

Plato
The Republic

BOOK III.

There is another motive in purifying religion, which is to banish fear; for no man can be courageous who is afraid of death, or who believes the tales which are repeated by the poets concerning the world below. They must be gently requested not to abuse hell; they may be reminded that their stories are both untrue and discouraging. Nor must they be angry if we expunge obnoxious passages, such as the depressing words of Achilles—‘I would rather be a serving-man than rule over all the dead;’ and the verses which tell of the squalid mansions, the senseless shadows, the flitting soul mourning over lost strength and youth, the soul with a gibber going beneath the earth like smoke, or the souls of the suitors which flutter about like bats. The terrors and horrors of Cocytus and Styx, ghosts and sapless shades, and the rest of their Tartarean nomenclature, must vanish. Such tales may have their use; but they are not the proper food for soldiers. As little can we admit the sorrows and sympathies of the Homeric heroes:—Achilles, the son of Thetis, in tears, throwing ashes on his head, or pacing up and down the sea-shore in distraction; or Priam, the cousin of the gods, crying aloud, rolling in the mire. A good man is not prostrated at the loss of children or fortune. Neither is death terrible to him; and therefore lamentations over the dead should not be practised by men of note; they should be the concern of inferior persons only, whether women or men. Still worse is the attribution of such weakness to the gods; as when the goddesses say, ‘Alas! my travail!’ and worst of all, when the king of heaven himself laments his inability to save Hector, or sorrows over the impending doom of his dear Sarpedon. Such a character of God, if not ridiculed by our young men, is likely to be imitated by them. Nor should our citizens be given to excess of laughter—‘Such violent delights’ are followed by a violent re-action. The description in the Iliad of the gods shaking their sides at the clumsiness of Hephaestus will not be admitted by us. ‘Certainly not.’

Truth should have a high place among the virtues, for falsehood, as we were saying, is useless to the gods, and only useful to men as a medicine. But this employment of falsehood must remain a privilege of state; the common man must not in return tell a lie to the ruler; any more than the patient would tell a lie to his physician, or the sailor to his captain.

In the next place our youth must be temperate, and temperance consists in self-control and obedience to authority. That is a lesson which Homer teaches in some places: ‘The Achaeans marched on breathing prowess, in silent awe of their leaders;’—but a very different one in other places: ‘O heavy with wine, who hast the eyes of a dog, but the heart of a stag.’ Language of the latter kind will not impress self-control on the minds of youth. The same may be said about his praises of eating and drinking and his dread of starvation; also about the verses in which he tells of the rapturous loves of Zeus and Here, or of how Hephaestus once detained

Ares and Aphrodite in a net on a similar occasion. There is a nobler strain heard in the words:—‘Endure, my soul, thou hast endured worse.’ Nor must we allow our citizens to receive bribes, or to say, ‘Gifts persuade the gods, gifts reverend kings;’ or to applaud the ignoble advice of Phoenix to Achilles that he should get money out of the Greeks before he assisted them; or the meanness of Achilles himself in taking gifts from Agamemnon; or his requiring a ransom for the body of Hector; or his cursing of Apollo; or his insolence to the river-god Scamander; or his dedication to the dead Patroclus of his own hair which had been already dedicated to the other river-god Spercheius; or his cruelty in dragging the body of Hector round the walls, and slaying the captives at the pyre: such a combination of meanness and cruelty in Cheiron’s pupil is inconceivable. The amatory exploits of Peirithous and Theseus are equally unworthy. Either these so-called sons of gods were not the sons of gods, or they were not such as the poets imagine them, any more than the gods themselves are the authors of evil. The youth who believes that such things are done by those who have the blood of heaven flowing in their veins will be too ready to imitate their example.

Enough of gods and heroes;—what shall we say about men? What the poets and story-tellers say—that the wicked prosper and the righteous are afflicted, or that justice is another’s gain? Such misrepresentations cannot be allowed by us. But in this we are anticipating the definition of justice, and had therefore better defer the enquiry.

The subjects of poetry have been sufficiently treated; next follows style. Now all poetry is a narrative of events past, present, or to come; and narrative is of three kinds, the simple, the imitative, and a composition of the two. An instance will make my meaning clear. The first scene in Homer is of the last or mixed kind, being partly description and partly dialogue. But if you throw the dialogue into the ‘*oratio obliqua*,’ the passage will run thus: The priest came and prayed Apollo that the Achaeans might take Troy and have a safe return if Agamemnon would only give him back his daughter; and the other Greeks assented, but Agamemnon was wroth, and so on—The whole then becomes descriptive, and the poet is the only speaker left; or, if you omit the narrative, the whole becomes dialogue. These are the three styles—which of them is to be admitted into our State? ‘Do you ask whether tragedy and comedy are to be admitted?’ Yes, but also something more—Is it not doubtful whether our guardians are to be imitators at all? Or rather, has not the question been already answered, for we have decided that one man cannot in his life play many parts, any more than he can act both tragedy and comedy, or be rhapsodist and actor at once? Human nature is coined into very small pieces, and as our guardians have their own business already, which is the care of freedom, they will have enough to do without imitating. If they imitate they should imitate, not any meanness or baseness, but the good only; for the mask which the actor wears is apt to become his face.

We cannot allow men to play the parts of women, quarrelling, weeping, scolding, or boasting against the gods,—least of all when making love or in labour. They must not represent slaves, or bullies, or cowards, drunkards, or madmen, or blacksmiths, or neighing horses, or bellowing bulls, or sounding rivers, or a raging sea. A good or wise man will be willing to perform good and wise actions, but he will be ashamed to play an inferior part which he has never practised; and he will prefer to employ the descriptive style with as little imitation as possible. The man who has no self-respect, on the contrary, will imitate anybody and anything; sounds of nature and cries of animals alike; his whole performance will be imitation of gesture and voice. Now in the descriptive style there are few changes, but in the dramatic there are a great many. Poets and musicians use either, or a compound of both, and this compound is very attractive to youth and their teachers as well as to the vulgar. But our State in which one man plays one part only is not adapted for complexity. And when one of these polyphonous pantomimic gentlemen offers to exhibit himself and his poetry we will show him every observance of respect, but at the same time tell him that there is no room for his kind in our State; we prefer the rough, honest poet, and will not depart from our original models (Laws).

Next as to the music. A song or ode has three parts,—the subject, the harmony, and the rhythm; of which the two last are dependent upon the first. As we banished strains of lamentation, so we may now banish the mixed Lydian harmonies, which are the harmonies of lamentation; and as our citizens are to be temperate, we may also banish convivial harmonies, such as the Ionian and pure Lydian. Two remain—the Dorian and Phrygian, the first for war, the second for peace; the one expressive of courage, the other of obedience or instruction or religious feeling. And as we reject varieties of harmony, we shall also reject the many-stringed, variously-shaped instruments which give utterance to them, and in particular the flute, which is more complex than any of them. The lyre and the harp may be permitted in the town, and the Pan's-pipe in the fields. Thus we have made a purgation of music, and will now make a purgation of metres. These should be like the harmonies, simple and suitable to the occasion. There are four notes of the tetrachord, and there are three ratios of metre, $3/2$, $2/2$, $2/1$, which have all their characteristics, and the feet have different characteristics as well as the rhythms. But about this you and I must ask Damon, the great musician, who speaks, if I remember rightly, of a martial measure as well as of dactylic, trochaic, and iambic rhythms, which he arranges so as to equalize the syllables with one another, assigning to each the proper quantity. We only venture to affirm the general principle that the style is to conform to the subject and the metre to the style; and that the simplicity and harmony of the soul should be reflected in them all. This principle of simplicity has to be learnt by every one in the days of his youth, and may be gathered anywhere, from the creative and constructive arts, as well as from the forms of plants and animals.

Other artists as well as poets should be warned against meanness or unseemliness. Sculpture and painting equally with music must conform to the law of simplicity. He who violates it cannot be allowed to work in our city, and to corrupt the taste of our citizens. For our guardians must grow up, not amid images of deformity which will gradually poison and corrupt their souls, but in a land of health and beauty where they will drink in from every object sweet and harmonious influences. And of all these influences the greatest is the education given by music, which finds a way into the innermost soul and imparts to it the sense of beauty and of deformity. At first the effect is unconscious; but when reason arrives, then he who has been thus trained welcomes her as the friend whom he always knew. As in learning to read, first we acquire the elements or letters separately, and afterwards their combinations, and cannot recognize reflections of them until we know the letters themselves;—in like manner we must first attain the elements or essential forms of the virtues, and then trace their combinations in life and experience. There is a music of the soul which answers to the harmony of the world; and the fairest object of a musical soul is the fair mind in the fair body. Some defect in the latter may be excused, but not in the former. True love is the daughter of temperance, and temperance is utterly opposed to the madness of bodily pleasure. Enough has been said of music, which makes a fair ending with love.

Next we pass on to gymnastics; about which I would remark, that the soul is related to the body as a cause to an effect, and therefore if we educate the mind we may leave the education of the body in her charge, and need only give a general outline of the course to be pursued. In the first place the guardians must abstain from strong drink, for they should be the last persons to lose their wits. Whether the habits of the palaestra are suitable to them is more doubtful, for the ordinary gymnastic is a sleepy sort of thing, and if left off suddenly is apt to endanger health. But our warrior athletes must be wide-awake dogs, and must also be inured to all changes of food and climate. Hence they will require a simpler kind of gymnastic, akin to their simple music; and for their diet a rule may be found in Homer, who feeds his heroes on roast meat only, and gives them no fish although they are living at the sea-side, nor boiled meats which involve an apparatus of pots and pans; and, if I am not mistaken, he nowhere mentions sweet sauces. Sicilian cookery and Attic confections and Corinthian courtezans, which are to gymnastic what Lydian and Ionian melodies are to music, must be forbidden. Where gluttony and intemperance prevail the town quickly fills with doctors and pleaders; and law and medicine give themselves airs as soon as the freemen of a State take an interest in them. But what can show a more disgraceful state of education than to have to go abroad for justice because you have none of your own at home? And yet there IS a worse stage of the same disease—when men have learned to take a pleasure and pride in the twists and turns of the law; not considering how much better it would be for

them so to order their lives as to have no need of a nodding justice. And there is a like disgrace in employing a physician, not for the cure of wounds or epidemic disorders, but because a man has by laziness and luxury contracted diseases which were unknown in the days of Asclepius. How simple is the Homeric practice of medicine. Eurypylus after he has been wounded drinks a posset of Pramnian wine, which is of a heating nature; and yet the sons of Asclepius blame neither the damsel who gives him the drink, nor Patroclus who is attending on him. The truth is that this modern system of nursing diseases was introduced by Herodicus the trainer; who, being of a sickly constitution, by a compound of training and medicine tortured first himself and then a good many other people, and lived a great deal longer than he had any right. But Asclepius would not practise this art, because he knew that the citizens of a well-ordered State have no leisure to be ill, and therefore he adopted the 'kill or cure' method, which artisans and labourers employ. 'They must be at their business,' they say, 'and have no time for coddling: if they recover, well; if they don't, there is an end of them.' Whereas the rich man is supposed to be a gentleman who can afford to be ill. Do you know a maxim of Phocylides—that 'when a man begins to be rich' (or, perhaps, a little sooner) 'he should practise virtue'? But how can excessive care of health be inconsistent with an ordinary occupation, and yet consistent with that practice of virtue which Phocylides inculcates? When a student imagines that philosophy gives him a headache, he never does anything; he is always unwell. This was the reason why Asclepius and his sons practised no such art. They were acting in the interest of the public, and did not wish to preserve useless lives, or raise up a puny offspring to wretched sires. Honest diseases they honestly cured; and if a man was wounded, they applied the proper remedies, and then let him eat and drink what he liked. But they declined to treat intemperate and worthless subjects, even though they might have made large fortunes out of them. As to the story of Pindar, that Asclepius was slain by a thunderbolt for restoring a rich man to life, that is a lie—following our old rule we must say either that he did not take bribes, or that he was not the son of a god.

Glaucon then asks Socrates whether the best physicians and the best judges will not be those who have had severally the greatest experience of diseases and of crimes. Socrates draws a distinction between the two professions. The physician should have had experience of disease in his own body, for he cures with his mind and not with his body. But the judge controls mind by mind; and therefore his mind should not be corrupted by crime. Where then is he to gain experience? How is he to be wise and also innocent? When young a good man is apt to be deceived by evil-doers, because he has no pattern of evil in himself; and therefore the judge should be of a certain age; his youth should have been innocent, and he should have acquired insight into evil not by the practice of it, but by the observation of it in others. This is the ideal of a judge; the criminal turned detective is wonderfully suspicious, but when in company with good men

who have experience, he is at fault, for he foolishly imagines that every one is as bad as himself. Vice may be known of virtue, but cannot know virtue. This is the sort of medicine and this the sort of law which will prevail in our State; they will be healing arts to better natures; but the evil body will be left to die by the one, and the evil soul will be put to death by the other. And the need of either will be greatly diminished by good music which will give harmony to the soul, and good gymnastic which will give health to the body. Not that this division of music and gymnastic really corresponds to soul and body; for they are both equally concerned with the soul, which is tamed by the one and aroused and sustained by the other. The two together supply our guardians with their twofold nature. The passionate disposition when it has too much gymnastic is hardened and brutalized, the gentle or philosophic temper which has too much music becomes enervated. While a man is allowing music to pour like water through the funnel of his ears, the edge of his soul gradually wears away, and the passionate or spirited element is melted out of him. Too little spirit is easily exhausted; too much quickly passes into nervous irritability. So, again, the athlete by feeding and training has his courage doubled, but he soon grows stupid; he is like a wild beast, ready to do everything by blows and nothing by counsel or policy. There are two principles in man, reason and passion, and to these, not to the soul and body, the two arts of music and gymnastic correspond. He who mingles them in harmonious concord is the true musician,—he shall be the presiding genius of our State.

The next question is, Who are to be our rulers? First, the elder must rule the younger; and the best of the elders will be the best guardians. Now they will be the best who love their subjects most, and think that they have a common interest with them in the welfare of the state. These we must select; but they must be watched at every epoch of life to see whether they have retained the same opinions and held out against force and enchantment. For time and persuasion and the love of pleasure may enchant a man into a change of purpose, and the force of grief and pain may compel him. And therefore our guardians must be men who have been tried by many tests, like gold in the refiner's fire, and have been passed first through danger, then through pleasure, and at every age have come out of such trials victorious and without stain, in full command of themselves and their principles; having all their faculties in harmonious exercise for their country's good. These shall receive the highest honours both in life and death. (It would perhaps be better to confine the term 'guardians' to this select class: the younger men may be called 'auxiliaries'.)

And now for one magnificent lie, in the belief of which, Oh that we could train our rulers!—at any rate let us make the attempt with the rest of the world. What I am going to tell is only another version of the legend of Cadmus; but our unbelieving generation will be slow to accept such a story. The tale must be imparted, first to the rulers, then to the soldiers,

lastly to the people. We will inform them that their youth was a dream, and that during the time when they seemed to be undergoing their education they were really being fashioned in the earth, who sent them up when they were ready; and that they must protect and cherish her whose children they are, and regard each other as brothers and sisters. 'I do not wonder at your being ashamed to propound such a fiction.' There is more behind. These brothers and sisters have different natures, and some of them God framed to rule, whom he fashioned of gold; others he made of silver, to be auxiliaries; others again to be husbandmen and craftsmen, and these were formed by him of brass and iron. But as they are all sprung from a common stock, a golden parent may have a silver son, or a silver parent a golden son, and then there must be a change of rank; the son of the rich must descend, and the child of the artisan rise, in the social scale; for an oracle says 'that the State will come to an end if governed by a man of brass or iron.' Will our citizens ever believe all this? 'Not in the present generation, but in the next, perhaps, Yes.'

Now let the earthborn men go forth under the command of their rulers, and look about and pitch their camp in a high place, which will be safe against enemies from without, and likewise against insurrections from within. There let them sacrifice and set up their tents; for soldiers they are to be and not shopkeepers, the watchdogs and guardians of the sheep; and luxury and avarice will turn them into wolves and tyrants. Their habits and their dwellings should correspond to their education. They should have no property; their pay should only meet their expenses; and they should have common meals. Gold and silver we will tell them that they have from God, and this divine gift in their souls they must not alloy with that earthly dross which passes under the name of gold. They only of the citizens may not touch it, or be under the same roof with it, or drink from it; it is the accursed thing. Should they ever acquire houses or lands or money of their own, they will become householders and tradesmen instead of guardians, enemies and tyrants instead of helpers, and the hour of ruin, both to themselves and the rest of the State, will be at hand.

The religious and ethical aspect of Plato's education will hereafter be considered under a separate head. Some lesser points may be more conveniently noticed in this place.

1. The constant appeal to the authority of Homer, whom, with grave irony, Plato, after the manner of his age, summons as a witness about ethics and psychology, as well as about diet and medicine; attempting to distinguish the better lesson from the worse, sometimes altering the text from design; more than once quoting or alluding to Homer inaccurately, after the manner of the early logographers turning the Iliad into prose, and delighting to draw far-fetched inferences from his words, or to make ludicrous applications of them. He does not, like Heracleitus, get into a rage with Homer and Archilochus (Heracl.), but uses their words and

expressions as vehicles of a higher truth; not on a system like Theagenes of Rhegium or Metrodorus, or in later times the Stoics, but as fancy may dictate. And the conclusions drawn from them are sound, although the premises are fictitious. These fanciful appeals to Homer add a charm to Plato's style, and at the same time they have the effect of a satire on the follies of Homeric interpretation. To us (and probably to himself), although they take the form of arguments, they are really figures of speech. They may be compared with modern citations from Scripture, which have often a great rhetorical power even when the original meaning of the words is entirely lost sight of. The real, like the Platonic Socrates, as we gather from the Memorabilia of Xenophon, was fond of making similar adaptations. Great in all ages and countries, in religion as well as in law and literature, has been the art of interpretation.

2. 'The style is to conform to the subject and the metre to the style.' Notwithstanding the fascination which the word 'classical' exercises over us, we can hardly maintain that this rule is observed in all the Greek poetry which has come down to us. We cannot deny that the thought often exceeds the power of lucid expression in Aeschylus and Pindar; or that rhetoric gets the better of the thought in the Sophist-poet Euripides. Only perhaps in Sophocles is there a perfect harmony of the two; in him alone do we find a grace of language like the beauty of a Greek statue, in which there is nothing to add or to take away; at least this is true of single plays or of large portions of them. The connection in the Tragic Choruses and in the Greek lyric poets is not unfrequently a tangled thread which in an age before logic the poet was unable to draw out. Many thoughts and feelings mingled in his mind, and he had no power of disengaging or arranging them. For there is a subtle influence of logic which requires to be transferred from prose to poetry, just as the music and perfection of language are infused by poetry into prose. In all ages the poet has been a bad judge of his own meaning (Apol.); for he does not see that the word which is full of associations to his own mind is difficult and unmeaning to that of another; or that the sequence which is clear to himself is puzzling to others. There are many passages in some of our greatest modern poets which are far too obscure; in which there is no proportion between style and subject, in which any half-expressed figure, any harsh construction, any distorted collocation of words, any remote sequence of ideas is admitted; and there is no voice 'coming sweetly from nature,' or music adding the expression of feeling to thought. As if there could be poetry without beauty, or beauty without ease and clearness. The obscurities of early Greek poets arose necessarily out of the state of language and logic which existed in their age. They are not examples to be followed by us; for the use of language ought in every generation to become clearer and clearer. Like Shakespere, they were great in spite, not in consequence, of their imperfections of expression. But there is no reason for returning to the necessary obscurity which prevailed in the infancy of literature. The English poets of the last century were certainly not obscure; and we have

no excuse for losing what they had gained, or for going back to the earlier or transitional age which preceded them. The thought of our own times has not out-stripped language; a want of Plato's 'art of measuring' is the rule cause of the disproportion between them.

3. In the third book of the Republic a nearer approach is made to a theory of art than anywhere else in Plato. His views may be summed up as follows:—True art is not fanciful and imitative, but simple and ideal,— the expression of the highest moral energy, whether in action or repose. To live among works of plastic art which are of this noble and simple character, or to listen to such strains, is the best of influences,—the true Greek atmosphere, in which youth should be brought up. That is the way to create in them a natural good taste, which will have a feeling of truth and beauty in all things. For though the poets are to be expelled, still art is recognized as another aspect of reason—like love in the Symposium, extending over the same sphere, but confined to the preliminary education, and acting through the power of habit; and this conception of art is not limited to strains of music or the forms of plastic art, but pervades all nature and has a wide kindred in the world. The Republic of Plato, like the Athens of Pericles, has an artistic as well as a political side.

There is hardly any mention in Plato of the creative arts; only in two or three passages does he even allude to them (Rep.; Soph.). He is not lost in rapture at the great works of Phidias, the Parthenon, the Propylea, the statues of Zeus or Athene. He would probably have regarded any abstract truth of number or figure as higher than the greatest of them. Yet it is hard to suppose that some influence, such as he hopes to inspire in youth, did not pass into his own mind from the works of art which he saw around him. We are living upon the fragments of them, and find in a few broken stones the standard of truth and beauty. But in Plato this feeling has no expression; he nowhere says that beauty is the object of art; he seems to deny that wisdom can take an external form (Phaedrus); he does not distinguish the fine from the mechanical arts. Whether or no, like some writers, he felt more than he expressed, it is at any rate remarkable that the greatest perfection of the fine arts should coincide with an almost entire silence about them. In one very striking passage he tells us that a work of art, like the State, is a whole; and this conception of a whole and the love of the newly-born mathematical sciences may be regarded, if not as the inspiring, at any rate as the regulating principles of Greek art (Xen. Mem.; and Sophist).

4. Plato makes the true and subtle remark that the physician had better not be in robust health; and should have known what illness is in his own person. But the judge ought to have had no similar experience of evil; he is to be a good man who, having passed his youth in innocence, became acquainted late in life with the vices of others. And therefore, according to Plato, a judge should not be young, just as a young man according to

Aristotle is not fit to be a hearer of moral philosophy. The bad, on the other hand, have a knowledge of vice, but no knowledge of virtue. It may be doubted, however, whether this train of reflection is well founded. In a remarkable passage of the *Laws* it is acknowledged that the evil may form a correct estimate of the good. The union of gentleness and courage in Book ii. at first seemed to be a paradox, yet was afterwards ascertained to be a truth. And Plato might also have found that the intuition of evil may be consistent with the abhorrence of it. There is a directness of aim in virtue which gives an insight into vice. And the knowledge of character is in some degree a natural sense independent of any special experience of good or evil.

5. One of the most remarkable conceptions of Plato, because unGreek and also very different from anything which existed at all in his age of the world, is the transposition of ranks. In the Spartan state there had been enfranchisement of Helots and degradation of citizens under special circumstances. And in the ancient Greek aristocracies, merit was certainly recognized as one of the elements on which government was based. The founders of states were supposed to be their benefactors, who were raised by their great actions above the ordinary level of humanity; at a later period, the services of warriors and legislators were held to entitle them and their descendants to the privileges of citizenship and to the first rank in the state. And although the existence of an ideal aristocracy is slenderly proven from the remains of early Greek history, and we have a difficulty in ascribing such a character, however the idea may be defined, to any actual Hellenic state—or indeed to any state which has ever existed in the world—still the rule of the best was certainly the aspiration of philosophers, who probably accommodated a good deal their views of primitive history to their own notions of good government. Plato further insists on applying to the guardians of his state a series of tests by which all those who fell short of a fixed standard were either removed from the governing body, or not admitted to it; and this ‘academic’ discipline did to a certain extent prevail in Greek states, especially in Sparta. He also indicates that the system of caste, which existed in a great part of the ancient, and is by no means extinct in the modern European world, should be set aside from time to time in favour of merit. He is aware how deeply the greater part of mankind resent any interference with the order of society, and therefore he proposes his novel idea in the form of what he himself calls a ‘monstrous fiction.’ (Compare the ceremony of preparation for the two ‘great waves’ in Book v.) Two principles are indicated by him: first, that there is a distinction of ranks dependent on circumstances prior to the individual: second, that this distinction is and ought to be broken through by personal qualities. He adapts mythology like the Homeric poems to the wants of the state, making ‘the Phoenician tale’ the vehicle of his ideas. Every Greek state had a myth respecting its own origin; the Platonic republic may also have a tale of earthborn men. The gravity and verisimilitude with which the tale is told, and the analogy of Greek

tradition, are a sufficient verification of the 'monstrous falsehood.' Ancient poetry had spoken of a gold and silver and brass and iron age succeeding one another, but Plato supposes these differences in the natures of men to exist together in a single state. Mythology supplies a figure under which the lesson may be taught (as Protagoras says, 'the myth is more interesting'), and also enables Plato to touch lightly on new principles without going into details. In this passage he shadows forth a general truth, but he does not tell us by what steps the transposition of ranks is to be effected. Indeed throughout the Republic he allows the lower ranks to fade into the distance. We do not know whether they are to carry arms, and whether in the fifth book they are or are not included in the communistic regulations respecting property and marriage. Nor is there any use in arguing strictly either from a few chance words, or from the silence of Plato, or in drawing inferences which were beyond his vision. Aristotle, in his criticism on the position of the lower classes, does not perceive that the poetical creation is 'like the air, invulnerable,' and cannot be penetrated by the shafts of his logic (Pol.).

6. Two paradoxes which strike the modern reader as in the highest degree fanciful and ideal, and which suggest to him many reflections, are to be found in the third book of the Republic: first, the great power of music, so much beyond any influence which is experienced by us in modern times, when the art or science has been far more developed, and has found the secret of harmony, as well as of melody; secondly, the indefinite and almost absolute control which the soul is supposed to exercise over the body.

In the first we suspect some degree of exaggeration, such as we may also observe among certain masters of the art, not unknown to us, at the present day. With this natural enthusiasm, which is felt by a few only, there seems to mingle in Plato a sort of Pythagorean reverence for numbers and numerical proportion to which Aristotle is a stranger. Intervals of sound and number are to him sacred things which have a law of their own, not dependent on the variations of sense. They rise above sense, and become a connecting link with the world of ideas. But it is evident that Plato is describing what to him appears to be also a fact. The power of a simple and characteristic melody on the impressible mind of the Greek is more than we can easily appreciate. The effect of national airs may bear some comparison with it. And, besides all this, there is a confusion between the harmony of musical notes and the harmony of soul and body, which is so potently inspired by them.

The second paradox leads up to some curious and interesting questions—How far can the mind control the body? Is the relation between them one of mutual antagonism or of mutual harmony? Are they two or one, and is either of them the cause of the other? May we not at times drop the opposition between them, and the mode of describing

them, which is so familiar to us, and yet hardly conveys any precise meaning, and try to view this composite creature, man, in a more simple manner? Must we not at any rate admit that there is in human nature a higher and a lower principle, divided by no distinct line, which at times break asunder and take up arms against one another? Or again, they are reconciled and move together, either unconsciously in the ordinary work of life, or consciously in the pursuit of some noble aim, to be attained not without an effort, and for which every thought and nerve are strained. And then the body becomes the good friend or ally, or servant or instrument of the mind. And the mind has often a wonderful and almost superhuman power of banishing disease and weakness and calling out a hidden strength. Reason and the desires, the intellect and the senses are brought into harmony and obedience so as to form a single human being. They are ever parting, ever meeting; and the identity or diversity of their tendencies or operations is for the most part unnoticed by us. When the mind touches the body through the appetites, we acknowledge the responsibility of the one to the other. There is a tendency in us which says 'Drink.' There is another which says, 'Do not drink; it is not good for you.' And we all of us know which is the rightful superior. We are also responsible for our health, although into this sphere there enter some elements of necessity which may be beyond our control. Still even in the management of health, care and thought, continued over many years, may make us almost free agents, if we do not exact too much of ourselves, and if we acknowledge that all human freedom is limited by the laws of nature and of mind.

We are disappointed to find that Plato, in the general condemnation which he passes on the practice of medicine prevailing in his own day, depreciates the effects of diet. He would like to have diseases of a definite character and capable of receiving a definite treatment. He is afraid of invalidism interfering with the business of life. He does not recognize that time is the great healer both of mental and bodily disorders; and that remedies which are gradual and proceed little by little are safer than those which produce a sudden catastrophe. Neither does he see that there is no way in which the mind can more surely influence the body than by the control of eating and drinking; or any other action or occasion of human life on which the higher freedom of the will can be more simple or truly asserted.

7. Lesser matters of style may be remarked.

(1) The affected ignorance of music, which is Plato's way of expressing that he is passing lightly over the subject.

(2) The tentative manner in which here, as in the second book, he proceeds with the construction of the State.

(3) The description of the State sometimes as a reality, and then again as a work of imagination only; these are the arts by which he sustains the

reader's interest.

(4) Connecting links, or the preparation for the entire expulsion of the poets in Book X.

(5) The companion pictures of the lover of litigation and the valetudinarian, the satirical jest about the maxim of Phocylides, the manner in which the image of the gold and silver citizens is taken up into the subject, and the argument from the practice of Asclepius, should not escape notice.

