CHRISTIANITY

AND

GREEK PHILOSOPHY;

OR, THE RELATION BETWEEN

SPONTANEOUS AND REFLECTIVE THOUGHT IN GREECE
AND THE POSITIVE TEACHING OF
CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.

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"Plato made me know the true God, Jesus Christ showed me the way to him."
ST. AUGUSTINE.

Cocker, Benjamin Franklin. Christianity and Greek Philosophy.
New York: Harper, 1870.

NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,
FRANKLIN SQUARE.
1870.

TO

D. D. WHEDON, D.D.,

MY EARLIEST LITERARY FRIEND, WHOSE VIGOROUS WRITINGS HAVE STIMULATED MY INQUIRIES, WHOSE COUNSELS HAVE GUIDED MY STUDIES, AND WHOSE KIND AND GENEROUS WORDS HAVE ENCOURAGED ME TO PERSEVERANCE AMID NUMEROUS DIFFICULTIES,

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME AS A TOKEN OF MY MORE THAN ORDINARY AFFECTION.

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

IN preparing the present volume, the writer has been actuated by a conscientious desire to deepen and vivify our faith in the Christian system of truth, by showing that it does not rest *solely* on a special class of facts, but upon all the facts of nature and humanity; that its authority does not repose *alone* on the peculiar and supernatural events which transpired in Palestine, but also on the still broader foundations of the ideas and laws of the reason, and the common wants and instinctive yearnings of the human heart. It is his conviction that the course and constitution of nature, the whole current of history, and the entire development of human thought in the ages anterior to the advent of the Redeemer centre in, and can only be interpreted by, the purpose of redemption.

The method hitherto most prevalent, of treating the history of human thought as a series of isolated, disconnected, and lawless movements, without unity and purpose; and the practice of denouncing the religions and philosophies of the ancient world as inventions of satanic mischief, or as the capricious and wicked efforts of humanity to relegate itself from the bonds of allegiance to the One Supreme Lord and Lawgiver, have, in his judgment, been prejudicial to the interests of all truth, and especially injurious to the cause of Christianity. They betray an utter insensibility to the grand unities of nature and of thought, and a strange forgetfulness of that universal Providence which comprehends all nature and all history, and is yet so minute in its regards that it numbers the hairs on every

human head, and takes note of every sparrow's fall. A juster method will lead us to regard the entire history of human thought as a development towards a specific end, and the providence of God as an all-embracing plan, which sweeps over all ages and all nations, and which, in its final consummation, will, through Christ, "gather together all things in one, both things which are in heaven and things which are on earth."

The central and unifying thought of this volume is *that the necessary ideas and laws of the reason, and the native instincts of the human heart, originally implanted by God, are the primal and germinal forces of history; and that these have been developed under conditions which were first ordained, and have been continually supervised by the providence of God.* God is the Father of humanity, and he is also the Guide and Educator of our race. As "the offspring of God," humanity is not a bare, indeterminate potentiality, but a living energy, an active reason, having definite qualities, and inheriting fundamental principles and necessary ideas which constitute it "the image and likeness of God." And though it has suffered a moral lapse, and, in the exercise of its freedom, has become alienated from the life of God, yet God has never abandoned the human race. He still "magnifies man, and sets his heart upon him." "He visits him every morning, and tries him every moment." "The inspiration of the Almighty still gives him understanding." The illumination of the Divine Logos still "teacheth man knowledge." The Spirit of God still comes near to and touches with strong emotion every human heart. "God has never left himself without a witness" in any nation, or in any age. The providence of God has always guided the dispersions and migrations of the families of the earth, and presided over and directed the education of the race. "He has foreordained the times of each nation's existence, and fixed the geographical boundaries of their habitations, *in order that they should seek the Lord,* and feel after and find Him who is not far from any one of us." The religions of the ancient world were the painful effort of the human spirit to return to its true rest and

centre—the struggle to "find Him" who is so intimately near to every human heart, and who has never ceased to be the want of the human race. The philosophies of the ancient world were the earnest effort of human reason to reconcile the finite and the infinite, the human and the Divine, the subject and God. An overruling Providence, which makes even the wrath of man to praise Him, took up all these sincere, though often mistaken, efforts into his own plan, and made them subserve the purpose of redemption. They aided in developing among the nations "the desire of salvation," and in preparing the world for the advent of the Son of God. The entire course and history of Divine providence, in every nation, and in every age, has been directed towards the one grand purpose of "reconciling all things to Himself." Christianity, as a comprehensive scheme of reconciliation, embracing "all things," can not, therefore, be properly studied apart from the ages of earnest thought, of profound inquiry, and of intense religious feeling which preceded it. To despise the religions of the ancient world, to sneer at the efforts and achievements of the old philosophers, or even to cut them off in thought from all relation to the plans and movements of that Providence which has cared for, and watched over, and pitied, and guided all the nations of the earth, is to refuse to comprehend Christianity itself.

The author is not indifferent to the possibility that his purpose may be misconceived. The effort may be regarded by many conscientious and esteemed theologians with suspicion and mistrust. They can not easily emancipate themselves from the ancient prejudice against speculative thought. Philosophy has always been regarded by them as antagonistic to Christian faith. They are inspired by a commendable zeal for the honor of dogmatic theology. Every essay towards a profounder conviction, a broader faith in the unity of all truth, is branded with the opprobrious name of "rationalism." Let us not be terrified by a harmless word. Surely religion and right reason must be found in harmony. The author believes, with

Bacon, that "the foundation of all religion is right reason." The abnegation of reason is not the evidence of faith, but the confession of despair. Sustained by these convictions, he submits this humble contribution to theological science to the thoughtful consideration of all lovers of Truth, and of Christ, the fountain of Truth. He can sincerely ask upon it the blessing of Him in whose fear it has been written, and whose cause it is the purpose of his life to serve.

The second series, on "Christianity and Modern Thought," is in an advanced state of preparation for the press.

NOTE.—It has been the aim of the writer, as far as the nature of the subject would permit, to adapt this work to general readers. The references to classic authors are, therefore, in all cases made to accessible English translations (in Bohn's Classical Library); such changes, however, have been made in the rendering as shall present the doctrine of the writers in a clearer and more forcible manner. For valuable services rendered in this department of the work, by Martin L. D'Ooge, M. A., Acting Professor of Greek Language and Literature in the University of Michigan, the author would here express his grateful acknowledgment.

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PLATO.

WE have seen that the advent of Socrates marks a new era in the history of speculative thought. Greek philosophy, which at first was a philosophy of nature, now changes its direction, its character, and its method, and becomes a philosophy of mind. This, of course, does not mean that now it had mind alone for its object; on the contrary, it tended, as indeed philosophy must always tend, to the conception of a rational ideal or *intellectual system of the universe.* It started from the phenomena of mind, began with the study of human thought, and it made the knowledge of mind, of its ideas and laws, the basis of a higher philosophy, which should interpret all nature. In other words, it proceeded from psychology, through dialectics, to ontology.[1]

This new movement we have designated in general terms as the *Socratic School.* Not that we are to suppose that, in any technical sense, Socrates founded *a* school. The Academy, the Lyceum, the Stoa, and the Garden, were each the chosen resort of distinct philosophic sects, the locality of separate schools; but Athens itself, the whole city, was the scene of the studies, the conversations, and the labors of Socrates. He wandered through the streets absorbed in thought. Sometimes he stood still for hours lost in profoundest meditation; at other times he might be seen in the market-place, surrounded by a crowd of Athenians, eagerly discussing the great questions of the day.

[1] Cousin's "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," vol. i. p. 413.

Socrates, then, was not, in the usual sense of the word, a teacher. He is not to be found in the Stoa or the Grove, with official aspect, expounding a system of doctrine. He is "the garrulous oddity" of the streets, putting the most searching and perplexing questions to every bystander, and making every man conscious of his ignorance. He delivered no lectures; he simply talked. He wrote no books; he only argued: and what is usually styled his school must be understood as embracing those who attended him in public as listeners and admirers, and who caught his spirit, adopted his philosophic *method*, and, in after life, elaborated and systematized the ideas they had gathered from him.

Among the regular or the occasional hearers of Socrates were many who were little addicted to philosophic speculation. Some were warriors, as Nicias and Laches; some statesmen, as Critias and Critobulus; some were politicians, in the worst sense of that word, as Glaucon; and some were young men of fashion, as Euthydemus and Alcibiades. These were all alike delighted with his inimitable irony, his versatility of genius, his charming modes of conversation, his adroitness of reply; and they were compelled to confess the wisdom and justness of his opinions, and to admire the purity and goodness of his life. The magic power which he wielded, even over men of dissolute character, is strikingly depicted by Alcibiades in his speech at "the Banquet."[1] Of these listeners, however, we can not now speak. Our business is with those only who imbibed his philosophic spirit, and became the future teachers of philosophy. And even of those who, as Euclid of Megara, and Antisthenes the Cynic, and Aristippus of Cyrenaica, borrowed somewhat from the dialectic of Socrates, we shall say nothing. They left no lasting impression upon the current of philosophic thought, because their systems were too partial, and narrow, and fragmentary. It is in Plato and Aristotle that the true development of the Socratic philosophy is to be sought, and in Plato chiefly, as the disciple and friend of Socrates.

[1] "Banquet," §§ 39, 40.

PLATO (B.C. 430–347) was pre-eminently the pupil of Socrates. He came to Socrates when he was but twenty years of age, and remained with him to the day of his death.

Diogenes Laertius reports the story of Socrates having dreamed he found an unfledged cygnet on his knee. In a few moments it became winged and flew away, uttering a sweet sound. The next day a young man came to him who was said to reckon Solon among his near ancestors, and who looked, through him, to Codrus and the god Poseidon. That young man was Plato, and Socrates pronounced him to be the bird he had seen in his dream.[1]

Some have supposed that this old tradition intimates that Plato departed from the method of his master—he became fledged, and flew away into the air. But we know that Plato did not desert his master whilst he was living, and there is no evidence that he abandoned his method after he was dead. He was the best expounder and the most rigid observer of the Socratic "organon." The influence of Socrates upon the philosophy of Plato is everywhere discernible. Plato had been taught by Socrates, that beyond the world of sense there is a world of eternal truth, seen by the eye of reason alone. He had also learned from him that the eye of reason is purified and strengthened by *reflection*, and that to reflect is to observe, and analyze, and define, and classify the facts of consciousness. Self-reflection, then, he had been taught to regard as the key of real knowledge. By a completer induction, a more careful and exact analysis, and a more accurate definition, he carried this philosophic method forward towards maturity. He sought to solve the problem of *being* by the principles revealed in his own consciousness, and in the *ultimate ideas of the reason* to find the foundation of all real knowledge, of all truth, and of all certitude.

Plato was admirably fitted for these sublime investigations by the possession of those moral qualities which were so promi nent in the character of his master. He had that same deep

[1] Diogenes Laertius, "Lives of the Philosophers," bk. iii. ch. vii.

seriousness of spirit, that earnestness and rectitude of purpose, that longing after truth, that inward sympathy with, and reverence for justice, and purity, and goodness, which dwelt in the heart of Socrates, and which constrained him to believe in their reality and permanence. He could not endure the thought that all ideas of right were arbitrary and factitious, that all knowledge was unreal, that truth was a delusion, and certainty a dream. The world of sense might be fleeting and delusive, but the voice of reason and conscience would not mislead the upright man. The opinions of individual men might vary, but the universal consciousness of the race could not prevaricate. However conflicting the opinions of men concerning beautiful things, right actions, and good sentiments, Plato was persuaded there are ideas of Order, and Right, and Good, which are universal, unchangeable, and eternal. Untruth, injustice, and wrong may endure for a day or two, perhaps for a century or two, but they can not always last; they must perish. The *just* thing and the *true* thing are the only enduring things; these are eternal. Plato had a sublime conviction that his mission was to draw the Athenian mind away from the fleeting, the transitory, and the uncertain, and lead them to the contemplation of an Eternal Truth, an Eternal Justice, an Eternal Beauty, all proceeding from and united in an Eternal Being—the ultimate ἀγαθόν—*the Supremely Good.* The knowledge of this "Supreme Good" he regarded as the highest science.[1]

Added to these moral qualifications, Plato had the further qualification of a comprehensive knowledge of all that had been achieved by his predecessors. In this regard he had enjoyed advantages superior to those of Socrates. Socrates was deficient in erudition, properly so called. He had studied men rather than books. His wisdom consisted in an extensive *observation*, the results of which he had generalized with more or less accuracy. A complete philosophic method demands not only a knowledge of contemporaneous opinions and modes of thought, but also a knowledge of the succession and devel-

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xvi. p. 193.

opment of thought in past ages. Its instrument is not simply psychological analysis, but also historical analysis as a counter-proof.[1] And this erudition Plato supplied. He studied carefully the doctrines of the Ionian, Italian, and Eleatic schools. Cratylus gave him special instruction in the theories of Heraclitus.[2] He secured an intimate acquaintance with the lofty speculations of Pythagoras, under Archytas of Tarentum, and in the writings of Philolaus, whose books he is said to have purchased. He studied the principles of Parmenides under Hermogenes,[3] and he more than once speaks of Parmenides in terms of admiration, as one whom he had early learned to reverence.[4] He studied mathematics under Theodorus, the most eminent geometrician of his day. He travelled in Southern Italy, in Sicily, and, in search of a deeper wisdom, he pursued his course to Egypt.[5] Enriched by the fruits of all previous speculations, he returned to Athens, and devoted the remainder of his life to the development of a comprehensive system "which was to combine, to conciliate, and to supersede them all."[6] The knowledge he had derived from travel, from books, from oral instruction, he fused and blended with his own speculations, whilst the Socratic spirit mellowed the whole, and gave to it a unity and scientific completeness which has excited the admiration and wonder of succeeding ages.[7]

The question as to *the nature, the sources, and the validity of human knowledge* had attracted general attention previous to the time of Socrates and Plato. As the results of this protracted controversy, the opinions of philosophers had finally crystallized in two well-defined and opposite theories of knowledge.

1. That which reduced all knowledge to the accidental and

[1] Cousin's "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," vol. i. p. 31.
[2] Aristotle's "Metaphysics," bk. i. ch. vi.
[3] Diogenes Laertius, "Lives of the Philosophers," bk. iii. ch. viii. p. 115.
[4] See especially "Theætetus," § 101.
[5] Ritter's "History of Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 147.
[6] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 22.
[7] Encyclopædia Britannica, article "Plato."

passively receptive quality of the organs of sense, and which asserted, as its fundamental maxim, that "*Science consists in* αἴσθησις—*sensation.*"[1]

This doctrine had its foundation in the physical philosophy of Heraclitus. He had taught that all things are in a perpetual flux and change. "Motion gives the appearance of existence and of generation." "Nothing *is*, but is always a *becoming.*"[2] Material substances are perpetually losing their identity, and there is no permanent essence or being to be found. Hence Protagoras inferred that truth must vary with the ever-varying sensations of the individual. "Man (the individual) is the measure of all things." Knowledge is a purely relative thing, and every man's opinion is truth for him.[3] The law of right, as exemplified in the dominion of a party, is the law of the strongest; fluctuating with the accidents of power, and never attaining a permanent being. "Whatever a city enacts as appearing just to itself, this also is just to the city that enacts it, so long as it continues in force."[4] "The just, then, is nothing else but that which is expedient for the strongest."[5]

2. The second theory is that which denies the existence (except as phantasms, images, or mere illusions of the mind) of the whole of sensible phenomena, and refers all knowledge to the *rational apperception of unity* (τὸ ἕν) *or the One.*

This was the doctrine of the later Eleatics. The world of sense was, to Parmenides and Zeno, a blank negation, the *non ens.* The identity of thought and existence was the fundamental principle of their philosophy.

> "Thought is the same thing as the cause of thought;
> For without the thing in which it is announced,
> You can not find the thought; for there is nothing, nor shall be,
> Except the existing."[6]

This theory, therefore, denied to man any valid knowledge of the external world.

[1] "Theætetus," § 23. [2] Ibid., §§ 25, 26. [3] Ibid., §§ 39, 87.
[4] Ibid., § 87. [5] "Republic," bk. i. ch. xii.
[6] Parmenides, quoted in Lewes's "Biog. History of Philosophy," p. 54.

It will at once be apparent to the intelligent reader that the direct and natural result of both these theories[1] of knowledge was a tendency to universal skepticism. A spirit of utter indifference to truth and righteousness was the prevailing spirit of Athenian society. That spirit is strikingly exhibited in the speech of Callicles, "the shrewd man of the world," in "Gorgias" (§§ 85, 86). Is this new to our ears? "My dear Socrates, you talk of *law*. Now the laws, in my judgment, are just the work of the weakest and most numerous; in framing them they never thought but of themselves and their own interests; they never approve or censure except in reference to *this*. Hence it is that the cant arises that tyranny is improper and unjust, and to struggle for eminence, guilt. Unable to rise themselves, of course they would wish to preach liberty and equality. But nature proclaims the law of the stronger.... We surround our children from their infancy with preposterous prejudices about liberty and justice. The man of sense tramples on such impositions, and shows what Nature's justice is.... I confess, Socrates, philosophy is a highly amusing study—in moderation, and for boys. But protracted too long, it becomes a perfect plague. Your philosopher is a complete novice in the life *comme il faut*.... I like very well to see a child babble and stammer; there is even a grace about it when it becomes his age. But to see a man continue the prattle of the child, is absurd. Just so with your philosophy." The consequence of this prevalent spirit of universal skepticism was a

[1] Between these two extreme theories there were offered two, apparently less extravagant, accounts of the nature and limits of human knowledge—one declaring that "*Science* (real knowledge) *consists in right opinion*" (δόξα ἀληθής), but having no further basis in the reason of man ("Theætetus," § 108); and the other affirming that "*Science is right opinion with logical explication or definition*" (μετὰ λόγου), ("Theætetus," § 139). A close examination will, however, convince us that these are but modifications of the sensational theory. The latter forcibly remind us of the system of Locke, who adds "reflection" to "sensation," but still maintains that all our "simple ideas" are obtained from without, and that these are the only material upon which reflection can be exercised. Thus the human mind has no criterion of truth within itself, no elements of knowledge which are connatural and inborn.

general laxity of morals. The Alcibiades, of the "*Symposium*," is the ideal representative of the young aristocracy of Athens. Such was the condition of society generally, and such the degeneracy of even the Government itself, that Plato impressively declares "that God alone could save the young men of his age from ruin."[1]

Therefore the grand, the vital, the most urgent question for his times, as indeed for all times, was, *What is Truth? What is Right?* In the midst of all this variableness and uncertainty of human opinion, is there no ground of certainty? Amid all the fluctuations and changes around us and within us, is there nothing that is immutable and permanent? Have we no ultimate standard of Right? Is there no criterion of Truth? Plato believed most confidently there was such a criterion and standard. He had learned from Socrates, his master, to cherish an unwavering faith in the existence of an Eternal Truth, an Eternal Order, an Eternal Good, the knowledge of which is essential to the perfection and happiness of man, and which knowledge must therefore be presumed to be attainable by man. Henceforth, therefore, the ceaseless effort of Plato's life is to attain a standard (*κριτήριον*)[2]—a CRITERION OF TRUTH.

At the outset of his philosophic studies, Plato had derived from Socrates an important principle, which became the guide of all his subsequent inquiries. He had learned from him that the criterion of truth must be no longer sought amid the ever-changing phenomena of the "sensible world." This had been attempted by the philosophers of the Ionian school, and ended in failure and defeat. It must therefore be sought in the meta-phenomenal—the "intelligible world;" that is, it must be sought in the apperceptions of the reason, and not in opinions founded on sensation. In other words, he must look *within*. Here, by reflection, he could recognize, dimly and imperfectly at first, but increasing gradually in clearness and distinctness, two classes of cognitions, having essentially distinct and opposite characteristics. He found one class that was complex (*συγκε-*

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. vii.

[2] "Theætetus," § 89.

χυμένον), changeable (θάτερον), contingent and relative (τὰ πρός τι σχέσιν ἔχοντα); the other, simple (κεχωρισμένον), unchangeable (ἀκίνητον), constant (ταὐτόν), permanent (τὸ ὂν ἀεί), and absolute (ἀνυπόθετον = ἁπλοῦν). One class that may be questioned, the other admitting of no question, because self-evident and necessary, and therefore compelling belief. One class grounded on sense-perception, the other conceived by reason alone. But whilst the reason recognizes, it does not create them. They are not particular and individual, but universal. They belong not to the man, but to the race.

He found, then, that there are in all minds certain "principles" which are fundamental—principles which lie at the basis of all our cognitions of the objective world, and which, as "mental laws," determine all our forms of thought; and principles, too, which have this marvellous and undeniable character, that they are encountered in the most common experiences, and, at the same time, instead of being circumscribed within the limits of experience, transcend and govern it—principles which are *universal* in the midst of particular phenomena—*necessary*, though mingled with things contingent—to our eyes *infinite* and *absolute*, even when appearing in us the relative and finite beings that we are.[1] These first or fundamental principles Plato called IDEAS (ἰδέαι).

In attempting to present to the reader an adequate representation of the Platonic Ideas, we shall be under the necessity of anticipating some of the results of his Dialectical method before we have expounded that method. And, further, in order that it may be properly appreciated by the modern student, we shall avail ourselves of the lights which modern psychology, faithful to the method of Plato, has thrown upon the subject. Whilst, however, we admit that modern psychology has succeeded in giving more definiteness and precision to the "doctrine of Ideas," we shall find that all that is fundamentally valuable and true was present to the mind of Plato. Whatever superiority the "Spiritual" philosophy of to-day may have over

[1] Cousin's "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," p. 40.

the philosophy of past ages, it has attained that superiority by its adherence to the principles and method of Plato.

In order to the completeness of our preliminary exposition of the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, we shall conditionally assume, as a natural and legitimate hypothesis, the doctrine so earnestly asserted by Plato, that the visible universe, at least in its present form, is an *effect* which must have had a *cause*,[1] and that the Order, and Beauty, and Excellence of the universe are the result of the presence and operation of a "regulating Intelligence"—a *Supreme Mind*.[2] Now that, anterior to the creation of the universe, there must have existed in the Eternal Mind certain fundamental principles of Order, Right, and Good, will not be denied. Every conceivable *form*, every possible *relation*, every principle of *right*, must have been eternally present to the Divine thought. As pure intelligence, the Deity must have always been self-conscious—must have known himself as substance and cause, as the Infinite and Perfect. If then the Divine Energy is put forth in creative acts, that energy must obey those eternal principles of Order, Right, and Good. If the Deity operate at all, he must operate rightly, wisely, and well. The created universe must be an *image*, in the sphere of sense, of the ideas which inhere in the reason of the great First Cause.

"Let us declare," says Plato, "with what *motive* the Creator hath formed nature and the universe. He was *good*, and in the good no manner of envy can, on any subject, possibly subsist. Exempt from envy, he had wished that all things should, as far as possible, *resemble himself*..... It was not, and is not to be allowed for the Supremely Good to do any thing except what is most *excellent* (κάλλιστον)—most *fair*, most *beautiful*."[3] Therefore, argues Plato, "inasmuch as the world is the most beautiful of things, and its artificer the best of causes, it is evident that the Creator and Father of the universe looked to the *Eternal Model* (παράδειγμα), pattern, or plan,"[4] which lay in his

[1] "Timæus," ch. ix.
[2] "Phædo," § 105.
[3] "Timæus," ch. x.
[4] Ibid., ch. ix.

own mind. And thus this one, only-generated universe, is the *image* (εἰκών) of that God who is the object of the intellect, the greatest, the best, and the most perfect Being."[1]

And then, furthermore, if this Supreme Intelligence, this Eternal Mind, shall create another *mind*, it must, in a still higher degree, resemble him. Inasmuch as it is a rational nature, it must, in a peculiar sense, partake of the Divine characteristics. "The soul," says Plato, "is that which most partakes of the *Divine*."[2] The soul must, therefore, have native *ideas* and sentiments which correlate it with the Divine original. The ideas of substance and cause, of unity and identity, of the infinite and perfect, must be mirrored there. As it is the "offspring of God,"[3] it must bear some traces and lineaments of its Divine parentage. That soul must be configured and correlated to those principles of Order, Right, and Good which dwell in the Eternal Mind. And because it has within itself the same ideas and laws, according to which the great Architect built the universe, therefore it is capable of knowing, and, in some degree, of comprehending, the intellectual system of the universe. It apprehends the external world by a light which the reason supplies. It interprets nature according to principles and laws which God has inwrought within the very essence of the soul. "That which imparts truth to knowable things, and gives the knower his power of knowing truth, is the *idea of the good*, and you are to conceive of this as the source of knowledge and of truth."[4]

And now we are prepared to form a clear conception of the Platonic doctrine of Ideas. Viewed in their relation to the Eternal Reason, as giving the primordial thought and law of all being, these principles are simply εἴδη αὐτὰ καθ' αὑτά—*ideas in themselves*—the essential qualities or attributes of Him who is the supreme and ultimate Cause of all existence. When regarded as before the Divine imagination, giving definite forms and relations, they are the τύποι, the παραδείγματα—*the types*,

[1] "Timæus," ch. lxxiii.
[2] "Laws," bk. v. ch. i.
[3] Ibid., bk. x.
[4] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xviii.

models, patterns, ideals according to which the universe was fashioned. Contemplated in their actual embodiment in the laws, and typical forms of the material world, they are εἰκόνες—*images* of the eternal perfections of God. The world of sense pictures the world of reason by a participation (μέθεξις) of the ideas. And viewed as interwoven in the very texture and framework of the soul, they are ὁμοιώματα—copies of the Divine Ideas which are the primordial laws of knowing, thinking, and reasoning. Ideas are thus the nexus of relation between God and the visible universe, and between the human and the Divine reason.[1] There is something divine in the world, and in the human soul, namely, *the eternal laws and reasons of things*, mingled with the endless diversity and change of sensible phenomena. These ideas are "the light of the intelligible world;" they render the invisible world of real Being perceptible to the reason of man. "Light is the offspring of the Good, which the Good has produced in his own likeness. Light in the visible world is what the *idea of the Good* is in the intelligible world. And this offspring of the Good—light—has the same relation to vision and visible things which the Good has to intellect and intelligible things."[2]

Science is, then, according to Plato, *the knowledge of universal, necessary, unchangeable, and eternal ideas.* The simple cognition of the concrete phenomena of the universe is not regarded by him as *real* knowledge. "Science, or real knowledge, belongs to *Being*, and ignorance to *non*-Being." Whilst that which is conversant only "with that which partakes of both—of being

[1] "Now, Idea is, as regards God, a mental operation by him (the notions of God, eternal and perfect in themselves); as regards us, the first things perceptible by mind; as regards Matter, a standard; but as regards the world, perceptible by sense, a pattern; but as considered with reference to itself, an existence."—Alcinous, "Introduction to the Doctrines of Plato," p. 261.

"What general notions are to our minds, he (Plato) held, ideas are to the Supreme Reason (νοῦς βασιλέυς); they are the eternal thoughts of the Divine Intellect, and we attain truth when our thoughts conform with His —when our general notions are in conformity with the ideas."—Thompson, "Laws of Thought," p. 119.

[2] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xix.

and non-being—and which can not be said either to be or not to be"—that which is perpetually "becoming," but never "really is," is "simply *opinion*, and not real knowledge."[1] And those only are "philosophers" who have a knowledge of the *really-existing*, in opposition to the mere seeming; of the *always-existing*, in opposition to the transitory; and of that which exists *permanently*, in opposition to that which waxes and wanes—is developed and destroyed alternately. "Those who recognize many beautiful things, but who can not see the Beautiful itself, and can not even follow those who would lead them to it, they *opine*, but do not *know*. And the same may be said of those who recognize right actions, but do not recognize an absolute righteousness. And so of other ideas. But they who look at these ideas—permanent and unchangeable ideas—these men *really know*."[2] Those are the true philosophers alone who love the sight of truth, and who have attained to the vision of the eternal order, and righteousness, and beauty, and goodness in the Eternal Being. And the means by which the soul is raised to this vision of real Being (τὸ ὄντως ὄν) is THE SCIENCE OF REAL KNOWLEDGE.

Plato, in the "Theætetus," puts this question by the interlocutor Socrates, "What is Science (Ἐπιστήμη) or positive knowledge?"[3] Theætetus essays a variety of answers, such as, "Science is sensation," "Science is right judgment or opinion," "Science is right opinion with logical definition." These, in the estimation of the Platonic Socrates, are all unsatisfactory and inadequate. But after you have toiled to the end of this remarkable discussion, in which Socrates demolishes all the then received theories of knowledge, he gives you no answer of his own. He abruptly closes the discussion by naïvely remarking that, at any rate, Theætetus will learn that he does not understand the subject; and the ground is now cleared for an original investigation.

This investigation is resumed in the "Republic." This

[1] "Republic," bk. v. ch. xx.
[2] Ibid., bk. v. ch. xxii.
[3] "Theætetus," § 10.

greatest work of Plato's was designed not only to exhibit a scheme of Polity, and present a system of Ethics, but also, at least in its digressions, to propound a system of Metaphysics more complete and solid than had yet appeared. The discussion as to the *powers* or *faculties* by which we obtain knowledge, the *method* or *process* by which real knowledge is attained, and the ultimate *objects* or *ontological grounds* of all real knowledge, commences at § 18, book v., and extends to the end of book vii.

That we may reach a comprehensive view of this "sublimest of sciences," we shall find it necessary to consider—

1st. *What are the powers or faculties by which we obtain knowledge, and what are the limits and degrees of human knowledge?*

2d. *What is the method in which, or the processes and laws according to which, the mind operates in obtaining knowledge?*

3d. *What are the ultimate results attained by this method? what are the objective and ontological grounds of all real knowledge?*

The answer to the first question will give the PLATONIC PSYCHOLOGY; the answer to the second will exhibit the PLATONIC DIALECTIC; the answer to the last will reveal the PLATONIC ONTOLOGY.

I. PLATONIC PSYCHOLOGY.

Every successful inquiry as to the reality and validity of human knowledge must commence by clearly determining, by rigid analysis, what are the actual phenomena presented in consciousness, what are the powers or faculties supposed by these phenomena, and what reliance are we to place upon the testimony of these faculties? And, especially, if it be asserted that there is a science of absolute Reality, of ultimate and essential Being, then the most important and vital question is, By what power do we cognize real Being? through what faculty do we obtain the knowledge of that which absolutely *is*? If by sensation we only obtain the knowledge of the fleeting and the transitory, "*the becoming*," how do we attain to the knowl-

edge of the unchangeable and permanent, "the *Being?*" Have we a faculty of universal, necessary, and eternal principles? Have we a faculty, an interior eye which beholds "*the intelligible,*" ideal, spiritual world, as the eye of sense beholds the visible or "*sensible world?*"[1]

Plato commences this inquiry by first defining his understanding of the word δύναμις—*power* or *faculty*. "We will say that *faculties* (δυνάμεις) are a certain kind of real existences by which we can do whatever we are able (*e. g.*, to know), as there are powers by which every thing does what it does: the eye has a *power* of seeing; the ear has a *power* of hearing. But these powers (of which I now speak) have no color or figure to which I can so refer that I can distinguish one power from another. *In order to make such distinction, I must look at the power itself, and see what it is, and what it does. In that way I discern the power of each thing, and that is the same power which produces the same effect, and that is a different power which produces a different effect.*"[2] That which is employed about, and accomplishes one and the same purpose, this Plato calls a *faculty*.

We have seen that our first conceptions (*i. e.*, first in the order of time) are of the mingled, the concrete (τὸ συγκεχυμένον), "the multiplicity of things to which the multitude ascribe beauty," etc.[3] The mind "contemplates what is great and small, not as distinct from each other, but as confused."[4] Prior to the discipline of *reflection*, "men are curious about mere sights and sounds, love beautiful voices, beautiful colors, beautiful forms, but their intelligence can not see, can not embrace, the essential nature of the Beautiful itself."[5] Man's condition previous to the education of philosophy is vividly presented in Plato's simile of the cave.[6] He beholds only the images and shadows of the ectypal world, which are but dim and distant adumbrations of the real and archetypal world. Pri-

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xviii.
[2] Ibid., bk. v. ch. xxi.
[3] Ibid., bk. v. ch. xxii.
[4] Ibid., bk. vii. ch. viii.
[5] Ibid., bk. v. ch. xx.
[6] Ibid., bk. vii. ch. i., ii.

marily nothing is given in the abstract (*τὸ κεχωρισμένον*), but every thing in the concrete. The primary faculties of the mind enter into action spontaneously and simultaneously; all our primary notions are consequently synthetic. When reflection is applied to this primary totality of consciousness, that is, when we analyze our notions, we find them composed of diverse and opposite elements, some of which are variable, contingent, individual, and relative, others are permanent, unchangeable, universal, necessary, and absolute. Now these elements, so diverse, so opposite, can not have been obtained from the same source; they must be supplied by separate powers. "Can any man with common sense reduce under one what *is infallible*, and what is *not infallible*?"[1] Can that which is "*perpetually becoming*" be apprehended by the same faculty as that which "*always is*?"[2] Most assuredly not.

These primitive intuitions—the simple perceptions of sense, and the *à priori* intuitions of the reason, which constitute the elements of all our complex notions, have essentially *diverse objects*—the sensible or ectypal world, seen by the eye and touched by the hand, which Plato calls *δοξαστήν—the subject of opinion;* and the noetic or archetypal world, perceived by reason, and which he calls *διανοητικήν—the subject of rational intuition or science.* "It is plain," therefore, argues Plato, "that *opinion* is a different thing from *science.* They must, therefore, have a different *faculty* in reference to a different object—science as regards that which *is*, so as to know the nature of real *being*—opinion as regards that which can not be said absolutely to be, or not to be. That which is known and that which is opined can not possibly be the same, ... since they are naturally faculties of different things, and both of them are faculties—*opinion* and *science*, and each of them different from the other."[3] Here then are two grand divisions of the mental powers—a faculty of apprehending universal and necessary

[1] "Republic," bk. v. ch. xxi.
[2] Ibid., bk. v. ch. xxii.; also "Timæus," § 9.
[3] Ibid., bk. v. ch. xxi., xxii.

Truth, of intuitively beholding absolute Reality, and a faculty of perceiving sensible objects, and of judging according to appearance.

According to the scheme of Plato, these two general divisions of the mental powers are capable of a further subdivision. He says: "Consider that there are two kinds of things, the *intelligible* and the *visible;* two different regions, the intelligible world and the sensible world. Now take a line divided into two equal segments to represent these two regions, and again divide each segment in the same ratio—both that of the visible and that of the intelligible species. The parts of each segment are to represent differences of clearness and indistinctness. In the visible world the parts are *things* and *images.* By *images* I mean shadows,[1] reflections in water and in polished bodies, and all such like representations; and by *things* I mean that of which images are resemblances, as animals, plants, and things made by man.

"You allow that this difference corresponds to the difference of *knowledge* and *opinion;* and the *opinionable* is to the *knowable* as the *image* to the *reality.*[2]

"Now we have to divide the segment which represents intel-

[1] As in the simile of the cave ("Republic," bk. vii. ch. i. and ii.).

[2] The analogy between the "images produced by reflections in water and on polished surfaces" and "the images of external objects produced in the mind by sensation" is more fully presented in the "Timæus," ch. 19.

The eye is a light-bearer, "made of that part of elemental fire which does not burn, but sheds a mild light, like the light of day. . . . When the light of the day meets the light which beams from the eye, then light meets like, and make a homogeneous body; the external light meeting the internal light, in the direction in which the eye looks. And by this homogeneity like feels like; and if this beam touches any object, or any object touches it, it transmits the motions through the body to the soul, and produces that sensation which we call *seeing.* . . . And if (in sleep) some of the strong motions remain in some part of the frame, they produce within us likenesses of external objects, . . . and thus give rise to dreams. . . . As to the images produced by mirrors and by smooth surfaces, they are now easily explained, for all such phenomena result from the mutual affinity of the external and internal fires. The light that proceeds from the face (as an object of vision), and the light that proceeds from the eye, become one continuous ray on the smooth surface."

ligible things in this way: The one part represents the knowledge which the mind gets by using things as images—the other, that which it has by dealing with the ideas themselves; the one part that which it gets by reasoning downward from principles—the other, the principles themselves; the one part, truth which depends on hypotheses—the other, unhypothetical or absolute truth.

"Thus, to explain a problem in geometry, the geometers make certain hypotheses (namely, definitions and postulates) about numbers and angles, and the like, and reason from them—giving no reason for their assumptions, but taking them as evident to all; and, reasoning from them, they prove the propositions which they have in view. And in such reasonings, they use visible figures or diagrams—to reason about a square, for instance, with its diagonals; but these reasonings are not really about these visible figures, but about the mental figures, and which they conceive in thought.

"The diagrams which they draw, being visible, are the images of thoughts which the geometer has in his mind, and these images he uses in his reasoning. There may be images of these images—shadows and reflections in water, as of other visible things; but still these diagrams are only images of conceptions.

"This, then, is *one* kind of intelligible things: *conceptions*—for instance, geometrical conceptions of figures. But in dealing with these the mind depends upon assumptions, and does not ascend to first principles. It does not ascend above these assumptions, but uses images borrowed from a lower region (the visible world), these images being chosen so as to be as distinct as may be.

"Now the *other* kind of intelligible things is this: that which the *Reason* includes, in virtue of its power of reasoning, when it regards the assumptions of the sciences as (what they are) assumptions only, and uses them as occasions and starting-points, that from these it may ascend to the *Absolute*, which does not depend upon assumption, the origin of scientific truth.

The reason takes hold of this first principle of truth, and availing itself of all the connections and relations of this principle, it proceeds to the conclusion—using no sensible image in doing this, but contemplates the *idea alone;* and with these ideas the process begins, goes on, and terminates."

"I apprehend," said Glaucon, "but not very clearly, for the matter is somewhat abstruse. *You wish to prove that the knowledge which by the reason, in an intuitive manner, we may acquire of real existence and intelligible things is of a higher degree of certainty than the knowledge which belongs to what are commonly called the Sciences.* Such sciences, you say, have certain assumptions for their basis; and these assumptions are by the student of such sciences apprehended not by sense, but by a mental operation—by conception.

"But inasmuch as such students ascend no higher than assumptions, and do not go to the first principles of truth, they do not seem to have true knowledge, intellectual insight, intuitive reason, on the subjects of their reasonings, though the subjects are intelligible things. And you call this habit and practice of the geometers and others by the name of JUDGMENT (διάνοια), not reason, or insight, or intuition—taking judgment to be something between opinion, on the one side, and intuitive reason, on the other.

"You have explained it well," said I. "And now consider these four kinds of things we have spoken of, as corresponding to four affections (or faculties) of the mind. INTUITIVE REASON (νόησις), the highest; JUDGMENT (διάνοια) (or *discursive reason*), the next; the third, BELIEF (πίστις); and the fourth, CONJECTURE, or *guess* (εἰκασία); and arrange them in order, so that they may be held to have more or less certainty, as their objects have more or less truth."[1] The completeness, and even accuracy of this classification of all the objects of human cognition, and of the corresponding mental powers, will be seen at once by studying the diagram proposed by Plato, as figured on the opposite page.

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xx. and xxi.

PLATONIC SCHEME OF THE OBJECTS OF COGNITION, AND THE RELATIVE MENTAL POWERS.

	VISIBLE WORLD, (the object of Opinion—*δόξα*).		INTELLIGIBLE WORLD, (the object of Knowledge or Science—*ἐπιστήμη*).	
	Things.	Images.	Intuitions.	Conceptions.

And may be thus further expanded:

	VISIBLE WORLD.		INTELLIGIBLE WORLD.	
OBJECT.	Things. *ζῶα. κ. τ. λ.*	Images. *εἰκόνες.*	Ideas. *ἰδέαι.*	Conceptions. *διανοήματα.*
PROCESS.	Belief. *πίστις.*	Conjecture. *εἰκασία.*	Intuition. *νόησις.*	Demonstration. *ἐπιστήμη.*
FACULTY	SENSATION. *αἴσθησις.*	PHANTASY. *φαντασία.*	INTUITIVE REASON. *νοῦς.*	DISCURSIVE REASON. *λόγος.*
MODERN NOMENCLATURE.	SENSE. Presentative Faculty.	IMAGINATION. Representative Faculty.	REASON. Regulative Faculty.	JUDGMENT. Logical Faculty.
	MEMORY. *μνήμη.* *The Conservative Faculty*— "the preserver of sensation" (*σωτηρία αἰσθήσεως*).[1]		REMINISCENCE. *ἀνάμνησις.* *The Reproductive Faculty*— "the recollection of those things which the soul saw (in Eternity) when journeying in the train of the Deity."[2]	

[1] "Philebus," § 67.

[2] "Phædrus," § 62.

The foregoing diagram, borrowed from Whewell, with some modifications and additions we have ventured to make, exhibits a perfect view of the Platonic scheme of the *cognitive powers*—the faculties by which the mind attains to different degrees of knowledge, "having more or less certainty, as their objects have more or less truth."[1]

1st. SENSATION (*αἴσθησις*).—This term is employed by Plato to denote the passive mental states or affections which are produced within us by external objects through the medium of the vital organization, and also the cognition or vital perception or consciousness[2] which the mind has of these mental states.

2d. PHANTASY (*φαντασία*).—This term is employed to describe the power which the mind possesses of imagining or representing whatever has once been the object of sensation. This may be done involuntarily as "in dreams, disease, and hallucination,"[3] or voluntarily, as in reminiscence. *Φαντάσματα* are the images, the life-pictures (*ζωγράφημα*) of sensible things which are present to the mind, even when no external object is present to the sense.

The conjoint action of these two powers results in what Plato calls *opinion* (*δόξα*). "Opinion is the complication of memory and sensation. For when we meet for the first time with a thing perceptible by a sense, and a sensation is produced by it, and from this sensation a memory, and we subsequently meet again with the same thing perceived by a sense, we combine the memory previously brought into action with the sensation produced a second time, and we say within ourselves [this is] Socrates, or a horse, or fire, or whatever thing there may be of

[1] "Republic," bk. vii. ch. xix.

[2] "In Greek philosophy there was no term for 'consciousness' until the decline of philosophy, and in the latter ages of the language. Plato and Aristotle, to say nothing of other philosophers, had no special term to express the knowledge which the mind has of the operation of its own faculties, though this, of course, was necessarily a frequent matter of consideration. Intellect was supposed by them to be cognizant of its own operations.... In his 'Theætetus' Plato accords to sense the power of perceiving that it perceives."—Hamilton's "Metaphysics," vol. i. p. 198 (Eng. ed.).

[3] "Theætetus," § 39.

such a kind. Now this is called *opinion*, through our combining the recollection brought previously into action with the sensation recently produced. And when these, placed along each other, agree, a true opinion is produced; but when they swerve from each other, a false one."[1] The δόξα of Plato, therefore, answers to the experience, or the *empirical knowledge* of modern philosophy, which is concerned only with appearances (phenomena), and not with absolute realities, and can not be elevated to the dignity of *science* or real knowledge.

We are not from hence to infer that Plato intended to deny all reality whatever to the objects of sensible experience. These transitory phenomena were not real existences, but they were *images* of real existences. The world itself is but the image, in the sphere of sense, of those ideas of Order, and Proportion, and Harmony, which dwell in the Divine Intellect, and are mirrored in the soul of man. "Time itself is a moving image of Eternity."[2] But inasmuch as the immediate object of sense-perception is a representative image generated in the vital organism, and all empirical cognitions are mere "conjectures" (εἰκασίαι) founded on representative images, they need to be certified by a higher faculty, which immediately apprehends real Being (τὸ ὄν). Of things, as they are in themselves, the senses give us no knowledge; all that in sensation we are conscious of is certain affections of the mind (πάθος); the existence of self, or the perceiving subject, and a something external to self, a perceived object, are revealed to us, not by the senses, but by the reason.

3d. JUDGMENT (διάνοια, λόγος), *the Discursive Faculty, or the Faculty of Relations.*—According to Plato, this faculty proceeds on the assumption of certain principles as true, without inquiring into their validity, and reasons, by deduction, to the conclusions which necessarily flow from these principles. These assumptions Plato calls hypotheses (ὑποθέσεις). But by hypotheses he does not mean baseless assumptions—mere theories—but

[1] Alcinous, "Introduction to the Doctrine of Plato," p. 247.
[2] "Timæus," § 14.

things self-evident and "obvious to all;"[1] as for example, the postulates and definitions of Geometry. "After laying down hypotheses of the odd and even, and three kinds of angles [right, acute, and obtuse], and figures [as the triangle, square, circle, and the like], he *proceeds on them as known, and gives no further reason about them*, and reasons downward from these principles,"[2] affirming certain judgments as consequences deducible therefrom.

All judgments are therefore founded on *relations*. To judge is to compare two terms. "Every judgment has three parts: the subject, or notion about which the judgment is; the predicate, or notion with which the subject is compared; and the copula, or nexus, which expresses the connection or relation between them."[3] Every act of affirmative judgment asserts the agreement of the predicate and subject; every act of negative judgment asserts the predicate and subject do not agree. All judgment is thus an attempt to reduce to unity two cognitions, and reasoning (λογίζεσθαι) is simply the extension of this process. When we look at two straight lines of equal length, we do not merely think of them separately as *this* straight line, and *that* straight line, but they are immediately connected together by a comparison which takes place in the mind. We perceive that these two lines are alike; they are of equal length, and they are both straight; and the connection which is perceived as existing between them is a *relation of sameness or identity*.[4] When we observe any change occurring in nature, as, for example, the melting of wax in the presence of heat, the mind recognizes a causal efficiency in the fire to produce that change, and the relation now apprehended is a *relation of cause and effect*.[5] But the fundamental principles, the necessary ideas which lie at the basis of all the judgments (as the ideas of space and time, of unity and identity, of substance and cause, of the infinite and perfect) are not given by the judgment, but

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xx.
[2] Ibid., bk. vi. ch. xx.
[3] Thompson's "Laws of Thought," p. 134.
[4] "Phædo," §§ 50–57, 62.
[5] "Timæus," ch. ix.; "Sophocles," § 109.

by the "highest faculty"—the *Intuitive Reason*,[1] which is, for us, the source of all unhypothetical and absolute knowledge.

The knowledge, therefore, which is furnished by the Discursive Reason, Plato does not regard as "real Science." "It is something between Opinion on the one hand, and Intuition on the other."[2]

4th. REASON (*νοῦς*)—*Intuitive Reason*, is the organ of self-evident, necessary, and universal Truth. In an immediate, direct, and intuitive manner, it takes hold on truth with absolute certainty. The reason, through the medium of *ideas*, holds communion with the world of real Being. These ideas are the *light* which reveals the world of unseen realities, as the sun reveals the world of sensible forms. "*The idea of the good* is the *sun* of the Intelligible World; it sheds on objects the light of truth, and gives to the soul that knows, the power of knowing."[3] Under this light, the eye of reason apprehends the eternal world of being as truly, yes more truly, than the eye of sense apprehends the world of phenomena. This power the rational soul possesses by virtue of its having a nature kindred, or even homogeneous with the Divinity. It was "generated by the Divine Father," and, like him, it is in a certain sense "*eternal*."[4] Not that we are to understand Plato as teaching that the rational soul had an independent and underived existence; it

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xxi.

[2] Ibid., bk. vi. ch. xxi.

[3] Ibid., bk. vi. ch. xix.; see also ch. xviii.

[4] The reader must familiarize himself with the Platonic notion of "*eternity*," *as a fixed state out of time existing contemporaneous with one in time*, to appreciate the doctrine of Plato as stated above. If we regard his idea of eternity as merely an indefinite extension of time, with a past, a present, and a future, we can offer no rational interpretation of his doctrine of the eternal nature of the rational essence of the soul. An eternal nature "generated" in a "past" or "present" time is a contradiction. But that was not Plato's conception of "eternity," as the reader will discover on perusing the "Timæus" (ch. xiv.). "God resolved to create a moving image of eternity,.... and out of that eternity which reposes in its own *unchangeable unity* he framed an eternal image moving according to numerical succession, which we call *Time*. Nothing can be more inaccurate than to apply the terms, *past*, *present*, *future*, to real Being, which is immovable. Past and future are expressions only suitable to generation which proceeds through time." Time reposes on the bosom of eternity, as all bodies are in space.

was created or "generated" in eternity,[1] and even now, in its incorporate state, is not amenable to the conditions of time and space, but, in a peculiar sense, dwells in eternity; and therefore is capable of beholding eternal realities, and coming into communion with absolute beauty, and goodness, and truth —that is, with God, the *Absolute Being*.

Thus the soul (ψυχή) as a composite nature is on one side linked to the eternal world, its essence being generated of that ineffable element which constitutes the real, the immutable, and the permanent. It is a beam of the eternal Sun, a spark of the Divinity, an emanation from God. On the other side it is linked to the phenomenal or sensible world, its emotive part[2] being formed of that which is relative and phenomenal. The soul of man thus stands midway between the eternal and the contingent, the real and the phenomenal, and as such, it is the mediator between, and the interpreter of, both.

In the allegory of the "Chariot and Winged Steeds"[3] Plato represents the lower or inferior part of man's nature as dragging the soul down to the earth, and subjecting it to the slavery and debasement of corporeal conditions. Out of these conditions there arise numerous evils that disorder the mind and becloud the reason, for evil is inherent to the condition of finite and multiform being into which we have "fallen by our own fault." The present earthly life is a fall and a punishment. The soul is now dwelling in "the grave we call the body." In its incorporate state, and previous to the discipline of education, the rational element is "asleep." "Life is more of a dream than a reality." Men are utterly the slaves of sense, the sport of phantoms and illusions. We now resemble those "captives chained in a subterraneous cave," so poetically described in the seventh book of the "Republic;" their backs are turned to the light, and consequently they see but the shadows of the objects

[1] "Timæus," ch. xvi., and "Phædrus," where the soul is pronounced ἀρχὴ δὲ ἀγένητον.

[2] Θυμοειδές, the seat of the nobler—ἐπιθυμητικόν, the seat of the baser passions.

[3] "Phædrus," § 54–62.

which pass behind them, and they "attribute to these shadows a perfect reality." Their sojourn upon earth is thus a dark imprisonment in the body, a dreamy exile from their proper home. "Nevertheless these pale fugitive shadows suffice to revive in us the reminiscence of that higher world we once inhabited, if we have not absolutely given the reins to the impetuous untamed horse which in Platonic symbolism represents the emotive sensuous nature of man." The soul has some dim and shadowy recollection of its ante-natal state of bliss, and some instinctive and proleptic yearnings for its return.

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Has had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar,
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
> From God, who is our home."[1]

Exiled from the true home of the spirit, imprisoned in the body, disordered by passion, and beclouded by sense, the soul has yet longings after that state of perfect knowledge, and purity, and bliss, in which it was first created. Its affinities are still on high. It yearns for a higher and nobler form of life. It essays to rise, but its eye is darkened by sense, its wings are besmeared by passion and lust; it is "borne downward, until at length it falls upon and attaches itself to that which is material and sensual," and it flounders and grovels still amid the objects of sense.

And now, with all that seriousness and earnestness of spirit which is peculiarly Christian, Plato asks how the soul may be delivered from the illusions of sense, the distempering influence of the body, and the disturbances of passion, which becloud its vision of the real, the good, and the true?

Plato believed and hoped this could be accomplished by *philosophy*. This he regarded as a grand intellectual discipline for the purification of the soul. By this it was to be disen-

[1] Wordsworth, "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality," vol. v.

thralled from the bondage of sense[1] and raised into the empyrean of pure thought "where truth and reality shine forth." All souls have the faculty of knowing, but it is only by reflection, and self-knowledge, and intellectual discipline, that the soul can be raised to the vision of eternal truth, goodness, and beauty—that is, to the vision of God. And this intellectual discipline was the *Platonic Dialectic*.

[1] Not, however, fully in this life. The consummation of the intellectual struggle into "the intelligible world" is death. The intellectual discipline was therefore μελέτη θανάτου, *a preparation for death*.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PHILOSOPHERS OF ATHENS (*continued*).

THE SOCRATIC SCHOOL (*continued*).

PLATO.

II. THE PLATONIC DIALECTIC.

THE Platonic Dialectic is the Science of Eternal and Immutable Principles, and the *method* (ὄργανον) by which these first principles are brought forward into the clear light of consciousness. The student of Plato will have discovered that he makes no distinction between logic and metaphysics. These are closely united in the one science to which he gives the name of "*Dialectic*," and which was at once the science of the ideas and laws of the Reason, and of the mental process by which the knowledge of Real Being is attained, and a ground of absolute certainty is found. This science has, in modern times, been called *Primordial* or *Transcendental Logic*.

We have seen that Plato taught that the human reason is originally in possession of fundamental and necessary ideas—the copies of the archetypal ideas which dwell in the eternal Reason; and that these ideas are the primordial laws of thought—that is, they are the laws under which we conceive of all objective things, and reason concerning all existence. These ideas, he held, are not derived from sensation, neither are they generalizations from experience, but they are inborn and connatural. And, further, he entertained the belief, more, however, as a reasonable hypothesis[1] than as a demonstrable truth, that these standard principles were acquired by the soul

[1] Within "the εἰκότων μύθων ἰδέα—the category of probability."—"Phædo."

in a pre-existent state in which it stood face to face with ideas of eternal order, beauty, goodness, and truth.[1] "Journeying with the Deity," the soul contemplated justice, wisdom, science—not that science which is concerned with change, and which appears under a different manifestation in different objects, which we choose to call beings; but such science as is in that which alone is indeed *being*.[2] Ideas, therefore, belong to, and inhere in, that portion of the soul which is properly *οὐσία—essence* or *being;* which had an existence anterior to time, and even now has no relation to time, because it is now in eternity—that is, in a sphere of being to which past, present, and future can have no relation.[3]

All knowledge of truth and reality is, therefore, according to Plato, a REMINISCENCE (*ἀνάμνησις*)—a recovery of partially forgotten ideas which the soul possessed in another state of existence; and the *dialectic* of Plato is simply the effort, by apt *interrogation*, to lead the mind to "*recollect*"[4] the truth which has been formerly perceived by it, and is even now in the memory though not in consciousness. An illustration of this method is attempted in the "*Meno*," where Plato introduces Socrates as making an experiment on the mind of an uneducated person. Socrates puts a series of questions to a slave of Meno, and at length elicits from the youth a right enunciation of a geometrical truth. Socrates then points triumphantly to this instance, and bids Meno observe that he had not taught the youth any thing, but simply interrogated him as to his opinions, whilst the youth had recalled the knowledge previously existing in his own mind.[5]

Now whilst we readily grant that the instance given in the "*Meno*" does not sustain the inference of Plato that "the boy" had learnt these geometrical truths "in eternity," and that they had simply been brought forward into the view of his con-

[1] "Phædo," § 50–56. [2] "Phædrus," § 58. [3] See note on p. 349.

[4] "To learn is to recover our own previous knowledge, and this is properly to *recollect*."—"Phædo," § 55.

[5] "Meno," § 16–20. "Now for a person to recover knowledge himself through himself, is not this to *recollect*."

sciousness by the "questioning" of Socrates, yet it certainly does prove that *there are ideas or principles in the human reason which are not derived from without—which are anterior to all experience, and for the development of which, experience furnishes the occasion, but is not the origin and source.* By a kind of lofty inspiration, he caught sight of that most important doctrine of modern philosophy, so clearly and logically presented by Kant, *that the Reason is the source of a pure* à priori *knowledge*—a knowledge native to, and potentially in the mind, antecedent to all experience, and which is simply brought out into the field of consciousness by experience conditions. Around this greatest of all metaphysical truths Plato threw a gorgeous mythic dress, and presented it under the most picturesque imagery.[1] But, when divested of the rich coloring which the glowing imagination of Plato threw over it, it is but a vivid presentation of the cardinal truth that *there are ideas in the mind which have not been derived from without*, and which, therefore, the mind brought with it into the present sphere of being. The validity and value of this fundamental doctrine, even as presented by Plato, is unaffected by any speculations in which he may have indulged, as to the pre-existence of the soul. He simply regarded this doctrine of pre-existence as highly probable—a plausible explanation of the facts. That there are ideas, innate and connatural to the human mind, he clung to as the most vital, most precious, most certain of all truths; and to lead man to the recognitions of these ideas, to bring them within the field of consciousness, was, in his judgment, the great business of philosophy.

And this was the grand aim of his *Dialectic*—to elicit, to bring to light the truths which are already in the mind—"a μαίευσις," a kind of intellectual midwifery[2]—a delivering of the mind of the ideas with which it was pregnant.

It is thus, at first sight, obvious that it was a higher and more comprehensive science than the art of deduction. For it

[1] As in the "Phædo," §§ 48–57; "Phædrus," §§ 52–64; "Republic," bk. x.
[2] "Theætetus," §§ 17–20.

was directed to the discovery and establishment of First Principles. Its sole object was the discovery of truth. His dialectic was an *analytical* and *inductive method.* "In Dialectic Science," says *Alcinous*, "there is a dividing and a defining, and an analyzing, and, moreover, that which is inductive and syllogistic."[1] Even *Bacon*, who is usually styled "the Father of the Inductive method," and who, too often, speaks disparagingly of Plato, is constrained to admit that he followed the inductive method. "An induction such as will be of advantage for the invention and demonstration of Arts and Sciences must distinguish the essential nature of things (naturam) by proper rejections and exclusions, and then after as many of these negatives as are sufficient, by comprising, above all (super), the positives. Up to this time this has not been done, nor even attempted, *except by Plato alone, who, in order to attain his definitions and ideas, has used, to a certain extent, the method of Induction.*"[2]

The process of investigation adopted by Plato thus corresponds with the inductive method of modern times, with this simple difference, that Bacon conducted science into the world of *matter*, whilst Plato directed it to the world of *mind.* The dialectic of Plato aimed at the discovery of the "laws of thought;" the modern inductive philosophy aims at the discovery of the "laws of nature." The latter concerns itself chiefly with the inquiry after the "causes" of material phenomena; the former concerned itself with the inquiry after the "first principles" of all knowledge and of all existence. Both processes are, therefore, carried on by *interrogation.* The analysis which seeks for a law of nature proceeds by the interrogation of nature. The analysis of Plato proceeds by the interrogation of mind, in order to discover the fundamental *ideas* which lie at the basis of all cognition, which determine all our

[1] "Introduction to the Doctrines of Plato," vol. vi. p. 249. "The Platonic Method was the method of induction."—Cousin's "History of Philosophy," vol. i. p. 307.

[2] "Novum Organum," vol. i. p. 105.

processes of thought, and which, in their final analysis, reveal the REAL BEING, which is the ground and explanation of all existence.

Now the fact that such an inquiry has originated in the human mind, and that it can not rest satisfied without some solution, is conclusive evidence that the mind has an instinctive belief, a proleptic anticipation, that such knowledge can be attained. There must unquestionably be some mental initiative which is the *motive* and *guide* to all philosophical inquiry. We must have some well-grounded conviction, some *à priori* belief, some pre-cognition "ad intentionem ejus quod quæritur,"[1] which determines the direction of our thinking. The mind does not go to work aimlessly; it asks a specific question; it demands the "*whence*" and the "*why*" of that which is. Neither does it go to work unfurnished with any guiding principles. That which impels the mind to a determinate act of thinking is the possession of a *knowledge* which is different from, and independent of, the process of thinking itself. "A rational anticipation is, then, the ground of the *prudens quæstio* —the forethought query, which, in fact, is the prior half of the knowledge sought."[2] If the mind inquire after "laws," and "causes," and "reasons," and "grounds,"—the first principles of all knowledge and of all existence,—it must have the *à priori* ideas of "law," and "cause," and "reason," and "being *in se*," which, though dimly revealed to the mind previous to the discipline of reflection, are yet unconsciously governing its spontaneous modes of thought. The whole process of induction has, then, some rational ground to proceed upon—some principles deeper than science, and more certain than demonstration, which reason contains within itself, and which induction "draws out" into clearer light.

Now this mental initiative of every process of induction is the intuitive and necessary conviction *that there must be a sufficient reason why every thing exists, and why it is as it is, and not otherwise;*[3] or in other words, if any thing begins to be, some-

[1] Bacon. [2] Coleridge, vol. ii. p. 413. [3] "Phædo," § 103.

thing else must be supposed[1] as the ground, and reason, and cause, and law of its existence. This "*law of sufficient* (or *determinant*) *reason*"[2] is the fundamental principle of all metaphysical inquiry. It is contained, at least in a negative form, in that famous maxim of ancient philosophy, "*De nihilo nihil*"—"Ἀδύνατον γίνεσθαί τι ἐκ μηδενὸς προϋπάρχοντος." "It is impossible for a real entity to be made or generated from nothing pre-existing;" or in other words, "nothing can be made or produced without an efficient cause."[3] This principle is also distinctly announced by Plato: "Whatever is generated, is necessarily generated from a certain *αἰτίαν*"—*ground, reason*, or *cause;* "for it is wholly impossible that any thing should be generated without a cause."[4]

The first business of Plato's dialectic is to demonstrate that the ground and reason of all existence can not be found in the mere objects of sense, nor in any opinions or judgments founded upon sensation. Principles are only so far "first principles" as they are permanent and unchangeable, depending on neither time, nor place, nor circumstances. But the objects of sense are in ceaseless flux and change; they are "*always becoming;*" they can not be said to have any "*real being.*" They are not to-day what they were yesterday, and they will never again be what they are now; consequently all opinions founded on mere phenomena are equally fluctuating and uncertain. Setting out, therefore, from the assumption of the fallaciousness of "*opinion,*" it examined the various hypotheses

[1] *Suppono*, to place under as a support, to take as a ground.

[2] This generic principle, viewed under different relations, gives—

1st. *The principle of Substance*—every quality supposes a subject or real being.

2d. *The principle of Causality*—every thing which begins to be must have a cause.

3d. *The principle of Law*—every phenomenon must obey some uniform law.

4th. *The principle of Final Cause*—every means supposes an end, every existence has a purpose or reason why.

5th. *The principle of Unity*—all plurality supposes a unity as its basis and ground.

[3] Cudworth's "Intellectual System," vol. ii. p. 161.

[4] "Timæus," ch. ix.

which had been bequeathed by previous schools of philosophy, or were now offered by contemporaneous speculators, and showed they were utterly inadequate to the solution of the problem. This scrutiny consisted in searching for the ground of "contradiction"[1] with regard to each opinion founded on sensation, and showing that opposite views were equally tenable. It inquired on what ground these opinions were maintained, and what consequences flowed therefrom, and it showed that the grounds upon which "opinion" was founded, and the conclusions which were drawn from it, were contradictory, and consequently untrue.[2] "They," the Dialecticians, "examined the opinions of men as if they were error; and bringing them together by a reasoning process to the same point, they placed them by the side of each other; and by so placing, they showed that *the opinions are at one and the same time contrary to themselves, about the same things, with reference to the same circumstances, and according to the same premises.*"[3] And inasmuch as the same attribute can not, at the same time, be affirmed and denied of the same subject,[4] therefore a thing can not be at once "changeable" and "unchangeable," "movable" and "immovable," "generated" and "eternal."[5] The objects of sense, however generalized and classified, can only give the contingent, the relative, and the finite; therefore the permanent ground and sufficient reason of all phenomenal existence can not be found in opinions and judgments founded upon sensation.

The dialectic process thus consisted almost entirely of *refutation*,[6] or what both he and Aristotle denominated *elenchus* (ἔλεγχος)—a process of reasoning by which the contradictory

[1] "The Dialectitian is one who syllogistically infers the contradictions implied in popular opinions."—Aristotle, "Sophist," §§ 1, 2.

[2] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xiii.

[3] "Sophist," § 33; "Republic," bk. iv. ch. xii.

[4] See the "Phædo," § 119, and "Republic," bk. iv. ch. xiii., where the Law of Non-contradiction is announced.

[5] "Parmenides," § 3.

[6] "Confutation is the greatest and chiefest of purification."—"Sophist," § 34.

of a given proposition is inferred. "When refutation had done its utmost, and all the points of difficulty and objection had been fully brought out, the dialectic method had accomplished its purpose; and the affirmation which remained, after this discussion, might be regarded as setting forth the truth of the question under consideration;"[1] or in other words, *when a system of error is destroyed by refutation, the contradictory opposite principle, with its logical developments, must be accepted as an established truth.*

By the application of this method, Plato had not only exposed the insufficiency and self-contradiction of all results obtained by a mere *à posteriori* generalization of the simple facts of experience, but he demonstrated, as a consequence, that we are in possession of some elements of knowledge which have not been derived from sensation; that there are, in all minds, certain notions, principles, or ideas, which have been furnished by a higher faculty than sense; and that these notions, principles, or ideas, transcend the limits of experience, and reveal the knowledge of *real being*—*τὸ ὄντως ὄν*—*Being in se.*

To determine what these principles or ideas are, Plato now addresses himself to the *analysis of thought.* "It is the glory of Plato to have borne the light of analysis into the most obscure and inmost region; he searched out what, in this totality which forms consciousness, is the province of reason; what comes from it, and not from the imagination and the senses—from within, and not from without."[2] Now to analyze is to decompose, that is, to divide, and to define, in order to see better that which really is. The chief logical instruments of the dialectic method are, therefore, *Division* and *Definition.* "The being able to *divide* according to genera, and not to consider the same species as different, nor a different as the same,"[3] and "to see under one aspect, and bring together under one general idea, many things scattered in various places, that, by *defining*

[1] Article "Plato," Encyclopædia Britannica.
[2] Cousin's "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," vol. i. p. 328.
[3] "Sophist," § 83.

each, a person may make it clear what the subject is," is, according to Plato, "dialectical."[1]

We have already seen that, in his first efforts at applying reflection to the concrete phenomena of consciousness, Plato had recognized two distinct classes of cognitions, marked by characteristics essentially opposite;—one of "*sensible*" objects having a definite outline, limit, and figure, and capable of being imaged and represented to the mind in a determinate form—the other of "*intelligible*" objects, which can not be outlined or represented in the memory or the imagination by any figures or images, and are, therefore, the objects of purely rational conception. He found, also, that we arrive at one class of cognitions "*mediately*" through images generated in the vital organism, or by some testimony, definition, or explication of others; whilst we arrive at the other class "*immediately*," by simple intuition, or rational apperception. The mind stands face to face with the object, and gazes directly upon it. The reality of that object is revealed in its own light, and we find it impossible to refuse our assent—that is, it is *self-evident*. One class consisted of *contingent* ideas — that is, their objects are conceived as existing, with the possibility, without any contradiction, of conceiving of their non-existence; the other consisted of *necessary* ideas—their objects are conceived as existing with the absolute impossibility of conceiving of their non-existence. Thus we can conceive of this book, this table, this earth, as not existing, but we can not conceive the non-existence of space. We can conceive of succession in time as not existing, but we can not, in thought, annihilate duration. We can imagine this or that particular thing not to have been, but we can not conceive of the extinction of Being in itself. He further observed, that one class of our cognitions are *conditional* ideas; the existence of their objects is conceived only on the supposition of some antecedent existence, as for example, the idea of qualities, phenomena, events; whilst the other class of cognitions are *unconditional* and *absolute*—we can conceive of their objects as

[1] "Phædrus," §§ 109, 111.

existing independently and unconditionally—existing whether any thing else does or does not exist, as space, duration, the infinite, Being *in se*. And, finally, whilst some ideas appear in us as *particular* and *individual*, determined and modified by our own personality and liberty, there are others which are, in the fullest sense, *universal*. They are not the creations of our own minds, and they can not be changed by our own volitions. They depend upon neither times, nor places, nor circumstances; they are common to all minds, in all times, and in all places. These ideas are the witnesses in our inmost being that there is something beyond us, and above us; and beyond and above all the contingent and fugitive phenomena around us. Beneath all changes there is a *permanent* being. Beyond all finite and conditional existence there is something *unconditional* and *absolute*. Having determined that there are truths which are independent of our own minds—truths which are not individual, but universal—truths which would be truths even if our minds did not perceive them, we are led onward to a *super*sensual and *super*natural ground, on which they rest.

To reach this objective reality on which the ideas of reason repose, is the grand effort of Plato's dialectic. He seeks, by a rigid analysis, clearly to *separate*, and accurately to *define* the *à priori* conceptions of reason. And it was only when he had eliminated every element which is particular, contingent, and relative, and had defined the results in precise and accurate language, that he regarded the process as complete. The ideas which are self-evident, universal, and necessary, were then clearly disengaged, and raised to their pure and absolute form. "You call the man dialectical who requires a reason of the essence or being of each thing. As the dialectical man can define the essence of every thing, so can he of the good. He can *define* the idea of the good, *separating* it from all others—follow it through all windings, as in a battle, resolved to mark it, not according to opinion, but according to science."[1]

Abstraction is thus the process, the instrument of the Platon-

[1] "Republic," bk. vii. ch. xiv.

ic dialectic. It is important, however, that we should distinguish between the method of *comparative* abstraction, as employed in physical inquiry, and that *immediate* abstraction, which is the special instrument of philosophy. The former proceeds by comparison and generalization, the latter by simple separation. The one yields a contingent general principle as the result of the comparison of a number of individual cases, the other gives an universal and necessary principle by the analysis of a single concrete fact. As an illustration we may instance "the principle of causality." To enable us to affirm "that every event must have a cause," we do not need to compare and generalize a great number of events. "The principle which compels us to pronounce the judgment is already complete in the first as in the last event; it can change in regard to its object, it can not change in itself; it neither increases nor decreases with the greater or less number of applications."[1] In the presence of a single event, the universality and necessity of this principle of causality is recognized with just as much clearness and certainty as in the presence of a million events, however carefully generalized.

Abstraction, then, it will be seen, creates nothing; neither does it add any new element to the store of actual cognitions already possessed by all human minds. It simply brings forward into a clearer and more definite recognition, that which necessarily belongs to the mind as part of its latent furniture, and which, as a law of thought, has always unconsciously governed all its spontaneous movements. As a process of rational inquiry, it was needful to bring the mind into intelligible and conscious communion with the world of *Ideas*. These ideas are partially revealed in the sensible world, all things being formed, as Plato believed, according to ideas as models and exemplars, of which sensible objects are the copies. They are more fully manifested in the constitution of the human mind which, by virtue of its kindred nature with the original essence or being, must know them intuitively and immediately. And

[1] Cousin's "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," pp. 57, 58.

they are brought out fully by the dialectic process, which disengages them from all that is individual and phenomenal, and sets them forth in their pure and absolute form.

But whilst Plato has certainly exhibited the true method of investigation by which the ideas of reason are to be separated from all concrete phenomena and set clearly before the mind, he has not attempted a complete enumeration of the ideas of reason; indeed, such an enumeration is still the grand desideratum of philosophy. We can not fail, however, in the careful study of his writings, to recognize the grand Triad of Absolute Ideas—ideas which Cousin, after Plato, has so fully exhibited, viz., the *True*, the *Beautiful*, and the *Good*.

PLATONIC SCHEME OF IDEAS.

I. *The idea of* ABSOLUTE TRUTH or REALITY (*τὸ ἀληθές—τὸ ὄν*) —the ground and efficient cause of all existence, and by participating in which all phenomenal existence has only so far a reality, sensible things being merely shadows and resemblances of ideas. This idea is developed in the human intelligence in its relation with the phenomenal world; as,

1. *The idea of* SUBSTANCE (*οὐσία*)—the ground of all phenomena, "the being or essence of all things," the permanent reality.—"Timæus," ch. ix. and xii.; "Republic," bk. vii. ch. xiv.; "Phædo," §§ 63–67, 73.

2. *The idea of* CAUSE (*αἰτία*)—the power or efficiency by which things that "become," or begin to be, are generated or produced.—"Timæus," ch. ix.; "Sophist," § 109; "Philebus," §§ 45, 46.

3. *The idea of* IDENTITY (*αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον*)—that which "does not change," "is always the same, simple and uniform, incomposite and indissoluble,"—that which constitutes personality or self-hood.—"Phædo," §§ 61–75; "Timæus," ch. ix.; "Republic," bk. ii. ch. xix. and xx.

4. *The idea of* UNITY (*τὸ ἕν*)—one *mind* or intelligence pervading the universe, the comprehensive conscious *thought* or *plan* which binds all parts of the universe in one great

whole (τὸ πᾶν)—the principle of *order*.—"Timæus," ch. xi. and xv.; "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xiii.; "Philebus," §§ 50–51.

5. *The idea of the* INFINITE (τὸ ἄπειρον)—that which is unlimited and unconditioned, "has no parts, bounds, no beginning, nor middle, nor end."—"Parmenides," §§ 22, 23.

II. *The idea of* ABSOLUTE BEAUTY (τὸ καλόν)—the formal cause of the universe, and by participation in which all created things have only so far a real beauty.—"Timæus," ch. xi.; "Greater Hippias," §§ 17, 18; "Republic," bk. v. ch. 22.

This idea is developed in the human intelligence in its relation to the organic world; as,

1. *The idea of* PROPORTION or SYMMETRY (συμμετρία)—the proper relation of parts to an organic whole resulting in a harmony (κόσμος), and which relation admits of mathematical expression.—"Timæus," ch. lxix.; "Philebus," § 155 ("Timæus," ch. xi. and xii., where the relation of numerical proportions to material elements is expounded).

2. *The idea of* DETERMINATE FORM (παράδειγμα ἀρχέτυπος)—the eternal models or archetypes according to which all things are framed, and which admit of geometrical representation.—"Timæus," ch. ix.; "Phædo," § 112 ("Timæus," ch. xxviii.–xxxi., where the relation of geometrical forms to material elements is exhibited).

3. *The idea of* RHYTHM (ῥυθμός)—measured movement in time and space, resulting in melody and grace.—"Republic," bk. iii. ch. xi. and xii.; "Philebus," § 21.

4. *The idea of* FITNESS or ADAPTATION (χρήσιμον)—effectiveness to some purpose or end.—"Greater Hippias," § 35.

5. *The idea of* PERFECTION (τελειότης)—that which is complete, "a structure which is whole and finished—of whole and perfect parts."—"Timæus," ch. xi., xii., and xliii.

III. *The idea of* ABSOLUTE GOOD (τὸ ἀγαθόν)—the final *cause* or *reason* of all existence, the sun of the invisible world, that pours upon all things the revealing light of truth.

The first Good[1] (*summum bonum*) is God the highest, and Mind or Intelligence (νοῦς), which renders man capable of knowing and resembling God. The second flows from the first, and are virtues of mind. They are good by a participation of the chief good, and constitute in man a likeness or *resemblance* to God.—"Phædo," §§ 110–114; "Laws," bk. i. ch. vi., bk. iv. ch. viii.; "Theætetus," §§ 84, 85; "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xix., bk. vii. ch. iii., bk. x. ch. xii.[2]

This idea is developed in the human intelligence in its relation to the world of moral order; as,

1. *The idea of* WISDOM or PRUDENCE (φρόνησις)—thoughtfulness, rightness of intention, following the guidance of reason, the right direction of the energy or will.—"Republic," bk. iv. ch. vii., bk. vi. ch. ii.

2. *The idea of* COURAGE or FORTITUDE (ἀνδρία)—zeal, energy, firmness in the maintenance of honor and right, virtuous indignation against wrong.—"Republic," bk. iv. ch. viii.; "Laches;" "Meno," § 24.

3. *The idea of* SELF-CONTROL or TEMPERANCE (σωφροσύνη)—sound-mindedness, moderation, dignity.—"Republic," bk. iv. ch. ix.; "Meno," § 24; "Phædo," § 35.

4. *The idea of* JUSTICE (δικαιοσύνη)—the harmony or perfect proportional action of all the powers of the soul.—"Republic," bk. i. ch. vi., bk. iv. ch. x.–xii., bk. vi. ch. ii. and xvi.; "Philebus," § 155; "Phædo," § 54; "Theætetus," §§ 84, 85.

Plato's idea of Justice comprehends—

(1.) EQUITY (ἰσότης)—the rendering to every man his due.—"Republic," bk. i. ch. vi.

[1] "Let us declare, then, on what account the framing Artificer settled the formation of the universe. He was GOOD;" and being good, "*he desired that all things should as much as possible resemble himself.*"—"Timæus," ch. x.

[2] "At the utmost bounds of the intellectual world is the *idea of the Good*, perceived with difficulty, but which, once seen, makes itself known as the cause of all that is beautiful and good; which in the visible world produces light, and the orb that gives it; and which in the invisible world directly produces Truth and Intelligence."—"Republic," bk. vii. ch. iii.

(2.) VERACITY (ἀλήθεια)—the utterance of what is true. —"Republic," bk. i. ch. v., bk. ii. ch. xx., bk. vi. ch. ii.

(3.) FAITHFULNESS (πιστότης)—the strict performance of a trust.—"Republic," bk. i. ch. v., bk. vi. ch. ii.

(4.) USEFULNESS (ὠφέλιμον)—the answering of some valuable end.—"Republic," bk. ii. ch. xviii., bk. iv. ch. xviii.; "Meno," § 22.

(5.) BENEVOLENCE (εὔνοια)—seeking the well-being of others.—"Republic," bk. i. ch. xvii., bk. ii. ch. xviii.

(6.) HOLINESS (ὁσιότης)—purity of mind, piety.—"Protagoras," §§ 52–54; "Phædo," § 32; "Theætetus," § 84.

The final effort of Plato's Dialectic was to ascend from these ideas of Absolute Truth, and Absolute Beauty, and Absolute Goodness to the *Absolute Being*, in whom they are all united, and from whom they all proceed. "He who possesses the true love of science is naturally carried in his aspirations to the *real Being;* and his love, so far from suffering itself to be retarded by the multitude of things whose reality is only apparent, knows no repose until it have arrived at union with the *essence* of each object, by the part of the soul which is akin to the permanent and essential; so that this divine conjunction having produced intelligence and truth, the knowledge of *being* is won."[1]

To the mind of Plato, there was in every thing, even the smallest and most insignificant of sensible objects, a *reality* just in so far as it participates in some archetypal form or idea. These archetypal forms or ideas are the "*thoughts of God*"[2]—they are the plan according to which he framed the universe. "The Creator and Father of the universe looked to an *eternal model*.... Being thus generated, the universe is framed according to principles that can be comprehended by reason and reflection."[3] Plato, also, regarded all individual conceptions of the mind as hypothetical notions which have in them an *à*

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. v.
[2] Alcinous, "Doctrines of Plato," p. 262.
[3] "Timæus," ch. ix.

priori element—an idea which is unchangeable, universal, and necessary. These unchangeable, universal, and necessary ideas are copies of the Divine Ideas, which are, for man, the primordial laws of all cognition, and all reasoning. They are possessed by the soul "in virtue of its kindred nature to that which is permanent, unchangeable, and eternal." He also believed that every archetypal form, and every *à priori* idea, has its ground and root in a higher idea, which is *unhypothetical* and *absolute*—an idea which needs no other supposition for its explanation, and which is, itself, needful to the explanation of all existence—even the idea of an *absolute* and *perfect Being*, in whose mind the ideas of absolute truth, and beauty, and goodness inhere, and in whose eternity they can only be regarded as eternal.[1] Thus do the "ideas of reason" not only cast a bridge across the abyss that separates the sensible and the ideal world, but they also carry us beyond the limits of our personal consciousness, and discover to us a realm of real Being, which is the foundation, and cause, and explanation of the phenomenal world that appears around us and within us.

This passage from psychology to ontology is not achieved *per saltum*, or effected by any arbitrary or unwarrantable assumption. There are principles revealed in the centre of our consciousness, whose regular development carry us beyond the limits of consciousness, and attain to the knowledge of actual being. The absolute principles of *causality* and *substance*, of *intentionality* and *unity*, unquestionably give us the absolute Being. Indeed the absolute truth *that every idea supposes a being in which it resides*, and which is but another form of the law or principle of substance, viz., *that every quality supposes a substance or being in which it inheres*, is adequate to carry us from Idea to Being. "There is not a single cognition which does not suggest to us the notion of existence, and there is not an unconditional and absolute truth which does not necessarily imply an absolute and unconditional Being."[2]

[1] Maurice's "Ancient Philosophy," p. 149.
[2] Cousin's "Elements of Psychology," p. 506.

This, then, is the dialectic of Plato. Instead of losing himself amid the endless variety of particular phenomena, he would search for principles and laws, and from thence ascend to the great Legislator, the *First Principle of all Principles.* Instead of stopping at the relations of sensible objects to the general ideas with which they are commingled, he will pass to their *eternal Paradigms*—from the just thing to the idea of absolute justice, from the particular good to the absolute good, from beautiful things to the absolute beauty, and thence to the ultimate reality—*the absolute Being.* By the realization of the lower idea, embodied in the forms of the visible universe and in the necessary laws of thought, he sought to rise to the higher idea, in its pure and abstract form—the *Supreme Idea*, containing in itself all other ideas—the *One Intelligence* which unites the universe in a harmonious whole. "The Dialectic faculty proceeds from hypothesis to an unhypothetical principle..... It uses hypotheses as steps, and starting-points, in order to proceed from thence to the *absolute.* The Intuitive Reason takes hold of the First Principle of the Universe, and avails itself of all the connections and relations of that principle. It ascends from idea to idea, until it has reached the Supreme Idea"—the *Absolute Good*—that is, *God.*[1]

We are thus brought, in the course of our examination of the Platonic method, to the *results* obtained by this method—or, in other words, to

III. THE PLATONIC ONTOLOGY.

The grand object of all philosophic inquiry in ancient Greece was to attain to the knowledge of real Being—that Being which is permanent, unchangeable, and eternal. It had proceeded on the intuitive conviction, that beneath all the endless diversity of the universe there must be a principle of *unity* —below all fleeting appearances there must be a permanent *substance*—beyond all this everlasting flow and change, this beginning and end of finite existence, there must be an eternal

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xx. and xxi.

Being, which is the *cause*, and which contains, in itself, the *reason* of the order, and harmony, and beauty, and excellency which pervades the universe. And it had perpetually asked what is this permanent, unchangeable, and eternal substance or being?

Plato had assiduously labored at the solution of this problem. The object of his dialectic was "to lead upward the soul to the knowledge of real being,"[1] and the conclusions to which he attained may be summed up as follows:

1st. *Beneath all* SENSIBLE *phenomena there is an unchangeable subject-matter, the mysterious substratum of the world of sense, which he calls the receptacle* (ὑποδοχή) *the nurse* (τιθήνη) *of all that is produced.*[2]

It is this "substratum or physical groundwork" which gives a reality and definiteness to the evanescent phantoms of sense, for, in their ceaseless change, *they* can not justify any title whatever. It alone can be styled "*this*" or "*that*" (τόδε or τοῦτο); they rise no higher than "*of such kind*" or "*of what kind or quality*" (τοιοῦτον or ὁποιονοῦν τι).[3] It is not earth, or air, or fire, or water, but "an invisible *species* and formless universal receiver, which, in the most obscure way, receives the immanence of the intelligible."[4] And in relation to the other two principles (*i. e.*, ideas and objects of sense), "it is *the mother*" to the father and the offspring.[5] But perhaps the most remarkable passage is that in which he seems to identify it with *pure space*, which, "itself imperishable, furnishes a *seat* (ἕδραν) to all that is produced, not apprehensible by direct perception, but caught by a certain spurious reasoning, scarcely admissible, but which we see as in a dream; gaining it by that judgment which pronounces it necessary that all which is, be *somewhere*, and occupy a *certain space*."[6] This, it will be seen, approaches the Cartesian doctrine, which resolves matter into *simple extension*."[7]

[1] "Republic," bk. vii. ch. xii. and xiii.
[2] "Timæus," ch. xxii.
[3] "Timæus," ch. xxiii.
[4] Ibid., ch. xxiv.
[5] Ibid., ch. xxiv.
[6] Ibid., ch. xxvi.
[7] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 171.

It should, however, be distinctly noted that Plato does not use the word ὕλη—matter. This term is first employed by Aristotle to express "the substance which is the subject of all changes."[1] The subject or substratum of which Plato speaks, would seem to be rather a logical than a material entity. It is the *condition or supposition* necessary for the production of a world of phenomena. It is thus the *transition-element* between the real and the apparent, the eternal and the contingent; and, lying thus on the border of both territories, we must not be surprised that it can hardly be characterized by any definite attribute."[2] Still, this unknown recipient of forms or ideas has a *reality;* it has "an abiding nature," "a constancy of existence;" and we are forbidden to call it by any name denoting quality, but permitted to style it "*this*" and "*that*" (τόδε καὶ τοῦτο).[3] Beneath the perpetual changes of sensible phenomena there is, then, an unchangeable subject, which yet is neither the Deity, nor ideas, nor the soul of man, which exists as the means and occasion of the manifestation of Divine Intelligence in the organization of the world.[4]

There has been much discussion as to whether Plato held that this "*Receptacle*" and "*Nurse*" of forms and ideas was eternal, or generated in time. Perhaps no one has more carefully studied the writings of Plato than William Archer Butler, and his conclusions in regard to this subject are presented in the following words: "As, on the one hand, he maintained a strict system of dualism, and avoided, without a single deviation, that seduction of pantheism to which so many abstract speculators of his own school have fallen victims; so, on the other hand, it appears to me that he did not scruple to place this principle, the opposite of the Divine intelligence, in a sphere independent of temporal origination.... But we can scarcely enter into his views, unless we ascertain his notions of the nature of *Time* itself. This was considered to have been

[1] "Metaphysics," bk. vii. ch. i.
[2] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 178.
[3] "Timæus," ch. xxiii.
[4] Ibid., ch. xliii.

created with the rest of the sensible world, to finish with it, if it ever finished—to be altogether related to this phenomenal scene.[1] 'The generating Father determined to create a moving image of eternity (αἰῶνος); and in disposing the heavens, he framed of this eternity, reposing in its own unchangeable unity, an eternal *image*, moving according to numerical succession, which he called *Time*. With the world arose days, nights, months, years, which all had no previous existence. The past and future are but forms of time, which we most erroneously transfer to the eternal substance (ἀΐδιον οὐσίαν); we say it was, and is, and will be, whereas we can only fitly say *it is*. Past and future are appropriate to the successive nature of generated beings, for they bespeak motion; but the Being eternally and immovably the same is subject neither to youth nor age, nor to any accident of time; it neither was, nor hath been, nor will be, which are the attributes of fleeting sense—the circumstances of time, imitating eternity in the shape of number and motion. Nor can any thing be more inaccurate than to apply the term *real being* to past, or present, or future, or even to non-existence. Of this, however, we can not now speak fully. *Time*, then, was formed with the heavens, that, together created, they may together end, *if indeed an end be in the purpose of the Creator;* and it is designed as closely as possible to resemble the eternal nature, its exemplar. The model exists through all eternity; the world has been, is, and will be through all *time*."[2] .... In this ineffable eternity Plato places the Supreme Being, and the archetypal ideas of which the sensible world of time partakes. Whether he also includes under the same mode of existence the *subject-matter* of the sensible world, it is not easy to pronounce; and it appears to me evident that he did not himself undertake to speak with assurance on this obscure problem."[3] The creation of matter "out of nothing" is an idea which, in all probability, did not occur to the mind of Plato. But that he regarded it as, in some sense, a *dependent*

[1] See *ante*, note 4, p. 349.
[2] "Timæus," ch. xiv.
[3] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 171–175.

existence—as existing, like time, by "the purpose or will of the Creator"—perhaps as an eternal "generation" from the "eternal substance," is also highly probable; for in the last analysis he evidently desires to embrace all things in some ultimate *unity*—a tendency which it seems impossible for human reason to avoid.

2d. *Beneath all mental phenomena there is a permanent subject or substratum which he designates* THE IDENTICAL (*τὸ αὐτό*)—*the rational element of the soul*—"*the principle of self-activity*," *or self-determination.*[1]

There are three principles into which Plato analyzes the soul—the principle of the *Identical*, the *Diverse*, and the *Intermediate Essence.*[2] The first is indivisible and eternal, always existing in *sameness*, the very substance of *Intelligence* itself, and of the same nature with the Divine.[3] The second is divisible and corporeal, answering to our notion of the passive *sensibilities*, and placing the soul in relation with the visible world. The third is an intermediate essence, partaking of the natures of both, and constituting a medium between the eternal and the mutable—the conscious *energy* of the soul developed in the contingent world of time. Thus the soul is, on one side, linked to the unchangeable and the eternal, being formed of that ineffable element which constitutes the *real* or *immutable Being*, and on the other side, linked to the sensible and the contingent, being formed of that element which is purely *relative* and *contingent.* This last element of the soul is regarded by Plato as "mortal" and "corruptible," the former element as "immortal" and "indestructible," having its foundations laid in eternity.

This doctrine of the eternity of the free and rational element of the soul must, of course, appear strange and even repulsive to those who are unacquainted with the Platonic notion of eternity as a fixed state out of time, which has no past, present,

[1] "Laws," bk. x. ch. vi. and vii.; "Phædrus," § 51; "*ἀρχὴ κινήσεως.*"
[2] "Timæus," ch. xii.; *ταὐτόν*, *θάτερον*, and *οὐσία* or *τὸ συμμισγόμενον.*
[3] "Laws," bk. v. ch. i.

or future, and is simply that which "always *is*"—an everlasting *now*. The soul, in its elements of rationality and freedom, has existed anterior to time, because it now exists in eternity.[1] In its actual manifestations and personal history it is to be contemplated as a "generated being," having a commencement in time.

Now, that the human soul, like the uncreated Deity, has always had a distinct, conscious, personal, independent being, does not appear to be the doctrine of Plato. He teaches, most distinctly, that the "divine," the immortal part, was created, or rather "generated," in eternity. "The Deity himself *formed the divine*, and he delivered over to his celestial offspring [the subordinate and generated gods] the task of *forming the mortal*. These subordinate deities, copying the example of their parent, and receiving from his hands the *immortal principle* of the human soul, fashioned subsequently to this the mortal body, which they consigned to the soul as a vehicle, and in which they placed another kind of soul, mortal, the seat of violent and fatal affections."[2] He also regarded the soul as having a derived and dependent existence. He draws a marked distinction between the divine and human forms of the "self-moving principle," and makes its continuance dependent upon the will and wisdom of the Almighty Disposer and Parent, of whom it is "the first-born offspring."[3]

That portion of the soul which Plato regarded as "immortal" and "to be entitled divine," is thus the "*offspring of God*"—a ray of the Divinity "generated" by, or emanating from, the Deity. He seems to have conceived it as co-eternal with its ideal objects, in some mysterious ultimate *unity*. "The true foundation of the Platonic theory of the constitution of the soul is this fundamental principle of his philosophy—the *oneness of truth and knowledge*.[4] This led him naturally to derive the *ra-*

[1] See *ante*, note 4, p. 349, as to the Platonic notions of "Time" and "Eternity."

[2] "Timæus," ch. xliv.

[3] See the elaborate exposition in "Laws," bk. x. ch. xii. and xiii.

[4] See Grant's "Aristotle," vol. i. pp. 150, 151.

tional element of the soul (that element that *knows*, that possesses the power of νόησις) from the *real* element in things (the element that *is*—the νοούμενον); and in the original, the final, and, though imperfectly, the present state of that rational element, he, doubtless, conceived it united with its object in an eternal conjunction, or even identity. But though intelligence and its correlative intelligibles were and are thus combined, the soul is *more* than pure intelligence; it possesses an element of personality and consciousness distinct to each individual, of which we have no reason to suppose, from any thing his writings contain, Plato ever meant to deprive it."[1] On the contrary, he not only regarded it as having now, under temporal conditions, a distinct personal existence, but he also claimed for it a conscious, personal existence after death. He is most earnest, and unequivocal, and consistent in his assertion of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The arguments which human reason can supply are exhibited with peculiar force and beauty in the "Phædo," the "Phædrus," and the tenth book of the "Republic." The most important of these arguments may be presented in a few words.

1. *The soul is immortal, because it is incorporeal.* There are two kinds of existences, one compounded, the other simple; the former subject to change, the latter unchangeable; one perceptible to sense, the other comprehended by mind alone. The one is visible, the other is invisible. When the soul employs the bodily senses, it wanders and is confused; but when it abstracts itself from the body, it attains to knowledge which is stable, unchangeable, and immortal. The soul, therefore, being uncompounded, incorporeal, invisible, must be indissoluble—that is to say, immortal.[2]

2. *The soul is immortal, because it has an independent power of self-motion*—that is, it has self-activity and self-determination. No arrangement of matter, no configuration of body, can be conceived as the originator of free and voluntary movement.

[1] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 209, note.
[2] "Phædo," §§ 61–75.

Now that which can not move itself, but derives its motion from something else, may cease to move, and perish. "But that which is self-moved, never ceases to be active, and is also the cause of motion to all other things that are moved." And "whatever is continually active is immortal." This "self-activity is," says Plato, "the very essence and true notion of the soul."[1] Being thus essentially *causative*, it therefore partakes of the nature of a "principle," and it is the nature of a principle to exclude its *contrary*. That which is essentially self-active can never cease to be active; that which is the cause of motion and of change, can not be extinguished by the change called death.[2]

3. *The soul is immortal, because it possesses universal, necessary, and absolute ideas*, which transcend all material conditions, and bespeak an origin immeasurably above the body. No modifications of matter, however refined, however elaborated, can give the Absolute, the Necessary, the Eternal. But the soul has the ideas of absolute beauty, goodness, perfection, identity, and duration, and it possesses these ideas in virtue of its having a nature which is one, simple, identical, and in some sense, eternal.[3] If the soul can conceive an immortality, it can not be less than immortal. If, by its very nature, "it has hopes that will not be bounded by the grave, and desires and longings that grasp eternity," its nature and its destiny must correspond.

In the concluding sections of the "Phædo" he urges the doctrine with earnestness and feeling as the grand motive to a virtuous life, for "the reward is noble and the hope is great."[4] And in the "Laws" he insists upon the doctrine of a future state, in which men are to be rewarded or punished as the most conclusive evidence that we are under the moral government of God.[5]

[1] "Phædrus," §§ 51–53.
[2] "Phædo," §§ 112–128.
[3] Ibid., §§ 48–57, 110–115.
[4] Ibid., §§ 129–145.
[5] The doctrine of Metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, can scarcely be regarded as part of the philosophic system of Plato. He seems to have accepted it as a venerable tradition, coming within the range of probability, rather than as a philosophic truth, and it is always presented by him

4. *Beyond all finite existences and secondary causes, all laws, ideas, and principles, there is an* INTELLIGENCE *or* MIND, *the First Principle of all Principles, the Supreme Idea on which all other ideas are grounded; the Monarch and Lawgiver of the universe, the ultimate Substance from which all other things derive their being and essence, the First and efficient Cause of all the order, and harmony, and beauty, and excellency, and goodness, which pervades the universe, who is called by way of pre-eminence and excellence the Supreme Good,* THE GOD (ὁ θεός), "*the God over all,*" (ὁ ἐπὶ πᾶσι θεός).

This SUPREME MIND,[1] Plato taught, is incorporeal,[2] unchangeable,[3] infinite,[4] absolutely perfect,[5] essentially good,[6] unoriginated,[7] and eternal.[8] He is "the Father, and Architect, and Maker of the Universe,"[9] "the efficient Cause of all things,"[10] "the Monarch and Ruler of the world,"[11] "the sovereign Mind that orders all things, and pervades all things,"[12] "the sole

in a highly mythical dress. Now of these mythical representations he remarks in the "Phædo" (§ 145) that "no man in his senses would dream of insisting *that they correspond to the reality*, but that, the soul having been shown to be immortal, this, or something like this, is true of individual souls or their habitations." If, as in the opinions of the ablest critics, "the Laws" is to be placed amongst the last and maturest of Plato's writings, the evidence is conclusive that whatever may have been his earlier opinions, he did not entertain the doctrine of "Metempsychosis" in his riper years. "But when, on the one hand, the soul shall remain having an intercourse with divine virtue, it becomes divine pre-eminently; and pre-eminently, after having been conveyed to a *place* entirely holy, it is changed for the better; but when it acts in a contrary manner, it has, under contrary circumstances, placed its existence in some *unholy spot.*

"'This is the judgment of the gods, who hold Olympus.'

"O thou young man," [know] "that the person who has become more wicked, *departs to the more wicked souls;* but he who has become better, to the better both in life and in all deaths, to do and suffer what is fitting for the like."—"Laws," bk. x. ch. xii. and xiii.

[1] "Phædo," §§. 105–107. [2] Diogenes Laertius, "Lives," bk. iii. ch. 77.
[3] "Republic," bk. ii. ch. xix.; "Timæus," ch. ix.
[4] "Apeleius," bk. i. ch. v. [5] "Republic," bk. ii. ch. xx.
[6] "Timæus," ch. x.; "Republic," bk. ii. ch. xviii.
[7] "Timæus," ch. ix.–x. [8] Ibid., ch. xii.
[9] Ibid., ch. ix. [10] "Phædo," § 105.
[11] "Laws," bk. x. ch. xii.; "Republic," bk. vii. ch. iii.; "Philebus," § 50.
[12] "Philebus," § 51.

Principle of all things,"[1] and "the Measure of all things,"[2] He is "the Beginning of all truth,"[3] "the Fountain of all law and justice,"[4] "the Source of all order and beauty,"[5] "the Cause of all good;"[6] in short, "he is the Beginning, the Middle, and End of all things."[7]

Beyond the sensible world, Plato conceived another world of intelligibles or *ideas*. These ideas are not, however, distinct and independent existences. "What general notions are to our own minds, ideas are to the Supreme Reason (*νοῦς βασιλεύς*); they are the *eternal thoughts* of the Divine Intellect."[8] Ideas are not substances, they are qualities, and there must, therefore, be some ultimate substance or being to whom, as attributes, they belong. "It must not be believed, as has been taught, that Plato gave to ideas a substantial existence. When they are not objects of pure conception for human reason, they are attributes of the Divine Reason. It is there they substantially exist."[9] These eternal laws and reasons of things indicate to us the character of that Supreme Essence of essences, the Being of beings. He is not the simple aggregate of all laws, but he is the Author, and Sustainer, and Substance of all laws. At the utmost summit of the intellectual world of Ideas blazes, with an eternal splendor, the idea of the *Supreme Good* from which all others emanate.[10] This Supreme Good is "far beyond all existence in dignity and power, and it is that from which all things else derive their being and essence."[11] The Supreme Good is not the truth, nor the intelligence; "it is the Father of it." In the same manner as the sun, which is the

[1] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xix.
[2] "Laws," bk. iv. ch. viii.
[3] "Republic," bk. ii. ch. xxi.
[4] "Laws," bk. iv. ch. vii.
[5] "Philebus," § 51; "Timæus," ch. x.
[6] "Republic," bk. ii. ch. xviii.; "Timæus," ch. x.
[7] "Laws," bk. iv. ch. vii.
[8] Thompson's "Laws of Thought," p. 119.
[9] Cousin, "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," vol. i. p. 415. "There is no quintessential metaphysics which can prevail against common sense, and if such be the Platonic theory of ideas, Aristotle was right in opposing it. But such a theory is only a chimera which Aristotle created for the purpose of combating it."—"The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," p. 77.
[10] "Republic," bk. vii. ch. iii.
[11] Ibid., bk. vi. ch. xviii. and xix.

visible image of the good, reigns over the world, in that it illumes and vivifies it; so the Supreme Good, of which the sun is only the work, reigns over the intelligible world, in that it gives birth to it by virtue of its inexhaustible fruitfulness.[1] *The Supreme Good is* GOD *himself*, and he is designated "the good" because this term seems most fittingly to express his essential character and essence.[2] It is towards this superlative perfection that the reason lifts itself; it is towards this infinite beauty the heart aspires. "Marvellous Beauty!" exclaims Plato; "eternal, uncreated, imperishable beauty, free from increase and diminution .... beauty which has nothing sensible, nothing corporeal, as hands or face: which does not reside in any being different from itself, in the earth, or the heavens, or in any other thing, but which exists *eternally and absolutely in itself, and by itself;* beauty of which every other beauty partakes, without their birth or destruction bringing to it the least increase or diminution."[3] The absolute being—God, is the last reason, the ultimate foundation, the complete ideal of all beauty. God is, *par excellent*, the Beautiful.

God is therefore, with Plato, *the First Principle of all Principles;* the Divine energy or power is the *efficient cause*, the Divine beauty the *formal cause*, and the Divine goodness the *final cause* of all existence.

The eternal unity of the principles of Order, Goodness, and Truth, in an ultimate reality—the ETERNAL MIND, is thus the fundamental principle which pervades the whole of the Platonic philosophy. And now, having attained this sublime elevation, he looks down from thence upon the *sensible, the phenomenal world*, and upon *the temporal life of man;* and in the light of this great principle he attempts to explain their meaning and purpose. The results he attained in the former case constitute the Platonic *Physics*, in the latter, the Platonic *Ethics*.

[1] "Republic," bk. vii. ch. iii.

[2] Ritter's "History of Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 275.

[3] "Banquet," § 35. See Cousin, "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," Lecture IV., also Lecture VII. pp. 150–153; Denis, "Histoire des Théories et Ideés Morales dans l'Antiquité," vol. i. p. 149.

I. PLATONIC PHYSICS.

Firmly believing in the absolute excellence of the Deity, and regarding the Divine Goodness as the Final Cause of the universe, he pronounces the physical world to be an *image* of the perfection of God. Anaxagoras, no doubt, prepared the way for this theory. Every one who has read the "Phædo," will remember the remarkable passage in which Socrates gives utterance to the disappointment which he had experienced when expecting from physical science an explanation of the universe. "When I was young," he said—"it is not to be told how eager I was about physical inquiries, and curious to know *how the universe came to be as it is;* and when I heard that Anaxagoras was teaching that all was arranged by *mind*, I was delighted with the prospect of hearing such a doctrine unfolded; I thought to myself, if he teaches that mind made every thing to be as it is, he will explain *how it is* BEST *for it to be*, and show that so it is." But Anaxagoras, it appears, lost sight of this principle, and descended to the explanation of the universe by material causes. "Great was my hope," says Socrates, "and equally great my disappointment."[1]

Plato accepted this suggestion of Anaxagoras with all his peculiar earnestness, and devoted himself to its fuller development. It were a vain and profitless theory, which, whilst it assumed the existence of a Supreme Mind, did not represent that mind as operating in the universe by *design*, and as exhibiting his intelligence, and justice, and goodness, as well as his power, in every thing. If it be granted that there is a Supreme Mind, then, argued Plato, he must be regarded as "the measure of all things," and all things must have been framed according to a plan or "model" which that mind supplied. Intelligence must be regarded as having a *purpose*, and as working towards an *end*, for it is this alone which distinguishes reason from unreason, and mind from mere unintelligent force. The only proper model which could be presented to the Supreme

[1] "Phædo," §§ 105, 106.

Intelligence is "the eternal and unchangeable model"[1] which his own perfection supplies, "for he is the most excellent of causes."[2] Thus God is not simply the maker of the universe, but the model of the universe, because he designed that it should be an IMAGE, in the sphere of sense, of his own perfections—a revelation of his eternal beauty, and wisdom, and goodness, and truth. "God was *good*, and being good, he desired that the universe should, as far as possible, *resemble* himself..... Desiring that all things should be *good*, and, as far as might be, nothing evil, he took the fluctuating m[illegible]of things visible, which had been in orderless confusion, and reduced it to *order*, considering this to be the *better* state. Now it was and is utterly impossible for the supremely good to form any thing except that which is *most excellent* (κάλλιστον—most fair, most beautiful").[3] The object at which the supreme mind aimed being that which is "*best*," we must, in tracing his operations in the universe, always look for "*the best*" in every thing.[4] Starting out thus, upon the assumption that the goodness of God is the final cause of the universe, Plato evolved a system of *optimism*.

The physical system of Plato being thus intended to illustrate a principle of optimism, the following results may be expected:

1. That it will mainly concern itself with *final causes*. The universe being regarded chiefly, as indeed it is, an indication of the Divine Intelligence—every phenomenon will be contemplated in that light. Nature is the volume in which the Deity reveals his own perfections; it is therefore to be studied solely with this motive, that we may learn from thence the perfection of God. "The *Timæus* is a series of ingenious hypotheses designed to deepen and vivify our sense of the harmony, and symmetry, and beauty of the universe, and, as a consequence, of the wisdom, and excellence, and goodness, of its Author.[5]

[1] "Timæus," ch. ix. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., ch. x. [4] Ibid., ch. xix.

[5] "Being is related to Becoming (the Absolute to the Contingent) as Truth is to Belief; consequently we must not marvel should we find it im-

Whatever physical truths were within the author's reach, took their place in the general array: the vacancies were filled up with the best suppositions admitted by the limited science of the time."[1] And it is worthy of remark that, whilst proceeding by this "high *à priori* road," he made some startling guesses at the truth, and anticipated some of the discoveries of the modern inductive method, which proceeds simply by the observation, comparison, and generalization of facts. Of these prophetic anticipations we may instance that of the definite proportions of chemistry,[2] the geometrical forms of crystallography,[3] the doctrine of complementary colors,[4] and that grand principle that all the highest laws of nature assume the form of a precise quantitative statement.[5]

2. It may be expected that a system of physics raised on optimistic principles will be *mathematical* rather than experimental. "Intended to embody conceptions of proportion and harmony, it will have recourse to that department of science which deals with the proportions in space and number. Such applications of mathematical truths, not being raised on ascertained facts, can only accidentally represent the real laws of the physical system; they will, however, vivify the student's apprehension of harmony in the same manner as a happy parable, though not founded in real history, will enliven his perceptions of moral truth."[6]

3. Another peculiarity of such a system will be an impatience of every merely *mechanical* theory of the operations of nature.

possible to arrive at any certain and conclusive results in our speculations upon the creation of the visible universe and its authors; it should be enough for us if the account we have to give be as probable as any other, remembering that we are but men, and therefore bound to acquiesce in merely probable results, without looking for a higher degree of certainty than the subject admits of."—"Timæus," ch. ix.

[1] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 157.

[2] "Timæus," ch. xxxi. [3] Ibid., ch. xxvii. [4] Ibid., ch. xlii.

[5] "It is Plato's merit to have discovered that the laws of the physical universe are resolvable into numerical relations, and therefore capable of being represented by mathematical formulæ."—Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 163.

[6] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 163.

"The psychology of Plato led him to recognize mind wherever there was motion, and hence not only to require a Deity as first mover of the universe, but also to conceive the propriety of separate and subordinate agents attached to each of its parts, as principles of motion, no less than intelligent directors. These agents were entitled '*gods*' by an easy figure, discernible even in the sacred language,[1] and which served, besides, to accommodate philosophical hypotheses to the popular religion. Plato, however, carefully distinguished between the sole, Eternal Author of the Universe, on the one hand, and that 'soul,' vital and intelligent, which he attaches to the world, as well as the spheral intelligences, on the other. These 'subordinate deities,' though intrusted with a sort of deputed creation, were still only the deputies of the Supreme Framer and Director of all."[2] The "gods" of the Platonic system are "subordinate divinities," "generated gods," brought into existence by the will and wisdom of the Eternal Father and Maker of the universe.[3] Even Jupiter, the governing divinity of the popular mythology, is a descendant from powers which are included in the creation.[4] The offices they fulfill, and the relations they sustain to the Supreme Being, correspond to those of the "angels" of Christian theology. They are the ministers of his providential government of the world.[5]

The application of this fundamental conception of the Platonic system—*the eternal unity of the principles of Order, Goodness, and Truth in an ultimate reality, the Eternal Mind*—to the elucidation of the *temporal life* of man, yields, as a result—

II. THE PLATONIC ETHICS.

Believing firmly that there are unchangeable, necessary, and absolute principles, which are the perfections of the Eternal Mind, Plato must, of course, have been a believer in an *immutable morality*. He held that there is a rightness, a justice, an

[1] Psalm lxxxii. 1; John x. 34.
[2] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 164.
[3] "Timæus," ch. xv. [4] Ibid. [5] "Laws," bk. x.

equity, not arbitrarily constituted by the Divine will or legislation, but founded in the nature of God, and therefore eternal. The independence of the principles of morality upon the mere will of the Supreme Governor is proclaimed in all his writings.[1] The Divine will is the fountain of efficiency, the Divine reason, the fountain of law. God is no more the creator of *virtue* than he is the creator of *truth*.

And inasmuch as man is a partaker of the Divine essence, and as the ideas which dwell in the human reason are "copies" of those which dwell in the Divine reason, man may rise to the apprehension and recognition of the immutable and eternal principles of righteousness, and "by communion with that which is Divine, and subject to the law of order, may become himself a subject of order, and divine, so far as it is possible for man."[2]

The attainment of this consummation is the grand purpose of the Platonic philosophy. Its ultimate object is "*the purification of the soul*," and its pervading spirit is the aspiration after perfection. The whole system of Plato has therefore an eminently *ethical* character. It is a speculative philosophy directed to a practical purpose.

Philosophy is the *love of wisdom*. Now wisdom (σοφία) is expressly declared by Plato to belong alone to the Supreme Divinity,[3] who alone can contemplate reality in a direct and immediate manner, and in whom, as Plato seems often to intimate, knowledge and being coincide. Philosophy is the aspiration of the soul after this wisdom, this perfect and immutable truth, and in its realization it is a union with the Perfect Wisdom through the medium of a divine affection, the *love* of which Plato so often speaks. The eternal and unchangeable Essence which is the proper object of philosophy is also endowed with *moral* attributes. He is not only "the Being," but "the Good" (τὸ ἀγαθόν), and all in the system of the universe which can be the object of rational contemplation, is an emanation from that

[1] In "Euthyphron" especially.
[2] "Republic," bk. vi. ch. xiii.
[3] "Phædrus," § 145.

goodness. The love of truth is therefore the love of Good, and the love of Good is the love of truth. Philosophy and morality are thus coincident. "Philosophy is the love of Perfect Wisdom; Perfect Wisdom and Perfect Goodness are identical; the Perfect Good is God; philosophy is the *Love of God.*"[1] Ethically viewed, it is this one motive of *love* for the Supreme Wisdom and Goodness, predominating over and purifying and assimilating every desire of the soul, and governing every movement of the man, raising man to a participation of and communion with Divinity, and restoring him to "the *likeness* of God." "This flight," says Plato, "consists in resembling God (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ), and this resemblance is the becoming just and holy with wisdom."[2] "This assimilation to God is the enfranchisement of the divine element of the soul. To approach to God as the substance of truth is *Science;* as the substance of goodness in truth is *Wisdom,* and as the substance of Beauty in goodness and truth is *Love.*"[3]

The two great principles which can be clearly traced as pervading the ethical system of Plato are—

1. *That no man is willingly evil.*[4]

2. *That every man is endued with the power of producing changes in his moral character.*[5]

The first of these principles is the counterpart ethical expression of his theory of *immutable Being.* The second is the counterpart of his theory of phenomenal change, or *mere Becoming.*

The soul of man is framed after the pattern of the immutable ideas of the *just,* and the *true,* and the *good,* which dwell in the Eternal Mind—that is, it is made in the image of God. The soul in its ultimate essence is formed of "the immutable" and "the permanent." The presence of the ideas of the just, and the true, and the good in the reason of man, constitute him a

[1] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 61.
[2] "Theætetus," § 84.
[3] Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 277.
[4] "Timæus," ch. xlviii.
[5] "Laws," bk. v. ch. i., bk. ix. ch. vi., bk. x. ch. xii.

moral nature; and it is impossible that he can cease to be a moral being, for these ideas, having a permanent and immutable being, can not be changed. All the passions and affections of the soul are merely phenomenal. They belong to the mortal, the transitory life of man; they are in endless flow and change, and they have no permanent reality. As phenomena, they must, however, have some ground; and Plato found that ground in the mysterious, instinctive longing for the *good* and the *true* which dwells in the very essence of the soul. These are the realities after which it strives, even when pursuing pleasure, and honor, and wealth, and fame. All the restlessness of human life is prompted by a longing for the *good*. But man does not clearly perceive what the *good* really is. The rational element of the soul has become clouded by passion and ignorance, and suffered an eclipse of its powers. Still, man longs for the good, and bears witness, by his restlessness and disquietude, that he instinctively desires it, and that he can find no rest and no satisfaction in any thing apart from the knowledge and the participation of the Supreme, the Absolute Good.

This, then, is the meaning of the oft-repeated assertion of Plato "*that no man is willingly evil*," viz., that no man deliberately chooses evil as evil. And Plato is, at the same time, careful to guard the doctrine from misconception. He readily grants that acts of wrong are distinguished as voluntary and involuntary, without which there could be neither merit nor demerit, reward nor punishment.[1] But still he insists that no man chooses evil in and by itself. He may choose it voluntarily as a means, but he does not choose it as an end. Every volition, by its essential nature, pursues, at least, an *apparent* good; because the end of volition is not the immediate act, but the object for the sake of which the act is undertaken.[2]

How is it, then, it may be asked, that men become evil? The answer of Plato is, that the soul has in it a principle of change, in the power of regulating the desires—in indulging them to excess, or moderating them according to the demands

[1] "Laws," bk. ix. ch. vi. [2] "Gorgias," §§ 52, 53.

of reason. The circumstances in which the soul is placed, as connected with the sensible world by means of the body, present an occasion for the exercise of that power, the end of this temporal connection being to establish a state of moral discipline and probation. The humors and distempers of the body likewise deprave, disorder, and discompose the soul.[1] "Pleasures and pains are unduly magnified; the democracy of the passions prevails; and the ascendency of reason is cast down." Bad forms of civil government corrupt social manners, evil education effects the ruin of the soul. Thus the soul is changed—is fallen from what it was when first it came from the Creator's hand. But the eternal Ideas are not utterly effaced, the image of God is not entirely lost. The soul may yet be restored by remedial measures. It may be purified by knowledge, by truth, by expiations, by sufferings, and by prayers. The utmost, however, that man can hope to do in this life is insufficient to fully restore the image of God, and death must complete the final emancipation of the rational element from the bondage of the flesh. Life is thus a discipline and a preparation for another state of being, and death the final entrance there.[2]

Independent of all other considerations, virtue is, therefore, to be pursued as the true good of the soul. Wisdom, Fortitude, Temperance, Justice, the four cardinal virtues of the Platonic system, are to be cultivated as the means of securing the purification and perfection of the inner man. And the ordinary pleasures, "the lesser goods" of life, are only to be so far pursued as they are subservient to, and compatible with, the higher and holier duty of striving after "the resemblance to God."

[1] "Gorgias," §§ 74–76.

[2] "Phædo," §§ 130, 131.