

THE
LESSER HIPPIAS:
A DIALOGUE
CONCERNING
VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY ERROR.

INTRODUCTION

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THE LESSER HIPPIAS.

IN this Dialogue Hippias the sophist bears the highest of the two subordinate parts or characters: from him therefore it derives its name¹; and the brevity of it, in comparison with the other between Socrates and the same sophist, has occasioned it to be called The Lesser Hippias.—The title prefixed to it in all the editions of Plato, which is this, *περὶ Ψεύδους*, Concerning Lying, or untruth, is apparently defective; because it expresses only part of the subject: unless the word lying be there taken in the sense put upon it by a late writer², so as to relate to every part of human conduct. But this being not the proper sense of the word, we have ventured to change the title; and to assign such a one as, we think, comprehends the whole of the subject; and, in as few words as are requisite to some degree of clearness, shows the nature of it. For in this Dialogue is argued a point which has been long

¹ See the latter part of the Prologue.—S.

² Mr. Wollaston in his Religion of Nature delineated: where that very ingenious and learned man makes error, or deviation from rectitude in moral actions, to consist in acting a lie; that is, in acting as if the nature of that person or thing, whom or which our action concerns, were different from what it is: which in plain English, and agreeably to the language of the Platonists, is the same thing as acting with incongruity and impropriety; or, as the Stoics love to express themselves, acting contrary to nature, our own, and that of other things.—S.

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the subject of much controversy, "whether error in the will depends on error in judgment." Socrates takes the affirmative side of the question: and his end in so doing is to prove the necessity of informing the understanding in moral truths, that is, of acquiring moral science; together with the necessity of maintaining the governing part within us in full power over that which is inferior, that is, of acquiring habits of virtue: through want of which science, and of which power or virtue, the philosopher insinuates, that man is either led blindly or impelled inevitably into evil. This design is executed in three parts. The first is concerning words: in which it appears, from inductive reasoning, that all untruth is owing either to some ignorance in the mind, that is, want of knowledge in those things which are the subjects of our affirmation or negation, or to some passion of the soul, desire of glory, for instance, prompting us to speak either deliberately and with design, like Hippias, or inadvertently and rashly, like Achilles, untruths or lies. The second part is concerning actions; and proceeds in the same way of reasoning by induction, to prove that all error in acting arises either from ignorance or weakness: seeing that in every action, merely corporeal, and also in the energies or works of every art, when faults are committed, such as are blamable, the cause of this is either defect of skill to design well, or defect of ability to execute. In the last part, by much the shortest, but for which the other two are intended by Plato, according to his usual manner, merely to prepare us, the reasoning is analytical; and proves, that in dishonest or bad men the understanding is either unenlightened by science, or overpowered and blinded by passion, or else suffers in both ways; and therefore that, with the ignorance or impotence of mind under which they labour, they labour at the same time under a necessity of doing ill: from which necessity they can be freed only by inward light and strength, that is, by science and virtue. Here we find the *Sapiens sibiq; Imperiosus* of Horace, in a beautiful passage of his seventh Satire, the second book: so much of which as relates immediately to our purpose we have thus paraphrased;

Thy master does, himself, some master serve;
 Some impulse sets in action every nerve.
 Think not the puppet in his own command;
 His strings are guided by another's hand.

Who

Who then is free?—who not by passion fool'd,
 In every motion is by reason rul'd.
 To all but reason he, superior, still
 Moves but as bids him his own better will.

Agreeably to this is that doctrine of the Stoics, derived immediately, it should seem, from this dialogue of Plato, “that only the wise man is free¹ :” upon which maxim the fifth Satire of Persius is a lively comment. But this being a philosophical paradox, Plato employs great address, in the insinuating into the mind a truth which our own consciousness seems to contradict: for who is there, not under outward restraint, and only influenced by inward motives, who does not think himself free? Our subtle philosopher therefore argues upon the supposition of the freedom of will in bad men; and by thus arguing, proves an absurdity, “that such as do evil wilfully are better men than those who do evil without intending it.” The consequence of which is this, that the argument proceeded upon a false supposition; for that none do evil with a clear-sighted and distinct view, and that in bad men the will is not free. Thus much only seems necessary for opening the concealed manner, design, and method of this dialogue. A more explicit and

¹ Plotinus also, the most ancient Platonist of any whose writings are now remaining, proves that only mind or intellect is truly free; and that, therefore, liberty of will in man, or his having his actions in his own power, *το αυτεξουσισ*, resides only in a soul whose inward operations follow the leading of intellect or mind, *εν ψυχη κατα νουν ενεργουση*. And at the end of his argument he thus concludes, The soul, therefore, becomes free through the government of the mind; pursuing thus, without impediment or hindrance, her way to good: *Γινεται ουν ψυχη ελευθερα δια νου, προς το αγαθον σπευδουσα ανεμποδιστως*. Plotin. Enn. vi. l. viii. c. 5, 6, and 7. Alexander Aphrodis. also, the oldest interpreter of Aristotle extant, makes the essence of man's freedom to consist in his being governed *κατα λογον τε και κρισιν*, by the judgment of his own reason; and in acting *κατα λογικην ορμην*, from rational motives, or as he is prompted and excited by reason. See his treatise *Περι ειμαρμεντος*, §. 14, and 23. ed. Lond. and Aristotle himself, *Metaphysic. l. ix. c. 5*. Epicurus seems to have been the first who imagined human liberty to consist in acting without any motives at all, or at least independently of any. To account for which wild way of acting, he supposes that uncertain and unaccountable declination of atoms, or their deviation from the ordinary course of nature, for which he is justly reprehended by Cicero in many parts of his philosophical works. Yet this notion, or fancy, of Epicurus, concerning the liberty of the will, absurd as it is, hath been espoused by some modern writers of great name; though without his, or indeed any other ingenious contrivance to obviate the absurdity.—S.

particular account of them will appear in the process of our notes. The Introduction is too natural and easy to want any explication. The outward form of the Dialogue is simply dramatic: and as to its genius, it may perhaps not improperly be said to be of the confuting kind; for we would not, unless obliged by the necessity of reason, choose to differ from other writers, or depart from antient authority, by which it is pronounced anatreptic. What ground there is, however, for referring it to some other kind, will easily appear to the readers of our synopsis.—S.

THE LESSER HIPPIAS.

THE PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

EUDICUS, SOCRATES, HIPPIAS.

* SCENE.—*The SCHOOL of PHIDOSTRATUS.*

EUDICUS.

WHENCE comes it, Socrates, that you are so silent; when Hippias here has been exhibiting so finely and so copiously? Why do you not join the rest of the audience in praising his dissertation; or, at least, make some objections to it, if there was any thing in it which you disapproved?—All the company too are now departed, and we left by ourselves; we, who would claim an especial right to share in all philosophic exercises.

Soc. It would give me pleasure, Eudicus, I assure you, to ask Hippias a question

* The conversation, here related, was held presently after Hippias had finished the exhibiting or public reading of that dissertation of his, so highly celebrated by himself in the larger Dialogue of his name, and upon the same spot of ground, which had been the scene of his lecture. This is evident from many circumstances. In the first place, Eudicus, who is there mentioned as the patron of Hippias, and promoter of that exhibition in particular, sustains the same character in this Dialogue. He opens it with an air of triumph upon the success of Hippias, which appeared in the applause paid him by his audience: and whenever he speaks afterwards, he takes the air and style of a patron, one of that kind who are humble and ignorant admirers.—It is probable that he stayed behind, one of the last of the assembly, on purpose to have an opportunity of inviting and leading the orator to his house; to feast there together, upon his coming off so triumphantly; as the custom is in modern times upon similar occasions.—Further, it appears from that passage of the Greater Hippias before cited, that Socrates, with such of his philosophic friends as himself should choose, was, at the particular request of Hippias, to make part of the audience at his intended exhibition. It is reasonable therefore to suppose them to be admitted without paying their quota of the contribution money. Now this circumstance exactly tallies with what we

question or two, relating to a subject, which he has just now been treating of, taken out of Homer. For I have heard your father Apemantes say, that the Iliad of Homer was a finer poem than his Odyssey; and as far surpassed it in excellence, as the virtue of Achilles surpassed the virtue of Ulysses. For those two poems, he said, were purposely composed in honour of those two heroes: the Odyssey, to shew the virtues of Ulysses; the Iliad, those of Achilles. Concerning this very point then, I should be glad, if it pleases Hippias, to ask his opinion; what he thinks of those two persons, and whether of them in his judgment was the better man. For his exhibition, besides containing a great variety of other matters, displayed much learning in the poets, and particularly in Homer.

EUD. There is no doubt but Hippias, if you propose a question to him, will condescend to give an answer.—Will you not, Hippias, answer to any question which Socrates shall propose to you? or what other course will you take in the affair?

HIP. ¹ I should take a shameful course indeed, Eudicus, should I decline

find in this Dialogue. For, not to insist on the improbability that Socrates should have been present without such special invitation; it accounts for the tarrying behind of Socrates and his friends, out of civility to Hippias, who probably had conducted and introduced them to the place appointed for the exhibition.—That Socrates was at this time accompanied by some of his followers in philosophy, is plain from the first speech of Eudicus; at the conclusion of which he addresses Socrates in the plural number, meaning him and his friends.—One argument more, to prove that the exhibition of Hippias, which gave occasion to this Dialogue, was the same with that promised in the Greater Hippias, arises from the nature of the dissertation itself. For the characters of the heroes in Homer's Iliad were drawn in this which he had been exhibiting, as we learn from the following Dialogue; and it appears from the subject, the title, and introduction of the dissertation promised, that a description of those very characters made a considerable part of it.—Remarkable instances, all these, of Plato's exact fidelity in the dramatic circumstances of his Dialogues, if true; or of his accuracy and exquisite judgment in adapting them one to another and to probability, if they are feigned.—S.

¹ The usual manner of Plato, in his Dialogues, is to open the character of each person, in the beginning or first speeches of his part; a manner worthy the imitation of all dramatic poets. The most striking feature in the character of Hippias is vanity, or the desire of false and vain applause: accordingly, it is here, in the very outset of the Dialogue, shown in a strong light. But there is, besides, a peculiar reason for displaying it in the beginning of this particular Dialogue, because the display of Hippias's vanity, and of the influence that vanity had upon his conduct, makes a material part of the subject and design.—S.

answering

answering to any question put by Socrates ; I, who never fail my attendance at the Olympic games ; and, quitting the privacy of home, constantly present myself in the temple there, to dissert, before the general assembly of the Grecians, upon any of the subjects which I have then ready for exhibition, such as shall be chosen by the audience ; and to answer to any question which any man shall think fit to ask.

Soc. Happy is the situation of your mind, Hippias, that, as often as the Olympic festival returns, you can ¹ proceed to the temple with a soul so full of alacrity and hope, through consciousness of wisdom. I should much wonder, if any one of the athletic combatants, on that occasion, marched to the engagement with half that security and confidence in the powers of his body, which you, according to your own account, have in the abilities of your mind.

HIP. I have reason, Socrates, to entertain such confidence. For, since the time when I first contended for a prize in the trials of skill at the Olympics, I have never met with a man my superior in any which I engaged in.

Soc. The reputation of your wisdom, Hippias, will be a fair monument of glory to your family and country.—But what say you to our question concerning Achilles and Ulysses ? Whether of the two, think you, was the better man ; and in what respects ? For, amidst the multitude of people, who were within, thronging about you at your exhibition, I missed hearing some part of what you said ; and, though desirous of asking you to repeat it over again, I suppressed that desire, on account of the greatness of the crowd, and because I would not interrupt your dissertation. But since we are reduced

¹ That is, when he was going to engage in those voluntary combats or contentions between the sophists, to prove which of them could make the finest exhibition. The decision of these seems to have been left to that judicious audience of theirs, the multitude ; who promulgated their sentence, we presume, in their usual way, by bestowing a more or less loud roar of applause, in proportion as they were more or less pleased with each of the combatants in these bye-battles. For, as it is certain that these made no part of those solemn combats or competitions at the Olympic festival, according to its original institution ; so neither do we suppose them in the number of those added afterwards, those in the liberal arts and sciences. It is more probable that the sophists, with a view of spreading their fame wider, exhibited on these occasions, gratis, to the public, the most approved of their dissertations made for private exhibition.—S.

to so small a number, and since Eudicus here encourages me to ask you, give me a precise and clear account of what you then said of those two heroes, and what distinction you made between their characters.

HIP. Well, Socrates; I am willing to inform you, more precisely and distinctly than I did in my exhibition, what my sentiments are concerning those heroes, and others beside.—I say then, that Homer has made Achilles superior in virtue to all the Grecians who were at the siege of Troy, Nestor superior in wisdom, and Ulysses in cunning.

Soc. Ah, Hippias! Will you grant me one favour more? and that is, not to laugh at me, if I am slow in apprehending what you say, and importune you with frequent and repeated questions. Will you endeavour, on the contrary, to give me mild and gentle answers?

HIP. Since I profess the instructing others in the knowledge of those very things which are the subjects of your inquiry, and think that knowledge so rare, as to deserve the being well paid for, it would be unfair and dishonourable in me, Socrates, not to pardon your ignorance, and give a mild answer to your questions.

Soc. Very fairly and honourably spoken.—You must know then, that when you said Achilles was made by Homer superior in virtue, I seemed to apprehend your meaning: as I also did, when you told me that his Nestor was made superior in wisdom. But when you further said, that the poet had made Ulysses superior in cunning, what you mean by this, to confess to you the truth, I am entirely ignorant of.—Possibly I may apprehend your meaning better by your answer to this question: Is not cunning part of the character of Achilles, as drawn by Homer?

HIP. Nothing like it; but the height of simplicity. For in the ninth book of the Iliad, where Achilles and Ulysses are introduced in conversation together, Achilles, addressing himself to Ulysses, speaks thus:

¹ Son of Laertes, progeny of Jove!
Subtle thy wit, Ulysses, and thy brain

¹ It must be remembered, that we have professed to translate the passages, taken out of Homer, not immediately from the poet, but from Plato. Now in these verses, as here cited, besides other various readings, there is one whole line omitted; which, though of importance in the poem, is insignificant to the design of Hippias in citing the passage.—S.

Full

Full of devices various: but to me
 Plain speech belongs; and bluntly to declare
 My mind, my meaning, and my fix'd resolve.
 Not the black gates of hades are to me
 More hostile or more hateful, than the man
 Whose tongue holds no communion with his heart.
 Thus then the secret purpose of my soul
 I tell thee—in no fruitless words; the deed
 Shall follow.—

In these verses we see the character of each of those heroes: we see Achilles sincere and simple, Ulysses false and cunning. For Achilles is made the speaker of these verses, and to Ulysses are they spoken.

Soc. Now, Hippias, I am in some hopes of understanding what you mean. False you call cunning, it seems; and a cunning man, with you, I find, is a man of falsehood.

Hip. Exactly so, Socrates. And Homer accordingly has made Ulysses a man of that very character, in many places both of the Iliad and of the Odyssey.

Soc. Homer then, it seems, was of opinion, that the man of truth was a man of different character from the man of falsehood.

Hip. Certainly, Socrates. How should it be otherwise?

Soc. And are you of the same opinion then yourself, Hippias?

Hip. Most certainly. For it would be of sad consequence to have those two opposite characters confounded.

Soc. Homer then let us leave out of the question: it being impossible for us to ask him, what he had in his mind when he wrote those verses. But, since you appear to second and support his cause, and to entertain the same sentiments with those which you attribute to him, do you answer at the same time for both, for the poet and yourself.

Hip. So it shall be. Ask any question then, whatever you think fit;— only let it be brief.

Soc. ¹ By men of falsehood, do you mean men who are under some such kind

¹ Plato, in this and the questions which follow, informs us what are the sources of vice and moral

kind of inability to certain actions, as men who are sick labour under? or do you mean men of abilities and powers for some or other performance?

HIP. I mean men, who have powers, and those very strong ones too, for many purposes, but particularly to deceive others.

SOC. The cunning then, it seems, according to your account, are men of strong powers and abilities. Are they not?

HIP. They are.

SOC. Is it through folly, and want of understanding, that they are cunning and deceitful? or is it through artfulness and understanding—of a certain kind?

HIP. Through artfulness in the highest degree, and depth of understanding.

SOC. They are men of good understanding then, it seems.

HIP. They are in no want of understanding, by Jupiter.

SOC. Since they have understanding then, are they ignorant of what they are about? or do they know it?

HIP. They know well enough what they do. And through this very knowledge it is that they are so wicked.

SOC. With this knowledge then, which they are masters of, can they want discipline or skill? or do they abound in it?

HIP. They have discipline and skill very sufficient for their purpose, that is, to deceive.

SOC. Hold now: let me recollect all that you have said. You assert, that men of falsehood are men of abilities, understanding, knowledge, and skill;—that is, in those subjects, in which they deceive.

HIP. I do.

SOC. And that men of sincerity and men of falsehood are different kinds of men, and of quite opposite characters one to the other.

HIP. I own this assertion also.

moral evil. The first is some disorder in the body, obscuring the light of the mind, or obstructing the operation of its faculties. Another is some defect in the natural powers of the understanding. A third is want of science: and the fourth, want of virtuous habit and practice.—S.

SOC.

Soc. Well then; amongst the men of abilities and skill, some, it seems, are men of falsehood, according to your account.

HIP. Most true.

Soc. When you say now, that men of falsehood are men of abilities and skill in certain respects, do you mean that they are able to deceive, if they are willing so to do? or think you that they want abilities for the purpose of deceiving?

HIP. I think they have abilities for that purpose.

Soc. To sum up the whole then; men of falsehood are men who have skill and ability to deceive.

HIP. Right.

Soc. The man therefore, who has no ability or skill to deceive, cannot be a man of falsehood, or a deceiver.

HIP. Very right.

Soc. ¹ Whether is that man able to do what he wills, who can exercise his ability at whatever time he chooses? that is, supposing him not hindered by some disease or ² other thing of that kind: but in the same manner, I mean, as you are able, whenever you choose it, to write my name. Say you not, that every such man is able, who has the like power in other cases?

HIP. I do.

Soc. Tell me now, Hippias; are not you well versed in numbers and accounts?

HIP. Perfectly well, Socrates.

Soc. Were a man to ask you then, "How many are thrice seven hundred," would you not answer that question, if you chose so to do, perfectly well, and with the utmost readiness?

HIP. I certainly should.

Soc. And that, because your ability and skill are excellent in subjects of that kind.

HIP. True.

¹ This sentence is evidently intended by Plato as a question, not as a positive consequence from any thing before said. Yet all the editors have given it this wrong turn, by falsely printing *ἀρα* instead of *ἄρα*. And all the translators were in this, as in most other places, misled by the erroneous printing of the Greek text.—S.

² That is, any outward impediment. In the vulgar use of the words, power and liberty, the absence of outward obstacles and impediments only is considered.—S.

Soc. Do you excel in ability and skill only? or is your virtue¹ equal to your ability and skill—with respect to the same subject; that is, numbers and accounts?

HIP. It is, Socrates.

Soc. You are perfectly well able, then, upon these subjects, to speak the truth: are you not?

HIP. So I imagine.

Soc. But what; are you not equally able to speak untruths upon the same subject? Answer me now, Hippias, as you did before, with a generous freedom and openness. Were a man to ask you, then, "How many are thrice seven hundred?" would not you be the best able to impose on others, and always to give answers alike untrue upon that subject, if you had a constant inclination to impose falsehood for truth, and never at any time to give a right answer? Or would the unskilled in computations be better able to deceive than you are, if they were so inclined? Might² not the ignorant, however desirous of persisting in false answers, frequently happen to stumble on such as were true, out of mere ignorance? But you, who have skill, should you also have an inclination to deceive, would you not always invariably answer wrong?

HIP. Certainly; the case is as you represent it.

Soc. Now the man of thorough falsehood, is he a deceiver in other cases only, but not so in numbering and computing?—Would he not deceive others, when numbers and computations were the points in question?

HIP. By Jupiter, would he³.

Soc. Let us suppose, then, Hippias, some certain person to be a false man, or a deceiver, upon the subject of numbers and computations.

HIP. Well.

Soc. What kind of person must he be? In order to be a deceiver, must he not, as you yourself just now acknowledged, have abilities to deceive?—

¹ Socrates here means justice, particularly that part of it which is called veracity.—S.

² In the original here we certainly ought to read *ἢ ὁ μὲν ἀμαθής*, and not *ἢ* (or) as it has been hitherto printed, and accordingly translated.—S.

³ Numbers and accounts being the chief articles in which bad men are guilty of fraud and falsehood.—S.

for,

for, as to any other man, who wanted those abilities, you admitted, if you remember, that such a one would never be a good deceiver.

HIP. I remember, we agreed in this.

SOC. Was it not proved just now, that you yourself was in the highest degree capable of deceiving others, by false information, upon the subject of numbers and accounts?

HIP. In this too we agreed.

SOC. And are you not in the highest degree capable of giving true information upon the same subject?

HIP. Certainly.

SOC. One and the same person therefore has abilities beyond other men to give either false or true information upon the subject of numbers and accounts: and a good arithmetician is this person.

HIP. Without doubt.

SOC. Who appears, then, Hippias, to be the man of falsehood², and the deceiver, with regard to numbers and accounts? Is it any other than the good arithmetician? for he it is who is the most able. And the same man is also the true accountant.

HIP. So it appears.

SOC.³ You see then that it belongs to the same man to be a man of falsehood

¹ Both members of this sentence, in the original, are by all the editors erroneously, as we apprehend, made interrogative; and are so translated by Serranus and Bembo. The other versions, in this place, concur with ours.—S.

² Aristotle observes, that Plato here makes use of a paralogism, or sophistical way of arguing: for by ψευδης, or, a man of falsehood, Plato, says he, means a man δυναμενος ψευδισθαι, capable of speaking untruths; whereas the word properly signifies a man ευχερης και προαιρετικος των τοιoutων [sc. ψευδων] λογων, μη δι' ετερον τι, αλλα δι' αυτο, και ο αλλοις εμπροητικος των τοιoutων λογων, apt to speak falsties through choice, and with intention to deceive, and to beget in others false notions of things. Aristot. Metaphysic. l. v. c. 29. And such a man, it is true, is the subject of the present dispute between Socrates and Hippias; but it is an innocent piece of sophistry; since it is not employed for the purpose of deceiving any, but for that only of discovering truth; and turns into just reasoning, when the inference comes afterwards to be drawn from all the instances enumerated. Aristotle does not condemn Plato as guilty of arguing unfairly, or of putting off one sense of the word for another; but as he treats, in that chapter of his Metaphysics, concerning the various meanings of the words false and falstity, he produces from this passage of Plato a singular instance of an improper use of the term ψευδης, false, when applied to man.—S.

³ In this sentence Socrates makes the application of his first instance, to prove the truth of his

falsehood and a man of truth on such subjects ; and that the man of truth is not a better man in this respect, than the man of falsehood : for indeed he is the same person ; so far is he from being one of opposite character, as you just now imagined.

HIP. It appears so in this case, I own.

Soc. Shall we try how it appears in other cases ?

HIP. With all my heart ; if you choose to go on to others.

Soc. Have not you great skill in geometry ?

HIP. I have.

Soc. Well then ; is it not so in geometry ? Is not one and the same person capable of giving either true or false information concerning diagrams ?

HIP. I admit he is.

Soc. Is any other person beside good at diagrams ?

HIP. No other.

Soc. A good and skilful geometrician, then, is equally capable, in either way, above other persons : and, if there be any excellent deceiver upon the subject of diagrams, it must be such a man : for he has abilities to deceive ; whereas the bad geometrician is wanting in those abilities : so that neither in this case can the man who has no abilities to deceive ever be a deceiver or man of falsehood, as you before admitted.

HIP. You are right.

Soc. Further now, let us consider a third case, that of astronomy ; in which science you have a still deeper knowledge than you have in those mentioned before. Is it not true, Hippias ?

HIP. It is.

Soc. Does not the same thing then hold good in astronomy ?

HIP. It is probable that it does, Socrates.

Soc. In this case, therefore, it is the good astronomer who is, above all others, the man of falsehood ; he who is able and well qualified to deceive : for it cannot be the man who is ignorant in astronomy ; because such a one is unable and unqualified for that purpose.

general position : we have, therefore, with all the translators, except Serranus, given it the air of an absolute assertion ; contrary to the printed editions of the Greek, in which it is turned into a question.—S.

HIP.

HIP. It appears so.

Soc. One and the same man therefore, in astronomy also, is the man of truth and the man of falsehood.

HIP. So it seems to be, I confess.

Soc. Now, Hippias, let us proceed to consider, in general and at large, through all the arts and sciences, if there be any case in which that position fails of being true. You must be a competent judge of this, because your knowledge is universal, and you are master of more arts than any man living: ² as I have heard you yourself declare, at some of the tables in the assembly-

¹ Whenever Plato brings instances from the mathematical sciences, in order to prove or to illustrate any truth running through them all, he does it always with a view of leading the mind upward from them to that master-science*, that from which they receive their principles, the science of mind; or at least to its immediate and noblest offspring, that of morals. See particularly his Theætetus, Republic, and Epinomis. We make this observation here, to show the scope of the argument now used by Socrates. The small company about him, all of them, except Hippias and Eudicus, were his own disciples, and of his intimate acquaintance: consequently they were used to this method of reasoning in the discourses of their master. It was easy for them therefore to apply the instances, which he brought from the lower sciences, agreeably to his intention; and to infer from thence, that, if his present argument were just, it would hold good in those higher sciences. But the absurdity of this must have been clearly apparent to them: for they knew that the truly wise and good man was, with a full and free choice, attached to truth; and consequently, where veracity was concerned, was indeed *μη δυναμενος ψευδεσθαι*, incapable of uttering falsities, or untruths, in a moral sense; and that in such cases, *ψευδης*, a man of falsehood, in Plato's sense of the word, was the same with *ψευδης* in Aristotle's sense of it, or *ψευδαλος*, a man given to speak falsities, and was the reverse therefore of the man of truth. Hence they saw, it followed, that, contrary to the account given by Hippias, the false man, or deceiver in words, was under some natural inability either of body or of mind, or was ignorant and void of the best science, or wanted skill and experience in the art of human life, that is, practical virtue. Aristotle rightly observes, that Plato produces these instances of falsehood, in the way of induction, to prove the same thing universally to be true of all moral evil. The inference, therefore, is, that no man is a wicked or bad man *εκων*, with a clear-sighted and free choice, but *ακων*, through the power of some evil necessity.—S.

² Socrates, to put his meaning beyond all doubt with the intelligent part of his audience, presents to their view next, in a very strong light, the character of Hippias himself, as full of false boasting and vain pretensions, which in him were clearly the effects of a total ignorance in moral science. He had been, it seems, though probably but for a short time, a disciple of Hegesidamus, or, as he is called by Jamblichus, (in Vit. Pythag. cap. ult.) Agesidamus, a Pythagorean philosopher of Metapontum in Lucania; who taught, that the perfection, end, and happiness of man

* This master-science is by Plato called *dialectic*, and by Aristotle metaphysics. For an account of which see the Introduction to the Parmenides.—T.

assembly-hall¹; where you were setting forth in ample detail, and glorying in, the variety of your valuable and rare knowledge. You there told us that you went once to the Olympic festival, with your attire, and every thing which you had about you; all the making of your own hands: in the first place, that the seal-ring which you wore on your finger, for you began with that, was your own work, proving thus your skill in cutting intaglios. Beside that,

consisted in *αυταρκεια*, self-sufficiency: but Hippias was so blind, it seems, to the true meaning of that sublime doctrine, and so stupid with regard to truth, whether metaphysical or moral, as to imagine, that the being able to furnish himself from himself with all the conveniences and even ornaments of life, and not to be indebted to any other artists for such as their respective arts afford, was the self-sufficiency recommended by the philosopher. See Quintilian. *Inst. Orat.* l. xii. c. 11. where that most judicious writer seems to have accounted for the conduct of Hippias from this ridiculous error of his: for, in order to attain self-sufficiency, Hippias aimed at acquiring skill in all the several arts requisite for that purpose; and, falling far short of an acquisition which is beyond the powers of any one man, he yet arrogantly pretended to it, through a desire of being admired by the multitude, and for want of that true self-sufficiency taught by Hegesidamus: to understand which it may be necessary in this place to observe, that in the days of Thales the Ionian arose Pythagoras; who in the southern parts of Italy, where Grecian colonies had settled, founded a sect of philosophers, from their country called Italic. The chief object of their philosophy was the knowledge of mind; which they considered as the first-moving principle in nature, and the fountain of all action; moving the soul to act with a view always to some end, which end always is some good. They held, that, as the universe was perfect and complete, actuated by soul under the direction of mind, this universal mind was *αυτοτελης*, that is, had in himself his own end, the possession of all good, and was sufficient to his own perfect happiness: the universal soul, therefore, acted only for the sake of producing good to particular beings, as many as was possible, and of communicating to particular minds the happiness of its own. Now this arising from its self-sufficiency; independence, and the contemplation of all being and beauty within itself, the great points of the Pythagorean moral were to free man from his dependance on things out of himself, to purge his soul from those passions by which he is attached to them, and to remove his life from those incumbering pursuits which hinder the contemplation of truth, and hide the view of archetypal and true beauty. Accordingly these philosophers taught, that the end of man was *ὁμοιωσις τῷ Θεῷ*, a resembling of God: which Hegesidamus explained by *αυταρκεια*, self-sufficiency: and his explication is confirmed by what Socrates in Xenophon teaches, (*Mem.* l. i. p. 79. ed. Simpson.) that “to want nothing is peculiar to the divine nature; and to have the fewest wants is approaching to it the nearest.” This self-sufficiency, by which a man becomes independent; and is free, like God himself, to do good to all; is the same thing also with that freedom of the soul, the desire of which to raise in his disciples is the ultimate end of Plato in this Dialogue.—S.

¹ The *αγορα*, or place where the people met, and voted in their general assemblies, was the place likewise of exchange: for at certain hours of the day mercantile business was here transacted: and at certain other hours the shops within it all around were opened, and tables were brought out, on which

that, you had another seal of your own engraving: a strigil too^r, and an unguent-box, of your own workmanship. Your father said, that the slippers, which you then had on your feet, were of your own cutting out and making; and that the garments which you then wore, the upper and the under both, were of your own weaving. But, what seemed the strangest thing of all, and a proof of your ingenuity and skill the most surprising, you told us, that the belt or girdle, which you wore round your vest, (and it was of that rare and costly sort, such as they make in Persia,) was entirely your own manufacture. Beside all this, you carried with you thither, on that occasion, poems, you said, of your own composing, epic, tragic, and dithyrambic; together with a great number of your compositions in prose upon various subjects. You assured us, that in the sciences, those we have just now been speaking of, you was superior to every person then at the Olympics; as you also was in the science of rhythm and harmony, and that of grammar. You enumerated, as well as I remember, a multitude of other branches of knowledge which you excelled in. But, I think, I had like to have forgotten your art of memory, for which you are so famous. Many other arts I presume you have, which I cannot recollect at present. But what I mean is this; to put you upon considering those arts and sciences, which you are master of, (and I have mentioned a sufficient number of them,) and all those beside, which are severally professed by others; and then to ask you, if you can think of any, where the man of truth and the

which all kinds of shop-commodities were exposed to sale, each kind severally in a peculiar part of this vast edifice; that every person who came to purchase might know where to meet directly with what he wanted. At some of these shops and tables much time was spent by the talkative, the inquisitive, and the idle.—S.

^r This was an instrument used by the old Greeks and Romans to clean the skin; and serving them, besides, for the same purposes with our flesh-brush: for the antient politer nations took a much better care of their persons than is customary amongst the modern Europeans. Whenever their bodies were fouled, as after travelling, or walking in dusty roads, after wrestling, or other exercises, which they used almost naked in rooms strewed deep with a soft sand, (to procure them, when they fell, an easy fall,) they rubbed themselves gently with these strigils; bathing at the same time in warm baths, which were very numerous, and to be met with in all great towns and cities. At other times a more vehement rubbing served in the room of exercise itself. After using the strigil, they anointed themselves all over, especially about their joints, with some perfumed oil or unguent. Thus the skin was cleansed, the blood was equally circulated, the muscles were strengthened, and the joints made supple and pliant.—S.

man of falsehood, as we have described them, are distinct persons; and where the same man is not equally fitted for speaking truth and falsehood. Consider the matter in any art you please, in any kind of wisdom, skill, or cunning, or whatever else you choose to name it, and you will never find it so to be; since it is not there to be found. For if you know any, which affords such an instance, tell me what it is.

HIP. I am not able, Socrates, thus on the sudden.

SOC. Nor ever, as I imagine, will you be able. If I am in the right then, remember, Hippias, what conclusion follows from my reasoning.

HIP. It does not readily occur to me, Socrates, what conclusion it is you mean.

SOC. You do not perhaps at present exercise your art of memory. No doubt, you think there is at present no occasion for it. I will assist you therefore in recollecting. Do you not remember that you said, Achilles was a man of truth, and Ulysses a man of cunning and falsehood?

HIP. I do.

SOC. But now you perceive, that the man of truth and the man of falsehood have proved to be the same person. So that, if Ulysses was a man of falsehood, it appears that he was no less a man of truth; and if Achilles was a man of truth, we find he must also have been a man of falsehood. These two characters then are not heterogeneous, one from the other; much less are they opposite, as you imagined; but are similar, and meet in the same man.

HIP. Socrates, you are always twisting and winding arguments in this sort of way. In every matter of debate, you always pick out that point in which most difficulty lies; you stick close to that, and handle it with a most minute exactness: but you never meddle with the ² whole of the subject, considered in one view. For I can produce you now a multitude of proofs,

² Hippias himself is here made to expose his own loose, vague, and declamatory way of talking; so opposite to that close, precise, and truly logical manner of Socrates in his discourses, by which alone truth can be discovered, and the disputes arising in conversation be brought to any rational or fair conclusion. But this not being now or ever the intention of Hippias, he expresses in this speech his uneasiness at the present method of managing the debate, and his desire of returning to his usual long harangues; showing himself in this respect also the *ψευδης*, or man of falsehood; according to the old maxim, "*Dolus versatur in generalibus*," The man, who means to deceive, deals only in generals, and avoids coming to particulars.—S.

if you are disposed to hear them, sufficient to convince you, that Homer has made Achilles a man of sincerity, and of greater virtue than Ulysses; whom he has made crafty, false, and deceitful, in fine, a worse man than Achilles. And to oppose my proofs, do you, if you have a mind to it, bring others on your side of the question, to prove Ulysses the better man: by which means our little audience here may be the better enabled to judge which of us speaks the best.

Soc. I have no doubt, Hippias, but that your wisdom is superior to mine. But it is a constant rule with me, at the time when any man is speaking, to give him my attention; especially, if I think him a wise man; and, as I am desirous of comprehending perfectly all he means, afterwards I interrogate, and sift him thoroughly concerning all he has said; I consider it over again, and compare it with the account he gives me in his answers, in order to my own better information. But if I think the speaker insignificant, and not worth regarding, after he has done speaking, I ask him no questions, nor give myself any trouble about what he has been talking of. You may know by this, what persons I account wise. You may also find, that I am studious and solicitous about the sayings of² such a man; that I am busy and restless in putting questions to him, with a view of being improved by the acquisition of some piece of knowledge. Accordingly, I took particular notice, in my own mind, of something³ which seemed to me very strange in that passage of Homer, if your interpretation of it be true, that which you repeated just now, to prove that Achilles treated Ulysses as a deceiver. This to me, I say, seemed strange; because Ulysses, your cunning Ulysses, no where appears to have spoken untruths: but it is Achilles, whom we find cunning, according to your account, as being a teller of falsties and deceiving others. For having premised that fair profession, which you just now repeated,

² Socrates here intimates, that the source of that habit, which Hippias had, of lying and deceiving, was a fondness for unmerited or false praise, with an affectation of being thought wise.

³ The word in the original here is printed *ταυτα*, but we presume ought to be either *ταυτων*, agreeably to the translations of Ficinus and Gryneus, or as we have supposed it in ours, *τοιυτων*.—S.

³ From the sense it is evident, that we ought here to read in the Greek *δ, τι—ατομων, κ. τ. λ.* not *δτι δ'* [1905,] an error frequent throughout the printed text. Stephens has frequently indeed corrected it; but has passed it over in this and many other places.—S.

Not the black gates of hades are to me
 More hostile or more hateful, than the man
 Whose tongue holds no communion with his heart.

A little afterwards he declares, that he would not be dissuaded from his purpose, not by Ulysses and Agamemnon together; nor would he be by any means prevailed on to stay in the Trojan territories; but, says he,

¹ To-morrow, after sacrifice to Jove
 And all that next in nature is divine,
 My well-mann'd galleys launch I from the shore
 Into the briny waves: and thou shalt see,
 (If curious of the fight, or thy concern
 Thou mak'st it,) with the dawning hour of day,
 My fleet spread o'er the fishy Hellespont;
 With many an eager stroke of the brisk oars
 Short'ning the passage: and if Neptune grant
 Prosperous voyage, the third returning light
 Shall view me on rich Pthia's fertile plains.

Besides, long before this, with an air of insult he had said thus to Agamemnon,

² And now with my full galleys I depart,
 Steering my course for Pthia:—my best course
 Is homeward,—here dishonour'd.—Nor shalt thou
 Meet better fare, I ween:—no more expect
 Spoils and rich plunder shall attend thine arms.

Now though he had made this declaration, first in the face of the whole army, and afterwards to such as were intimate with him, it no where appears, that he made any preparations for his voyage, or any attempts toward the launching of his ships, in order to his departure homeward; but, on the contrary,

¹ We meet with this passage in the ninth book of the Iliad, v. 357, &c. a little after the former; and both of them exactly as they are cited by Plato.—S.

² The verses, here cited, occur in the first book of the Iliad, with a difference only in one word. For instead of *λοιον*, which we read in Plato, we find in Homer *φιλιπον*: a difference not taken notice of by Barnes in his Var. Lect. Perhaps he thought it not of importance enough to mention. But, in editions of the finest writers of antiquity, too minute an accuracy, we think, never can be used.—S.

with a noble indifference, he disregarded the keeping of his word and the speaking truth. It was for this reason, Hippias, that I proposed my first question to you; because I was at a loss to know, which of those two heroes the poet had made the better man: but I presumed that both were excellent; and that it was difficult to determine whether was the superior, as well with respect to speaking truth and¹ falsehood, as every other kind of virtue; for in that point, no less than in others, they seemed nearly on a par.

HIP. You view not the matter in its true light, Socrates. For, though Achilles breaks his word, it is plain that he had no intention to deceive, nor any dissembled meaning: but, against his inclination, he is obliged, by the distresses of the army, to stay and give them his assistance. But when Ulysses speaks falsely, it is with design, and his falsehood is voluntary.

SOC. My dear friend Hippias, you deceive me; and are guilty, yourself, of doing as you say Ulysses did.

HIP. Far from it, Socrates. How mean you? and in what respect?

SOC. By telling me, that Achilles had no intention to deceive, nor any dissembled meaning: whereas Achilles, in saying through arrogance what he had no serious intention of doing, was so² artful an impostor, as Homer has represented him, that he appears confident of outwitting Ulysses, and concealing from him the emptiness of his arrogance; nay, to that degree confident, as to dare in his presence to contradict himself. Accordingly we find Ulysses actually imposed upon: for, as we see from his silence on that head, he discovered not that Achilles had told him any untruth.

HIP. Where is all this to be found, Socrates?

¹ Socrates here mentions falsehood as well as truth, in order to preserve consistence in his argumentation; having proved to Hippias, that the speaking falsehood well was the effect of some kind of knowledge and virtue.—S.

² In the Greek, Γῶσις, or cunning juggler. By Achilles here, we suppose, is meant that very passion of arrogance in him, which is the most distinguished part of his character. For all the great actions and events of Homer's *Iliad* turn upon the desire of Achilles to show to the Grecians the importance of his presence and his aid. By the same name, Γῶσις, is the passion of love called in Plato's *Banquet*, and in the same metaphorical sense; because both these passions impose upon a man's own understanding, and force him to say and do things, to which his reason is by no means privy; putting him, as in this case of Achilles, upon contradictory promises and assertions; and by their bold assurance, making him believe them all, by turns, himself.—S.

SOC. Do you not remember, that ¹ after he had declared (as he did to Ulysses), that he would set sail early the next day; to Ajax on the other hand he says no such thing, but tells him a quite different story.

HIP. In what passage?

SOC. In this,

* No more in bloody field shall I engage,
I nor my forces; till great Ilium's son,
The godlike Hector, worthy of his fire,
Through heaps of slaughter'd Greeks, victorious reach
My myrmidons; or till his hostile flames,
Spreading from ship to ship, approach my own.
Then,—near my vessel, or my tent, I trust,
Shall Hector's fury, though impetuous, meet
A bound impassable.—

Now can you imagine, Hippias, that he was so forgetful, this son of the goddess Thetis, this pupil of the sage Chiron, as that, after throwing out the bitterest reproaches upon such as speak what they mean not, he should first tell Ulysses that he would sail away, and then, through forgetfulness, assure Ajax that he would continue where he was? Do you not think that he must have talked in this manner with design, and from a supposal that Ulysses was a plain simple man, and that he should get the better of him that very way, by artifice and lying?

¹ In the Greek this passage is read thus; *Ουκ οισθ', ότι λεγων, υστερον, η̄ ως προς τον Οδυσσεια εφη̄ αμᾱ τη̄ η̄οῑ αποπλευσεῑσθαι, κ. τ. λ.* Stephens saw, that this was a corrupt reading; but an emendation of it not readily occurring to his mind, he supposed that many words were wanting. A slight alteration only will, as we imagine, correct the sentence thus; *Ουκ οισθ', ότι λεγων, τη̄ υστεραιᾱ (ως προς τον Οδυσσεια εφη̄) αμᾱ τη̄ η̄οῑ αποπλευσεῑσθαι, κ. τ. λ.* agreeably to which we have made our translation.—S.

² Achilles speaks of Hector thus highly on this occasion, purposely to raise the higher, in those who heard him, the idea of his own valour; none but himself, he tells them, being able to stop the progress of so mighty and formidable an enemy. Mr. Pope therefore, in omitting those high terms in which Achilles here mentions Hector, has omitted an essential beauty in this passage, and particularly material to that purpose, for which it is cited by Socrates,—to show, that the inconsistent falsities, uttered by Achilles, were owing to his arrogance and his thirst of glory. See the Introduction to this Dialogue. The verses are taken from the ninth book of the Iliad, v. 646, &c. But there is evidently a false reading in them, as cited by Plato, *μειησομαι* instead of *μεδησομαι*, observed by Barnes, in his notes on Homer.—S.

HIP.

HIP. I think quite otherwise, Socrates: I think that he was imposed upon, himself, by his own simplicity and undefigning heart: and that want of reflection made him talk to Ajax in a strain different from that in which he had been talking to Ulysses. But Ulysses, whenever he speaks truth, has always an intention to deceive, no less than when he speaks a falsehood.

Soc. Ulysses then is a better man, it seems, than Achilles.

HIP. By no means, Socrates, clearly.

Soc. Why, was it not proved just now, that the speakers of falsehoods, knowing them so to be, and with intention to deceive, were ¹ better men than those, who spoke what was false merely through ignorance, and against their intention?

HIP. But how is it possible, Socrates, that such as are guilty of injustice knowingly, such as are deceitful, and insidious, and wilfully do mischief, should be better men than those, who, not knowing what they do, lead others into mischiefs or mistakes? To such is due free pardon, should any injustice be done by their means, or if any man be deceived by them, or suffer injury. The laws ² accordingly are more severe to designing cheats, and to the wilfully injurious, than to such as deceive or injure without intention of so doing.

Soc. You see, Hippias, that I spoke truth, when I told you, how busy

¹ This is another instance, similar to that, taken notice of by Aristotle, which we mentioned before, of a sophistical way of arguing used by Plato against the sophists. For the truth of the position, contended for, has indeed been proved; and is apparent enough, in every inferior art or science; but Plato applies it in this place to morals, of which it has not been proved, but the direct contrary insinuated. There is the same ambiguity of expression in our own language; for we use the term, good man, with reference not only to moral goodness, but even ability or skill in any way whatever. Such a one, we say, is a good man, when we only mean, as to some particular kind of work or action which he performs well.—S.

² Demosthenes in *Orat. c. Midiam*, § 11. p. 35 and 36 of Dr. Taylor's edition in 8vo. gives an account of these laws somewhat more at large, too long to be here inserted, but so like this of Plato's, and so much in the same words, that it seems highly probable he had an eye towards it when he composed that part of his oration. For that incomparable orator was always a great admirer of Plato, and had been one of his favourite disciples; as we are told by the writer of the lives of the ten orators, vulgarly ascribed to Plutarch.—S.

and restless I was in putting questions to the wife ¹. I fear, indeed, that I have no other valuable quality belonging to me; the rest which I have being inconsiderable and mean. For I am apt to be mistaken in the natures of things, and ignorant of what they truly are. A sufficient evidence of which appears, whenever I am in company with any of you celebrated wise men, whose wisdom is acknowledged by the united voices of all the Grecians. It then appears that I know nothing: for scarcely in any point am I of the same opinion with you. And what greater evidence can there be of a man's want of knowledge, than his differing in opinion from the wife. I have this one admirable quality, however, which saves me from the fatal consequences of ignorance and error; this, that I am not ashamed to learn; but am given to inquiry, and to asking questions. I am very thankful also to the person who vouchsafes me an answer: nor ever neglected I to pay him my due acknowledgments. For whenever I had acquired a piece of knowledge, I never denied my having learnt it; nor ever pretended, that it was of my own finding out. On the contrary, I celebrate the wisdom of my teacher, whenever I produce the doctrine which he taught me. Thus at present, for instance, I agree not with you in that position, which you have laid down for truth; but am strongly of a different opinion. And this, I am convinced, arises from something in me, and must be attributed to my being such a one as I am; to avoid using any term or epithet too high in speaking of myself. To me, Hippias, the truth appears directly contrary to what you say. I think, that those who injure others, who are guilty of injustice, who vent falsehoods, and deceive, or commit any other fault, knowingly and wilfully, are better men than such as do the same evils ignorantly and without free choice. Sometimes, however, I am in the opposite way of thinking. In short, my sentiments are ever varying upon this subject, and driven backward and forward continually: the cause of which unsteadiness is clearly want of knowledge. But I now find in myself a fresh accession of my old malady: for the opinion, which prevails in me at present, is

¹ This and such other sayings, frequent in the mouth of Socrates, passed with the people even of his own time for mere ironies. Whence he was commonly called *ὁ ἀγῶν*, the dissembler of his knowledge, or pretender to ignorance.—S.

this;

this;—that such as commit wilful errors in any action whatever, are better men, with respect to actions in that way, than those who err in the same way against their will or intention. This present turn of mind in me is owing, as I imagine, to the preceding part of our conversation: for our reasoning upon the point, then debated, will, in all appearance at present, hold good through all things; and will prove, that the involuntary actors of ill, in any of those instances we have mentioned, are more wicked than those who are guilty of the same bad actions wilfully. Be so good therefore as to set my mind right: for in healing the disease of this, and freeing it from ignorance, you will do me a much greater piece of service, than you would in healing any distemper incident to my body. But now, should you have any intention to go through a long harangue, I can assure you beforehand, that you will never that way succeed in the affair: for my thoughts never will be able to keep even pace with you. But if you are disposed to answer to my questions, as you did before, you will highly^r profit and improve me; and, I presume, receive no detriment yourself. I have a right, Eudicus, to beg your interest with Hippias on this occasion; for you it was who engaged me in this dispute with him. If he therefore is averse to continuing the conversation in the way which I desire, do you intercede with him to favour my request.

EUD. There will be no occasion, Socrates, I imagine, for my intercession. That is made unnecessary by what Hippias himself said at first,—that he never declined answering to any man's questions. Did you not say so, Hippias?

HIP. I own it, Eudicus. But Socrates is always entangling the argument with cunning fallacies; and behaves like a fly deceiver.

SOC. My good Hippias! I do it not wilfully, I assure you, nor with any intention to deceive: for, if that were the case, I should be a man of great wisdom and abilities, according to your account. But, if I have that fault which you accuse me of, it is wholly involuntary in me. I pray you therefore pardon me: for pardon, you say, is due to involuntary and ignorant deceivers.

^r See the last sentence but one in the Greater Hippias.—S.

EUD. Do so, Hippias; forgive Socrates; and be not angry with him: but for my sake, and out of regard to your own word, answer to whatever questions he shall propose to you.

HIP. Well, at your entreaty, I will answer to his questions.—Come then; propose any, which you desire to have an answer to.

SOC. Truly, Hippias, I am greatly desirous to have a thorough discussion of that very point just now mentioned;—Which are the better sort of men; those who commit errors knowingly, wilfully, and purposely; or those others, who are guilty of the very same without knowing what they do, and without any will or purpose to err¹. Now the best way we can take, to have this point well examined, is, in my opinion, by setting out thus;—but observe, and make your answers duly²;—Are there not men, who are good at a foot-race?

¹ Every universal truth will hold good in all particular cases, to which it is applicable. In the way of reasoning therefore by induction, the enumerating of many particulars, however chosen, in which the hypothesis to be proved is found true, serves to induce a probability at least of its being true universally. And if the hypothesis fails in no instance that can be thought of, the certainty of it is then sufficiently established.—It should seem, therefore, that Plato might have been indifferent what instances he produced to prove a doctrine which, if true, might fairly be inferred from a multitude of any pitched upon at random. And indeed, had this been all he had in view, indifferent he would certainly have been to which he gave the preference. But his design, in selecting from all the several kinds of action the particular instances that follow, to the end of this second part of the Dialogue, is to show, what weaknesses or disorders in the human frame are the natural causes of ignorance and vice; and what natural disposition of body and mind is favourable to knowledge and virtue. In the choice and arrangement of these instances will appear admirable art and contrivance: for the discovery of which he prepares us in this sentence, by professing to take a certain method and way of beginning, such as is the most proper.—S.

² Plato begins, and takes his four first instances from such actions as fundamentally depend on the structure of the body and the conformation of its parts; in particular, running, wrestling, dancing, and singing. For the well-performing of these exercises, so far as the body is concerned, severally depends on agility, strength, gracefulness, and a musical voice: and these severally arise from elasticity of the fibres, firmness in the fabric of the bones, pliancy in the joints, and a perfect power of dilatation and contraction in the lungs and larynx. When all these concur, the natural consequences will be an animated, free, and easy flow of the blood and humours, sprightliness and vigour in the soul, and at the same time (if no obstacle hinder) firmness in the mind.—S.

HIP. There are.

Soc. And others in the same exercise who are bad?

HIP. Certainly.

Soc. Are not the good, those who run well? and the bad, those who run ill?

HIP. They are.

Soc. Do not the slow runners run ill? the swift runners, well?

HIP. They do.

Soc. In the race therefore, and in running, swiftness is a good thing; slowness, a bad thing.

HIP. Without dispute.

Soc. Whether of these two then is the better man in the race? One, who runs slow wilfully and on purpose; or one, whose slowness in running is involuntary and undesigned?

HIP. The first; he, who runs slow on purpose.

Soc. Is not running the doing something?

HIP. It is.

Soc. And if so, is not some action performed in running?

HIP. Certainly.

Soc. The man, therefore, who runs ill, performs an action which is bad and unseemly in the race.

HIP. Undoubtedly so.

Soc. And the man runs ill, you say, who runs slowly.

HIP. True.

Soc. He therefore is the good man in the race, who wilfully and purposely commits this bad and unseemly action: and he is the bad man, who does it against his will and his intention.

HIP. So it seems to be.

Soc. In the race therefore, the man, who is guilty of bad actions against his will and his intention, is a worse man than the other, in whom those bad actions are voluntary and intended.

HIP. In the race, I grant you, that it is so.

Soc. And how is it in wrestling? Whether of the two is the better wrestler? the man who, when he falls, falls designedly, or the man whose falls are involuntary and undesigned?

HIP. Probably, the man who falls designedly.

Soc. And which is the worse and more unseemly action in wrestling? for a man to fall himself, or to give his antagonist a fall?

HIP. To fall himself.

Soc. In wrestling then also, the man, who is guilty of bad and unseemly actions with design, is a better man than the other, who is guilty of the same without designing them.

HIP. It is probable that he is.

Soc. And how does the rule hold with respect to all other actions of the body? Is not the man, whose body is well-framed and fitly disposed, equally able for actions either strong or weak, either seemly and becoming, or unbecoming and awkward? So that the man who has a better habit of body, when he performs any bodily exercise or action ill, does it out of choice; but the man, whose body is in a worse state, performs ill against his inclination.

HIP. In actions which depend on strength of body, I admit the truth of your hypothesis.

Soc. And what say you as to those, which depend on gracefulness of the body, Hippias? Does it not belong to that body, which is well formed and well habituated, to exhibit unseemly and bad motions, gestures, and attitudes, only when the mind so wills and directs; but to a body of worse make and worse habits, to behave, move, and carry itself awkwardly without such will and direction? or how think you?

HIP. That it is, as you say.

Soc. Ungracefulness therefore also, when voluntary, belongs to the body in its better plight; when involuntary, is owing to an ill or depraved state of body.

HIP. So indeed it appears.

Soc. And how think you as to the voice? Which voice do you suppose the better and more excellent? That which sings out of tune wilfully and designedly; or that which does so because it cannot do otherwise?

HIP. That which does so designedly.

Soc. And that you call a viler voice, which errs from the harmony, and cannot help it.

HIP.

HIP. I do.

Soc. Further¹;—the things which are yours, whether would you choose to have them in good condition and order, or to have them bad, depraved, and out of order?

HIP. To have them good, and such as they ought to be.

Soc. Whether then would you choose to have your feet go lame at your own pleasure, or to have them limp and stumble against your will?

HIP. To go lame at my own pleasure.

Soc. Is not lameness in the feet a depravity of the feet; and the going lame an ungraceful way of walking?

HIP. Certainly.

Soc. And is not squinting a depravity of the eyes?

HIP. It is.

Soc. Which sort of eyes now would you choose to have, and to see with? Such as would look squint only when you pleased, or such as could not avoid squinting?

HIP. Such as squinted only when I pleased.

Soc. Of the things then which are your own, you deem those, whose wrong and depraved actions are voluntary, better than those, the pravity of whose actions is involuntary.

HIP. In things of that kind, I admit it to be true.

Soc. All such therefore, ears, and nose, and mouth, and all other parts administering to sensation, are to be comprehended in the following general

¹ His five next instances he takes from those parts of the body which are the more immediate servants of the mind: 1. The outward instruments of motion (particularizing in the feet), by which the will of the mind is executed: 2. The outward organs of sensation (enumerating them all), through which the mind perceives outward things: 3. That immediate source of motion and sensation, the brain; to signify which he uses the metaphor of a rudder, steering the body as the mind pleases: 4. Those inward instruments of motion, and vehicles of sensation, the nerves; which he compares to the strings of musical instruments, braced up or relaxed by the different passions of the soul, and vibrating just as they are touched from without, or played on by the musician's hand within: 5. and lastly, The organs of speech, signified by wind-instruments of music, through which the mind expresses her meaning, or declares her will. How much the acquisition of knowledge, the state of the soul, and power of the mind to do what she wills, depend on having all these organs in perfection, is by no means difficult to conceive.—S.

rule ;—those, in which the bad performance of their functions is involuntary, a man would be glad not to have, feeling that such are evil ; but those, whose wrong action or operation is wilful, and according to the intention, are desirable, such being good.

HIP. I agree.

Soc. Well ; and what sort of instruments is it best to have to do with ? those, with which a man may execute his work ill through choice and design ; or those, with which he cannot work otherwise than ill ? For instance : Whether of the two is the best rudder ; that, with which the steering ill is unavoidable ; or that, with which the pilot, if he steers ill, does it wilfully and on purpose ?

HIP. The latter sort.

Soc. Is it not so with the bow and lyre ; so with the flute ¹ ; so with every other kind of tools and instruments ?

HIP. It is true.

Soc. Well ² ; and of which horse is it best to be the owner ? Whether of a horse with such a kind of temper and spirit, as may serve his rider in riding

¹ To the instances already given, which are of more especial moment, the other parts and members of the body are subjoined, in general ; the regular frame and sound condition of them all being, in the opinion of Plato, of some importance to the soul, to its affections and passions ; more or less, in proportion to the more immediate or more remote action, or influence, of the one upon the other. This will open much of Plato's secret meaning in the latter part of his *Timæus*.—S.

² From the just frame of the body, and the right formation of every member of it, the philosopher proceeds, in the same metaphorical manner, to describe the other part of that *εὐφροία*, or good natural disposition, which he holds to be the necessary foundation of virtue. This other part is the right frame or constitution of the soul herself. He begins with the passions ; agreeably to that climax which he uses through all these instances. The passions are, in the Platonic system, all comprehended under two kinds, *ἐπιθυμία* and *θυμὸς*, the emotions of desire and anger. The first of these kinds is characterized under the emblem of a horse, the latter under that of a dog ; and both with great propriety. For one of these animals is remarkably subject to vehement emotions of the former kind in pursuit of glory or pleasure ; the other to emotions of the latter kind no less violent, when the seizing of his prey or the destruction of an enemy is the end in view. Now both these animals, though irrational, are by nature formed to be manageable by man ; and are highly servicable to him, when their passions are directed to their proper objects, and restrained within due bounds.—S.

ill purposely and through choice only; or of a horse ¹, upon which his rider must of necessity ride ill?

HIP. Of the horse, upon which a man may ride ill only through choice.

Soc. This horse then is of a better spirit and temper than the other.

HIP. True.

Soc. With this better-tempered horse then a man may ², if he has an evil intention, perform such mischievous and evil tricks as this animal is capable of; but with the bad-tempered horse he cannot avoid doing mischief.

HIP. Perfectly true.

Soc. And is it not equally true with respect to the spirit and temper of a dog? and so of every other species of animals?

HIP. I admit it to hold true in the case of every brute animal.

Soc. Well now; and how is it in our own species, and with respect to the human soul? Whether is it better to have in our service a bowman, who, if he ever misses the mark, misses wilfully ³; or one who is apt to do, contrary to his intention and his aim?

HIP. One who misses wilfully.

Soc. Such a one then is a better man at shooting.

HIP. Right.

¹ The emendation of this sentence must be attributed to Cornarius: for he has been beforehand with us, in reading *αμεινον, η̄ η̄ ακων*, instead of *αμεινον η̄ ακων*, as in all the editions of the Greek it is printed.—S.

² Thus in the Greek; *Τη αμεινον αρα ψυχη ιππου τα της ψυχης εργα ταυτης τα ποιηρα εκουσιως αν ποιοι, τα δε της ποιηρας, ακουσιως*. It is evident, that this reading is faulty. We have always imagined, that the fault lay in the transposition of some of the words, with the corruption of only one in consequence of that transposition; and that the right reading was this; *Τ. α. α. ψ. ι. τ. τ. ψ. ε. τ. τα της ποιηρας, εκουσιως αν ποιοι, τη δε ποιηρα, ακουσιως*. But Cornarius is of opinion, that the sentence may be amended by altering only *τα δε της ποιηρας* into *τη δε τ. π.* which he is pleased to say, signifies the same with *τη δε ποιηροτερα*.—S.

³ In the editions of the Greek text, the sentence stands thus; *Τι δε δη; ανθρωπι ψυχη κεντησθαι τοσοτη αμεινοτος εστιν, η̄τις εκουσιως αμαρτανει τω σκοπι, η̄ η̄τις ακουσιως*; but we should be glad to read it as follows; *Τι δε δη ανθρωπι; ψυχη κεντησθαι τοσοτη αμεινον εστιν, κ. τ. λ.* transferring the first point of interrogation to the word *ανθρωπι*, and altering the word *αμεινοτος* into *αμεινον*, which latter emendation was made before us by Cornarius. Both together will render this sentence much more agreeable to the turn of those which precede, than the alteration of it proposed by Stephens.—S.

Soc.

Soc. In our own species therefore, and with respect to the human soul^f, the man, who misses aim or errs without intending so to do, is a worse man than the other, whose missing of the mark is undefined, or whose error is involuntary.

HIP. In the bowman's art I grant you that it is so.

Soc. And how is it in the art of medicine? Is not he the better physician, who, if he hurts or brings any disorder on the bodily frame, does it knowingly and purposely?

HIP. He is.

Soc. In this art also then, such a one is a better man than one who hurts when he would heal.

HIP. True.

Soc. And how is it in music, whether of the string or of the wind-kind? how, in all other arts and sciences? Is not he the better man, who purposely performs ill, and commits voluntary errors? and is not he the bad man, who blunders and errs, without designing it?

HIP. Probably so.

Soc. And we certainly should choose to have under our command such slaves as committed voluntary faults, and were guilty of bad actions purposely, rather than such as could not help blundering, doing wrong, and acting perversely; the former sort being better for our service.

HIP. In that also we agree.

Soc. Well then; do we not wish to be as good and excellent as possible ourselves?

HIP. To be sure.

Soc. Would not our own mind, spirit, and temper, be better, if we did evil and committed faults wilfully and freely, than if we could not avoid those faults and evil actions?

HIP. It would be a strange thing, Socrates, if the wilfully unjust and dishonest were better men than those who unwittingly or unwillingly did a base action.

^f The original, as printed, runs thus; *Και ψυχη αρα ακουσις αμαρτανουσα, κ. τ. λ.* But the reasoning requires the word *ανθρωπος* to be inserted after the word *αρα*. It was easily dropped in transcribing some manuscript, on account of the similitude of the letters which follow it: the ancient manner of writing it being this; *Και ψυχη αρα αν ακουσις, κ. τ. λ.*—S.

Soc.

Soc. And yet this appears to be the just conclusion from those premises ¹, in which we are agreed.

HIP. It appears not so to me.

Soc. To you yourself, I imagined, it must so appear. Let me put to you then a question or two more.—Is not honesty either some certain power in the mind, or some certain knowledge, or both together? Is it not necessary that true inward honesty should be one or other of these?

HIP. It is.

Soc. If honesty then be some power in the mind, does not honesty inhabit that mind most which is possessed of the most power? And this corresponds with what appeared true to us before, if you remember,—that the man who had the most abilities and powers within him was the best man in every case that we considered.

HIP. It did so appear.

Soc. And if honesty be some knowledge in the mind, does not honesty reside most in that mind, which hath the most knowledge, and is the wisest? and is not, in such case, that mind the most dishonest which is the most undisciplined and ignorant?—But if honesty should arise from knowledge and power, meeting both together in the same mind, is not that mind which is the best furnished with both, with knowledge and power, the most filled with honesty? and are not the greatest degrees of ignorance ² and impotence

¹ That is, upon the absurd supposition, that there are any such men. But if still the question should be asked, Whence is it, that a man may err wilfully in executing any work or energy of art, or in performing any action merely natural (for so is it with great truth supposed throughout the Dialogue), and that power and will may in all such cases be separated; yet that it is otherwise with respect to moral actions; that no error here is truly voluntary, and no bad man is free? The reason is this; that in all other cases the workman, or performer, may aim at some other end than the excellence of his work, or the rectitude of his performance: but that in every action, where morality is concerned, that is, in every action morally good or evil, the attainment of what a man thinks his good is the only end for which he acts: and that no man can possibly pursue, will, or aim at his own evil, fully and clearly knowing it to be what it is; nor help aiming at, willing, and pursuing what upon the whole he determines to be for himself the best. The will therefore in all these cases must of necessity follow, or rather accompany, the judgment.—S.

² That, in the Greek text, after the words *ἢ δὲ ἀμαθεύτερα*, the words *καὶ ἀδυνατέτερα* ought to be inserted, will be evident to every one who knows how to reason, and in what part an argument is defective.—S.

in the mind parents of the greatest villany?—Must not these things through necessity be so?

HIP. So indeed they appear.

Soc. Did it not appear before, that a man of the most knowledge and wisdom, as well as of the most abilities and powers, was the best man, and the most capable of performing either well or ill, at his own pleasure, in every operation?

HIP. It did.

Soc. Such a man therefore, whenever he performs any thing ill, does it with design; does it through his powers and his knowledge. Now it is evident, that on these honesty depends, either on both of them, or at least on one or other.

HIP. Probably it does.

Soc. It is further evident, that acting dishonestly is doing ill; and that acting honestly is doing well.

HIP. Clearly so.

Soc. Will not that man then, whose mind is the most filled with honesty and virtue, whenever he shall do any dishonest or base action, do it through choice and with design? but the man whose mind is evil and dishonest, will no he be guilty of villanous and base actions through unavoidable necessity?

HIP. So it appears.

Soc. Is not a good man, one whose mind is good and honest? and is not he a bad man, whose mind is evil and dishonest?

HIP. Without doubt.

Soc. It belongs to the good man, therefore, to act dishonestly through free choice; to the bad man without free choice, and through unavoidable necessity; if it be true that the mind of a good man is good.

HIP. And that certainly is true.

Soc. The man, therefore, who does wrong, and is guilty of villanous and base actions wilfully and out of free choice, if such a man there be¹, Hippias, he can be no other than the good man.

HIP.

¹ Meaning, that the supposition was absurd. See the Introduction. Plato here presents us with a key to this Dialogue, opening it so easily, and letting us into the secret of it so freely, that every unprejudiced mind may well wonder how it came to be so greatly misunderstood, as it will appear to have generally been, if any of our readers will take the pains to examine the annotations and comments on it, written by the moderns. But the wonder will cease, on reflecting what

HIP. I know not, Socrates, how I can grant you this.

SOC. Nor can I easily grant it to myself, Hippias. It must however, of necessity, appear true to us both at present, having been proved by the force of our present argument. But, as I said before, with regard to this point¹,
my

what unphilosophical and vulgar notions concerning the freedom of the will have generally prevailed in Europe ever since the extinction of those ancient schools of philosophy which once enlightened it. Hence it has come to pass, that learned men, involved in the common prejudices, have understood all the passages of ancient authors, relating to this point, in a sense favourable to their own notions. For error, that disease of the mind, resembles in this respect certain diseases in the humours of the body; it imparts somewhat of its own flavour, and gives a tinge of its own colour, to every object of the taste or sight which is so diseased. Those prejudices on the point in question, and the consequences of them, here complained of, are evidently seen in the late Mr. Jackson's Defence, as he is pleased to term it, of Human Liberty. For that learned man appears to have had a heart purer and clearer than his head; and therefore cannot be supposed to have misrepresented the sense of those ancient authors, whom he cites, knowingly and wilfully. The truth seems to be, that over much zeal, though in a good cause, that of theism, so far blinded him, as well as some greater men before him, that he thought he saw a similitude between two hypotheses, quite different and even opposite; the one, that of a material or mechanical necessity, maintained by Mr. Hobbes and by the author of Cato's letters, an hypothesis utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of an all-directing mind in nature; the other, that of a rational or moral necessity, no less inconsistent with atheism, and necessarily connected with the idea of a governor of the universe, ruling as well the rational part of it, as the rest, not by mere will, but wisdom. For if the appearances of good are not cogent to man, and he is not of necessity obliged to follow those only rational motives, but is by nature referred afterwards to some other power within him called will, distinct from reason, and able to control it, then is mere will in man, and, for aught we can tell, in nature too, a principle higher and more divine than intellect.—S.

¹ Should there be any man now, after all, who is inclined to think that Socrates, through this whole conversation, was but in jest, and meant nothing serious; or that, like the sophists, he used fallacious arguments, with a villainous intent to impose on the understandings of the company, by confounding truth and falsehood, right and wrong; or should any imagine, with Serranus, that the philosopher had no other end in view than merely to confuse or puzzle Hippias, and expose him to ridicule; or should there possibly be some other who follows Ficinus in fancying, that his secret meaning was the very reverse of that which we have represented it to be in the Introduction, and contended for in the notes; for that the will was independent of the judgment or understanding; and vice was owing neither to impotence, nor ignorance, nor both together, but to malice only or perverseness in the will; and that Socrates himself embraced, as truly philosophical, this distinction of the forum, received in after-ages by the pretended followers of Aristotle; but that he left it forsooth for Hippias to distinguish thus nicely, on purpose to show the ignorance of that sophist if he did it not; should any of our readers be apt to entertain any of these notions, on account of the strangeness of the paradox advanced or insinuated in this Dialogue, we shall content ourselves with observing that, strange as it may seem, it is entirely

my mind is driven backward and forward continually, and never remains long in the same opinion. Indeed, there is nothing wonderful in the case that I should wander in uncertainty; or that any other man should, who is only one of the multitude. But if you wise men should run in the same perplexed mazes, this must be to us a heavy misfortune; since we could never in this case, even though we applied to you, be freed from our perplexities.

consonant with the doctrine of Socrates, as delivered to us by Plato in many other of his writings. This was so notorious to the ancients, that Arrian, in his *Dissertations of Epictetus*, l. i. c. 28. and l. ii. c. 22. and Marcus Antoninus, l. vii. § 63. cite the authority of Plato to confirm the truth of this doctrine. The principal passages in our author, where he inculcates it expressly and openly, have been collected by Gataker in his *Annotations on Antoninus*, p. 286 and 399. and by our late learned friend Mr. Upton, in his *Notes on Arrian*, p. 91. Above all, see Alcinous, *Introduct.* c. 23. where his account of the Platonic doctrine upon this subject seems to be chiefly extracted from this Dialogue, and shows that he understood it exactly in the same sense with us.—S.

THE END OF THE LESSER HIPPIAS.