knowledge infer the knowledge of what is just, fair, and good, and if the knowledge of these things be the science of rational, right, and good government.—S.

ALC.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

ALC. What is that?
SOC. That of which was said some such thing as this,—that in the first place we should consider what is self itself: whereas, instead of this, we have been considering what is the proper self of every man. And this indeed for our purpose will perhaps suffice. For we could by no means ever say that any thing was more peculiarly and properly oneself, than is the soul.

ALC. Certainly, we could not.
SOC. May we not then fairly thus determine,—that we are converting one with another, by means of reason, you and I, soul with soul?
ALC. Quite fairly.
SOC. This therefore was our meaning when we said a little before, that Socrates discoursed with Alcibiades, making use of reason; we meant, it seems, that he directed his words and arguments, not to your outward person, but to Alcibiades himself, that is to the soul.
ALC. It seems so to me too.
SOC. He therefore enjoins a man to recognize the soul, he who gives him this injunction,—to know himself.
ALC. That is probably his meaning.
SOC. Whoever then has a knowledge only of his body, has indeed attained the knowledge of what is his, but not the knowledge of himself.
ALC. Just so.
SOC. None therefore of the physicians, so far as he is only a physician,

4 The Greek of this passage, in all the editions of Plato, is absurdly printed thus, ὡτὶς ἀπὸ τῶν σώματος γινομένης, τὰ αὐτῶ, ἀλλ' οὐχ' αὐτῷ, γνωσθεί. The first member of which sentence being ungrammatical, Stephens, in the margin of his edition, supposes may be rectified, either by inserting the word τὰ before τῶν, or by changing the τῶν into τὰ. In either of these ways indeed the grammatical construction is amended, but not the sense: for thus represented, (and thus reprinted it is by the Latin versions of Cornarius and Serranus,) it is inconsistent with the reasoning, which requires that the body itself should be intended, and not τὰ (or τὰ τῶν) τῶν σώματος, the garments, and other external things, or any of them, which are only appertinent to the body. Le Ferre and Dacier seem to have been well aware of this, and have rightly therefore rendered it into French by these words—son corps. They were led thus aright by Ficinus, who, in translating this part of the sentence, uses only the word corpus. Perhaps in the manuscript from which he translated, he found the right reading, which we conjecture to be this, ὡτὶς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος γενομένης, τὰ αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' οὐχ' αὐτῷ, γνωσθεί. S.

4 knows.
knows himself: neither does any master of the exercises, so far as he is such a master and nothing more.

Alc. It seems they do not.

Soc. Far from knowing themselves then are husbandmen, and other artificers or workmen. For such men as these are ignorant it seems of the things which are theirs, and knowing only in subjects still more remote, the mere appendices to those things which are theirs, so far as their several arts lead them. For they are acquainted only with things appertinent to the body, to the culture and service of which body these things administer.

Alc. What you say is true.

Soc. If therefore wisdom consist in the knowledge of oneself, none of these artificers are wise men by their skill in their respective arts.

Alc. I think they are not.

Soc. On this account it is that these arts seem mechanical and mean, and not the learning fit for a man of a virtuous merit.

Alc. Entirely true.

Soc. To return to our subject whoever then employs his care in the service of his body, takes care indeed of what is his, but not of himself.

Alc. There is danger of its being found so.

Soc. And whoever is attentive to the improvement of his wealth, is not taking care either of himself or of what is his, but of things still more remote, the mere appendices to what is his.

Alc. It seems so to me too.

Soc. The man therefore who is intent on getting money, is so far not acting for his own advantage.

Alc. Rightly concluded.

Soc. It follows also, that whoever was an admirer of the outward person of Alcibiades, did not admire Alcibiades, but something which belongs to Alcibiades.

Alc. You say what is true.

Soc. But whoever is your admirer is the admirer of your soul.

* The two preceding notes are referable to this passage also, where, in the Greek, as printed, the like omission is made of the article τα before τα ἐκπρω.—S.
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

ALC. It appears to follow of necessity from our reasoning.

Soc. And hence it is, that the admirer of your outward person, when the flower of it is all fallen, departs and forsakes you;

ALC. So it appears.

Soc. But the admirer of a soul departs not, so long as that soul goes on to improve itself.

ALC. Probably so.

Soc. I am he then who forsakes you not, but abides by you, when; the flower of youth having left you, the rest of your followers have left you and are gone.

ALC. It is kindly done of you, Socrates: and never do you forsake me.

Soc. Exert all your endeavours then to be as excellent a man as possible.

ALC. I will do my best.

Soc. For the state of your case is this:—Alcibiades, the son of Clinias, never it seems had any admirer, neither has he now, besides one only, and therefore to be cherished, this Socrates here, the son of Sophronicus and Phænarete.

ALC. 'Tis true.

Soc. Did you not say that I had been a little beforehand with you when I accosted you; for that you had it in your mind to address me first; as you wanted to ask me, why of all your admirers I was the only one who forsook you not?

ALC. I did say so: and that was the very case.

Soc. This then was the reason: 'twas because I was the only person who admired you; the others admired that which is yours. That which is yours has already dropped its flower; and the spring-season of it is past: whereas you yourself are but beginning to flourish. If therefore the Athenian populace corrupt you not, and make you less fair, I never shall forsake you. But this is what I chiefly fear, that you may come to admire and court the populace, and be corrupted by them, and we should lose you: since many of the Athenians, men of virtuous merit too, have been thus

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1 In the Greek, ἄνθρωπος τοῦ σωμάτος, where the word ἄνθρωπος seems necessary to be supplied. The same metaphor is used a few lines further on.—S.
corrupted before now. For the people of magnanimous Erechtheus has an outward person fair and engaging to behold. But we ought to strip it of all its showy drefs, and view it naked. Use therefore the caution which I give you.

Alc. What caution?

Soc. In the first place, my friend, exercise yourself; and acquire the knowledge of those things which are necessary to be learnt by every man who engages in political affairs: but engage not in them until you are thus exercised and thus instructed: that you may come to them prepared with an antidote, and suffer no harm from the poison of the populace.

Alc. What you say, Socrates, to me seems right. But explain, if you can, more clearly, how or in what way we should take care of ourselves.

Soc. Is not this then sufficiently clear to us from what has been already said? For what we are, has been tolerably well agreed on. Indeed before that point was settled we feared lest we should mistake it, and imagine that we were taking care of ourselves, when the object of our care all the while was some other thing.

Alc. This is true.

Soc. Upon that it was concluded by both of us that we ought to take care of the soul, and that to this we should direct all our attention and regard.

Alc. It was evident.

Soc. And that the care of our bodies and our possessions should be delivered over to others.

Alc. We could not doubt it.

Soc. In what way then may we attain to know the soul itself with the greatest clearness? For, when we know this, it seems we shall know ourselves. Now, in the name of the Gods, whether are we not ignorant of the right meaning of that Delphic inscription just now mentioned?

Alc. What meaning? What have you in your thoughts, O Socrates! when you ask this question?

Soc. I will tell you what I suspect that this inscription means, and what particular thing it advises us to do. For a just resemblance of it is, I think, not to be found wherever one pleases; but in one only thing, the sight.

Alc. How do you mean?
Soc. Consider it jointly now with me. Were a man to address himself to the outward human eye, as if it were some other man; and were he to give it this counsel "See yourself;" what particular thing should we suppose that he advised the eye to do? Should we not suppose that 'twas to look at such a thing, as that the eye, by looking at it, might see itself?

Alc. Certainly we should.

Soc. What kind of thing then do we think of, by looking at which we see the thing at which we look, and at the same time see ourselves?

Alc. 'Tis evident, O Socrates, that for this purpose we must look at mirrors, and other things of the like kind.

Soc. You are right. And has not the eye itself, with which we see, something of the same kind belonging to it?

Alc. Most certainly it has.

Soc. You have observed, then, that the face of the person who looks in the eye of another person, appears visible to himself in the eyesight of the person opposite to him, as in a mirror? And we therefore call this the pupil, because it exhibits the image of that person who looks in it.

Alc. What you say is true.

Soc. An eye therefore beholding an eye, and looking in the most excellent part of it, in that with which it sees, may thus see itself?

Alc. Apparently so.

Soc. But if the eye look at any other part of the man, or at any thing whatever, except what this part of the eye happens to be like, it will not see itself.

Alc. It is true.

Soc. If therefore the eye would see itself, it must look in an eye, and in that place of the eye, too, where the virtue of the eye is naturally seated; and the virtue of the eye is sight.

Alc. Just so.

Soc. Whether then is it not true, my friend Alcibiades, that the soul¹, if she would know herself, must look at soul, and especially at that place

¹ That is, the whole rational soul.—T.
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in the soul in which wisdom\(^1\), the virtue of the soul, is ingenerated; and also at whatever else this virtue of the soul resembles?

**ALC.** To me, O Socrates, it seems true.

**SOC.** Do we know of any place in the soul more divine than that which is the seat of knowledge and intelligence?

**ALC.** We do not.

**SOC.** This therefore in the soul resembles the divine nature. And a man, looking at this, and recognizing all that which is divine\(^2\), and God and wisdom, would thus gain the most knowledge of himself.

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\(^1\) According to Diotima, in the Banquet of Plato, the being which is wise desires to be full of knowledge, and does not seek nor investigate, but possesses the intelligible, or, in other words, the proper object of intellectual vision. But according to Socrates, in the Republic, wisdom is generative of truth and intellect: and from the Theaetetus it appears to be that which gives perfection to things imperfect, and calls forth the latent intellects of the soul. From hence, it is evident that wisdom, according to Plato, is full of real being and truth, is generative of intellectual truth, and is perfective according to energy of intellectual natures. In this place, therefore, Plato, with great propriety, and consistently with the above definition, calls wisdom the virtue of the soul. For the different virtues are the sources of different perfection to the soul, and wisdom, the highest virtue, is the perfection of our supreme part, intellect.—T.

\(^2\) Proclus on Plato's Theology, lib. I. cap. 3, p. 7. beautifully observes as follows on this passage: "Socrates, in the Alcibiades, rightly observes that the soul entering into herself will behold all other things, and deity itself. For, verging to her own union, and to the centre of all life, laying aside multitude, and the variety of the all manifold powers which she contains, she ascends to the highest watch-tower of beings. And as, in the most holy of mysteries\(^3\), they say that the mystics at first meet with the multiform and many-shaped genera\(^4\), which are hurled forth before the gods, but on entering the interior parts of the temple, unmoved, and guarded by the mystic rites, they genuinely receive in their bosom divine illumination, and divested of their garments, as they say, participate of a divine nature; the same mode, as it appears to me, takes place in the speculation of wholes\(^5\). For the soul, when looking at things posterior to herself, beholds only the shadows and images of beings; but when she turns to herself, she evolves her own essence, and the reasons which she contains. And at first, indeed,

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\(^3\) Viz. in the Eleusinian mysteries; for thus he elsewhere denominates these mysteries.

\(^4\) Meaning evil demons; for the assuming a variety of shapes is one of the characteristics of such demons.

\(^5\) By the term wholes, in the Platonic philosophy, every incorporeal order of being, and every mundane sphere, are signified.
Alc. It is apparent.
Soc. And to know oneself, we acknowledge to be wisdom.
Alc. By all means.

[1 Soc. Shall we not say, therefore, that as mirrors are clearer, purer, and more splendid than that which is analogous to a mirror in the eye, in like manner God is purer and more splendid than that which is best in our soul?

Alc. It is likely, Socrates.
Soc. Looking therefore at God, we should make use of him as the most beautiful mirror, and among human concerns we should look at the virtue of the soul; and thus, by so doing, shall we not especially see and know our very selves?

Alc. Yes.
Soc. If then we are not wise, but are ignorant of ourselves, can we know what our good is, and what our evil?

Alc. How is it possible that we should, Socrates?
Soc. For perhaps it appears impossible for a man who knows not Alcibiades himself, to know any thing which relates to Alcibiades, as having that relation.

Alc. Impossible it is, by Jupiter.

The only, as it were, beholds herself; but when she penetrates more profoundly in the knowledge of herself, she finds in herself both intellect and the orders of beings. But when she proceeds into her interior recesses, and into the adytum, as it were, of the soul, she perceives, with her eyes nearly closed, the genus of the gods, and the unities of beings. For all things reside in us according to the peculiarity of soul; and through this we are naturally capable of knowing all things, by exciting the powers and the images of wholes which we contain."—T.

1 The words within the brackets are from Stobaeus, Serm. 21. p. 183., from whom it appears that they ought to be inserted in this place, though this omission has not been noticed by any of the editors of Plato. The original is as follows: Ἀφ’ ἐκείνης κατοικτοῦ σαφέστατα οὕτως οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡμεῖς τῆς ζωῆς προερχόμενοι καὶ λαμπρὰ τὰ θεῖα φῶς τῶν θεῶν καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. For the intelligent reader needs not, I trust, be told, that, without this uncommonly beautiful passage, the dialogue is defective in its most essential part.—T.
Soc. Neither then can any thing which is our own, be known by us to be our own, any other way than through the knowledge of ourselves.

Alc. How should we?

Soc. And if we know not that which is ours, neither can we know any of the appertinences to what is ours.

Alc. It appears we cannot.

Soc. We therefore were not at all right in admitting, as we did just now, that certain persons there were, who knew not themselves, but who knew what belonged to them, and was theirs. Neither can such as know not themselves know the appertinences to what is theirs. For it seems, that 'tis the province of one and the same person, and is from one and the same science, to know himself, to know the things which are his, and to know the appertinences to those things.

Alc. I believe it will be found so.

Soc. And whoever is ignorant of what belongs to himself and is his own, must be likewise ignorant of what belongs to other men and is theirs.

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Soc. And if he is ignorant of what belongs to other men, will he not be ignorant also of what belongs to the public, and to other civil states?

Alc. He must be so.

Soc. Such a man, therefore, cannot be a politician.

Alc. Certainly he cannot.

Soc. Neither will he be fit to manage a family.

Alc. Certainly not.

Soc. Nor will he have any certain knowledge of any thing which he is doing.

Alc. He will not.

Soc. And will not the man who knows not what he is doing, do amiss?

Alc. Certainly so.

Soc. And doing amiss, will he not act ill, both as a private person, and as a member of the public?

Alc. No doubt of it.

Soc. And the man who acts ill, is he not in a bad condition?

Alc. 
THE FIRST ALCIBIADES.

Alc. A very bad one.
Soc. And in what condition will they be who have an interest in his conduct?
Alc. In a very bad one they too.
Soc. It is not possible therefore that any man should be happy if he be not wise and good.
Alc. It is not possible.
Soc. Those then who are bad men are in a bad condition.
Alc. A very bad one indeed.
Soc. Not even by riches therefore is a man delivered out of a miserable condition; nor by any other thing than wisdom and virtue.
Alc. Apparently so.
Soc. Fortifications therefore, and shipping, and harbours, will be of no avail to the happiness of any civil states; neither will the multitude of their people, nor the extent of their territories; if they want virtue.
Alc. Of none at all.
Soc. If then you would manage the affairs of the city well and rightly, you must impart virtue to the citizens.
Alc. Beyond question.
Soc. But can a man impart to others that which he has not himself?
Alc. How should he?
Soc. You yourself therefore in the first place should acquire virtue, as should also every other man who has any thoughts of governing, and managing, not himself only, and his own private affairs, but the people also, and the affairs of the public.
Alc. True.
Soc. Not arbitrary power therefore, nor command, ought you to procure, neither for yourself nor for the city, but justice and prudence.
Alc. It is evident.
Soc. For, if ye act justly and prudently, your own conduct, and that of the city too, will be pleasing unto God.
Alc. 'Tis highly probable.
Soc. And ye will thus act, by looking, as we said before, at that which is divine and splendid.
Alc.
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ALC. Evidently so.
Soc. And, further, by directing your sight hither, ye will behold and know what is your own good.
ALC. True.
Soc. Will ye not then act both rightly and well?
ALC. Certainly.
Soc. And acting thus I will insure happiness both to yourself and to the city.
ALC. You will be a safe insurer.
Soc. But acting unjustly, as looking to that which is without God, and dark, 'tis highly probable that ye will perform actions similar to what ye behold, actions dark and atheistical, as being ignorant of yourselves.
ALC. In all probability that would be the case.
Soc. For, O my friend Alcibiades! if a man have the power of doing what he pleases, and at the same time want intellect, what will be the probable consequence of such arbitrary power, to himself, if he is a private person, and to the state also, if he governs it? As in the case of a bodily disease, if the sick person, without having medical knowledge, had the power of doing what he pleased, and if he tyrannized so as that no person would dare to reprove him, what would be the consequence? Would it not be, in all probability, the destruction of his body?
ALC. It would indeed.
Soc. And in the affair of a sea voyage, if a man, void of the knowledge and skill belonging to a sea commander, had the power of acting and directing in the vessel as he thought proper, do you conceive what would be the consequence, both to himself and to the companions of his voyage?
ALC. I do; that they would all be lost.
Soc. Is it otherwise then in the administration of the state, or in any offices of command or power? If virtue be wanting in the persons who are appointed to them, will not the consequence be an evil and destructive conduct?
ALC. It must.
Soc. Arbitrary power, then, my noble Alcibiades! is not the thing which you are to aim at procuring,—neither for yourself, nor yet for the common-
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commonwealth; but virtue, if you mean either your own private happiness or that of the public.

ALC. True.

Soc. And before one acquires virtue, it is better to be under good government than it is to govern,—better not only for a child, but for a man.

ALC. Evidently so.

Soc. Is not that which is better, more beautiful also?

ALC. It is.

Soc. And is not that which is more beautiful, more becoming?

ALC. Without doubt.

Soc. It becomes a bad man therefore to be a slave: for it is better for him so to be.

ALC. Certainly.

Soc. Vice therefore is a thing servile, and becoming only to the condition of a slave.

ALC. Clearly.

Soc. And virtue is a thing liberal, and becoming to a gentleman.

ALC. It is.

Soc. Ought we not, my friend, to shun every thing which is servile, and becoming only to a slave?

ALC. The most of all things, O Socrates!

Soc. Are you sensible of the present state of your own mind? Do you find it liberal, and such as becomes a gentleman, or not?

ALC. I think I am very fully sensible of what it is.

Soc. Do you know then, by what means you may escape from that condition in which you are now,—not to name what it is, when it happens to be the case of a man of honour?

ALC. I do.

Soc. By what?

ALC. Through you, Socrates, if you please.

Soc. That is not well said, Alcibiades!

ALC. What ought I then to say?

Soc. You ought to say, If God pleases.

* See the Greater Hippias.—S.
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Alc. I adopt those words then for my own. And I shall add to them these further;—that we shall be in danger, Socrates, of changing parts,—I of assuming yours,—and you of bearing mine. For it is not possible for me to avoid the following you every where from this day forward, with as much assiduity as if I was your guardian,—and you my pupil.

Soc. My friendship then for you, noble Alcibiades! may be compared justly to a stork; if, having hatched in your heart, and there cherished, a winged love, it is afterwards to be by this love, in return, cherished and supported.

Alc. And this you will find to be the very case: for I shall begin from henceforward to cultivate the science of justice.

Soc. I wish you may persevere. But I am terribly afraid for you: not that I in the least distrust the goodness of your disposition; but perceiving the torrent of the times, I fear you may be borne away with it, in spite of your own resistance, and of my endeavours in your aid.