THE EPISTLES

OF

PLATO.

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EPISTLE I.*

DION to DIONYSIUS—Proſperity.

WHILE I reſided ſo long with you, and managed the affairs of your kingdom with ſuch fidelity, that you might be benefited beyond others, I ſuſtained grievous calumnies. For I know you are convinced, that nothing inhuman was ever perpetrated with my conſent. And of the truth of this, all thoſe are my witneſſes, who governed in conjunction with you; many of whom, through ſtrenuous endeavours, I liberated from no trifling calamities. And when you poſſeſſed the ſole authority, I often preſerved your city; but at length I was diſmiſſed by you, and ordered to ſet ſail, in a more ignominious manner than it becomes you to expel a mendicant; and this, after I had ſo long reſided with you. As to what remains, therefore, I ſhall conſult reſpecting myſelf in a more inhuman manner. But you being ſo great a tyrant, will govern alone. As to the ſplendid gold, which you gave for my diſmiſſion, I return it you by Bacchius, the bearer of this Epiſtle: for it was neither ſufficient for a viaticum, nor uſeful for the reſt of life. It would likewiſe procure great diſgrace to you as the giver, and not much leſs to me as the receiver. But it evidently makes no difference to you, either to give or receive as much gold as this; and on its being returned to you, you may make the ſame preſent to ſome other of your aſſociates, as you made to me. For you have paid ſufficient attention to me. And now that ſentence of Euri-

* This and the fifth Epiſtle appear to have been written by Dion, the celebrated but unfortunate diſciple of Plato, though the Aldine edition aſcribes them to Plato.

pides

pides ſeaſonably occurs to my remembrance, " That when affairs happen to be different from what they are at preſent, you will pray for ſuch a man to be preſent with you." But I wiſh to remind you, that the greater part of other tragic poets, when they introduce a tyrant dying through the machinations of ſome one, make him vociferate as follows: " Miſerable that I am, I periſh deſtitute of friends." But no one repreſents a tyrant periſhing through the want of gold. The following poetical ſentences, likewiſe, will not be diſapproved by the intelligent: " Not ſplendid gold, in this miſerable life of mortals moſt rare, not diamonds, nor tables of ſilver, which are highly valued by men, are ſo glittering to the ſight; nor yet fertile, weighty acres of wide extended land, as the unanimous conceptions of good men." Farewell, and know thus much of us who are far diſtant, that you may conduct yourſelf better towards others.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE II.

PLATO to DIONYSIUS—Proſperity.

I HAVE heard from Archidemus, that you think reſpecting yourſelf, that not only I, but my familiars, Dion alone excepted, ought neither to do you any injury, nor ſpeak ill of you. But this aſſertion, that Dion is to be excepted ſignifies that I do not rule over my familiars. For if I had dominion, as well over others, as you and Dion, I think great good would be the reſult, both to all you and the reſt of the Greeks. But now I am great, in rendering myſelf obedient to the dictates of my reaſon. I ſpeak in this manner, becauſe Cratiſtolus and Polyxenus have not given you any genuine information: for they report, that one of theſe ſhould ſay, he had heard among the Olympians that many of my aſſociates reviled you. Perhaps he heard more accutely than I did. But it is proper, as it appears to me, that, whenever any thing of this kind reſpecting my aſſociates is mentioned to you, to write to me reſpecting the affair: for I ſhall neither be afraid nor aſhamed to ſpeak the truth. But to you and me things are thus mutually circumſtanced. Nor are we unknown to any one of the Greeks, as I may ſay, nor is our converſation paſſed over in ſilence; nor ſhould it be concealed from you, that neither will it be paſſed over in ſilence by poſterity: for thoſe by whom it is received are ſuch, that they are neither few nor obſcure. But why do I thus ſpeak? I will now tell you, aſſuming an elevated exordium.

Wiſdom and mighty power naturally tend to the ſame: and theſe two always purſue, ſeek, and unite with each other. In the next place, men are delighted with theſe, whether they make them the ſubject of their private converſations, or hear them celebrated in poetical compoſitions. Thus thoſe who diſcourſe about Hiero, and Pauſanias the Lacedæmonian, rejoice to mention the familiarity of Simonides with theſe men, and to relate what he

did and ſaid to them. In like manner they are accuſtomed to celebrate Periander the Corinthian in conjunction with Thales the Mileſian; Pericles and Anaxagoras, Crœſus and Solon, as powerful with wiſe men, and Cyrus as a powerful man. Poets too, in imitation of this, bring together Creon and Tireſias; Polydus and Minos; Agamemnon and Neſtor; Ulyſſes and Palamedes: and, as it appears to me, for the ſame reaſon, the firſt men joined Prometheus with Jupiter. But of theſe, they repreſent ſome as diſcordant, and others as friendly with each other; and again, ſome as at one time friendly, and at another diſcordant: and they celebrate as well their mutual agreements as their diſſenſions. But I mention all theſe particulars, becauſe I am willing to evince that men will not be ſilent reſpecting us when we are dead; ſo that we ought not to neglect the opinion of mankind. For it is neceſſary, as it ſeems, that we ſhould pay attention to futurity; ſince it comes to paſs, through a certain nature, that the moſt illiberal of mankind are not at all concerned about the opinion of poſterity: but the moſt worthy men do every thing that they may be juſtly celebrated hereafter. And this I conſider as an argument that the dead have a certain perception of what is tranſacted here. For the moſt excellent ſouls propheſy that this will be the caſe; but this is not aſſerted by the moſt depraved. And the prophecies of divine men are more powerful than of thoſe that are not divine. I alſo think, that if it were permitted thoſe deceaſed perſons, of whom I have ſpoken above, to correct their converſations, they would very earneſtly endeavour that better things might be ſaid of them than at preſent. This, therefore, it is yet permitted us to ſay, through the favour of divinity, that if we have done any thing unbecoming during our former acquaintance with you, either in word or deed, we may correct it; that a true opinion may be entertained of us by poſterity reſpecting philoſophy; viz. a better opinion if we are worthy, and the contrary if we are depraved. And indeed, if we pay attention to this, we cannot do any thing more pious, nor is any thing more impious than the neglect of it. But how this ought to take place, and what the juſtice is which it contains, I will tell you.

When I came into Sicily, I had the reputation of excelling very much in philoſophy. I was alſo willing on my arrival among the Syracuſians to have you a witneſs of my renown, that philoſophy might alſo be honoured for me by

by the multitude. But my wiſhes were not crowned with ſucceſs. I do not however aſſign as the cauſe of this, that which is aſſigned by many, but I attribute it to your not entirely believing in me. But you were willing to diſmiſs me and call others, and to inquire into the nature of my buſineſs, by this as it ſeems diſtruſting me. And thoſe that ſpoke loudly of theſe things were many, and who likewiſe affirmed that you indeed deſpiſed me, and ſeriouſly applied yourſelf to other things. Such indeed were the reports at that time.

Now hear however what after theſe things it is juſt to do, that I may reply to your queſtion, how you and I ought mutually to conduct ourſelves. If then you entirely deſpiſe philoſophy, you muſt bid farewell to it. But if you have either heard from another, or have yourſelf diſcovered things more excellent than thoſe you have received from me, then honour theſe. But if our doctrines pleaſe you, then you ought highly to honour me. Now, therefore, as from the beginning, do you lead and I will follow. For being honoured by, I will honour you; but not being honoured, I will remain ſilent. Further ſtill, if you honour me, and in doing this take the lead, you will appear to honour philoſophy: and this will procure you that which you ardently deſire, the reputation of being conſidered by the multitude as a philoſopher. But if I ſhould honour you, without being honoured by you, I ſhould ſeem to admire and purſue wealth: and we know that this is conſidered as diſgraceful by all men. In ſhort, if you honour me, an ornament to both of us will enſue; but if I honour you, diſgrace to both of us will be the conſequence. And thus much for theſe particulars.

But the little ſphere [1] is not properly made: and this Archidemus will ſhow you on his arrival. It is likewiſe requiſite to render apparent to him the particulars reſpecting that which is far more honourable and divine than this, and about which you interrogate me through him. For you ſay, according to his report, that I have not ſufficiently demonſtrated to you the particulars reſpecting the firſt nature. I muſt ſpeak to you therefore in enigmas, that in caſe the letter ſhould be intercepted either by land or ſea, he who reads it may not underſtand this part of its contents: *All things are ſituated about the*

[1] What this little ſphere was is uncertain. Perhaps it was a kind of orrery.

king[1] *of all things; and all things ſubſiſt for his ſake, and he is the cauſe of all beautiful things. But ſecond things are ſituated about that which is ſecond; and*

[1] The following obſervations, extracted from the ſecond book of Proclus on the Theology of Plato, form an excellent comment on the preſent paſſage, which is no leſs deeply myſtical than truly admirable:

Plato here evidently neither connumerates the ineffable principle of things with the other principles poſterior to him, nor does he coarrange it, as the leader of a triad, with the ſecond and third powers. For in a triadic diviſion, the firſt monad is the leader of the firſt orders, and which are coordinate with itſelf: but the ſecond is the leader of ſecond orders; and the third of thoſe that are third. And if ſome one ſhould apprehend that the firſt principle is the leader of all things, ſo as to comprehend at once both ſecond and third allotments, yet the cauſe which ſubſiſts according to comprehenſion, is different from that which ſimilarly pervades to all things. And all things indeed are ſubject to the king of all things, according to one reaſon and one order: but to the firſt of the triad, things firſt are ſubjected according to the ſame order; and it is neceſſary that things ſecond and third ſhould be ſubſervient according to their communion with the remaining kings. Is it not evident, therefore, that what is here ſaid in a remarkable manner celebrates the exempt nature of the firſt cauſe, and his uncoordination with the other kingdoms of the gods? For Plato ſays, that the king of all ſimilarly reigns over all things, that all things ſubſiſt about him, and that both eſſence and energy are preſent with all things for his ſake.

Obſerve too, that Plato calls the firſt god king, but he does not think proper to give this appellation to the reſt. He likewiſe calls him the king not only of things firſt, as the ſecond of things ſecond, and the third of things third, but as the cauſe at once of all being and of all beauty. Hence the higheſt god precedes the other cauſes in an exempt and uniform manner, and is neither celebrated by Plato as coordinated with them, nor as the leader of a triad.

But when Plato a little after ſays, "This your inquiry concerning the cauſe of all beautiful things is as of a nature endued with *a certain quality*," he clearly indicates that neither language nor knowledge is adapted to that which is firſt: for, as being unknown, it cannot be apprehended by intelligence, and as being uncircumſcribed, it cannot be explained by words. But whatever you ſay of it, you will ſay, as of a *certain* thing; and you will ſpeak indeed *about* it, but you will not ſpeak *it*. For ſpeaking of the things of which it is the cauſe, we are unable to ſay, or to apprehend, through intelligence, what it is.

Here, therefore, the addition of quality and the buſy energy of the ſoul remove it from the goodneſs which is exempt from all things, by the redundancy of its conceptions about it. This likewiſe draws the ſoul down to kindred, connate, and multiform intelligibles, and prevents her from receiving that which is characterized by unity, and is occult in the participation of *the good*. And it is not only proper that the human ſoul ſhould be purified from things coordinate with itſelf in the union and communion with that which is firſt, and that for this purpoſe it ſhould leave all the multitude of itſelf behind, and, exciting its own hyparxis, approach with cloſed eyes, as it is ſaid, to the king of all things, and participate of his light as much as this is lawful for it to accompliſh; but intellect alſo, which is prior to us, and all divine natures, by their higheſt unions,

and ſuch as are third in gradation about that which is third. The human ſoul therefore extends itſelf in order to learn the quality of theſe things, and looks to ſuch

unions, ſupereſſential torches *, and firſt hyparxes, are united to that which is firſt, and always participate of its exuberant fulneſs; and this not ſo far as they are that which they are, but ſo far as they are exempt from things allied to themſelves, and converge to the one principle of all. For the cauſe of all diſſeminated in all things impreſſions of his own all-perfect tranſcendency, and through theſe eſtabliſhes all things about himſelf, and being exempt from wholes, is ineffably preſent to all things. Every thing, therefore, entering into the ineffable of its own nature, finds there the ſymbol of the father of all. All things too naturally venerate him, and are united to him, through an appropriate myſtic impreſſion, diveſting themſelves of their own nature, and haſtening to become his impreſſion alone, and to participate him alone, through the deſire of his unknown nature, and of the fountain of good. Hence, when they have run upwards as far as to this cauſe, they become tranquil, and are liberated from the parturitions and the deſire which all things naturally poſſeſs of goodneſs unknown, ineffable, imparticipable, and tranſcendently full. But that what is here ſaid is concerning the firſt god, and that Plato, in theſe conceptions, leaves him uncoordinated with and exempt from the other cauſes, has been, I think, ſufficiently evinced.

Let us then in the next place conſider each of the dogmas, and adapt them to our conceptions concerning cauſe, that from theſe we may comprehend, by a reaſoning proceſs, the ſcope of the whole of Plato's theology. Let then one truth concerning the firſt principle be eſpecially that which celebrates his ineffable, ſimple, and all-tranſcending nature; which eſtabliſhes all things about him, but does not aſſert that he generates or produces any thing, or that he preſubſiſts as the end of things poſterior to himſelf. For ſuch a form of words neither adds any thing to the unknown, who is exempt from all things, nor multiplies him who is eſtabliſhed above all union, nor refers the habitude and communion of things ſecondary to him who is perfectly imparticipable. Nor in ſhort does it announce that it teaches any thing about him, or concerning his nature, but about the ſecond and third natures which ſubſiſt after him.

Such then being this indication of the firſt god, and ſuch the manner in which it venerates the ineffable, the ſecond to this is that which converts all the deſires of things to him, and celebrates him as the object of deſire to and common end of all things, according to one cauſe which precedes all other cauſes. For the laſt of things ſubſiſts only for the ſake of ſomething elſe, but the firſt is that only for the ſake of which all other things ſubſiſt: and all the natures that ſubſiſt between participate of theſe two idioms. Hence they genuinely adhere to the natures which ſurpaſs them, as objects of deſire, but impart the perfection of deſires to ſubordinate beings.

The third ſpeculation of the principle of things is far inferior to the preceding, conſidering him as giving ſubſiſtence to all beautiful things. For to celebrate him as the ſupplier of good, and as end preceding the two orders of things, is not very remote from the narration which ſays, that all cauſes are poſterior to him, and derive their ſubſiſtence from him, as well thoſe which are

* Υπερουσιοι πυρσοι. Proclus thus denominates the ſupereſſential unities conformably to what is ſaid of them by Plato in the 6th book of the Republic; for he there conſiders them as analogous to light.

paternal,

ſuch particulars as are allied to itſelf, none of which are ſufficient for the purpoſe. But about the king himſelf, and the natures of which I have ſpoken, there is

paternal, and the ſources of good, as thoſe that are the ſuppliers of prolific powers. But to aſcribe to him a producing and generative cauſe, is ſtill more remote from the all-perfect union of the firſt. For as it cannot be known or diſcuſſed by language, by ſecondary natures, it muſt not be ſaid that it is the cauſe, or that it is generative of beings, but we ſhould celebrate in ſilence this ineffable nature, and this perfectly cauſeleſs cauſe which is prior to all cauſes. If, however, as we endeavour to aſcribe to him *the good* and *the one*, we in like manner attribute to him *cauſe*, and that which is final or paternal, we muſt pardon the parturition of the ſoul about this ineffable principle, aſpiring to perceive him with the eye of intellect, and to ſpeak about him; but, at the ſame time, the exempt tranſcendency of *the one* which is immenſe muſt be conſidered as ſurpaſſing an indication of this kind.

From theſe things, therefore, we may receive the ſacred conceptions of Plato, and an order adapted to things themſelves. And we may ſay that the firſt part of this ſentence ſufficiently indicates the ſimplicity, tranſcendency, and in ſhort the uncoordination with all things of the king of all. For the aſſertion that all things ſubſiſt about him, unfolds the hyparxis of things ſecond, but leaves that which is beyond all things without any connexion with things poſterior to it. But the ſecond part celebrates the king of all things as prearranged in the order of *end*. For that which is the higheſt of all cauſes, is immediately conjoined with that which is prior to cauſe; but of this kind is the final cauſe, and that for the ſake of which all things ſubſiſt. This, therefore, is poſterior to the other, and is woven together with the order of things, and the progreſſion of the Platonic doctrine.

Again, the third part aſſerts him to be productive of all beautiful things, and thus adds to him a ſpecies of cauſe inferior to the final. Whence alſo Plotinus, I think, does not heſitate to call the firſt god the fountain of the beautiful. It is neceſſary therefore to attribute that which is beſt to the beſt of all things, that he may be the cauſe of all, and in reality prior to cauſe. But this is *the good*. This too, which is an admirable circumſtance, may be ſeen in the words of Plato, that the firſt of theſe three divine dogmas, neither preſumes to ſay any thing about *the good*, and this ineffable nature, nor does it permit us to refer any ſpecies of cauſe to it. But the ſecond dogma leaves indeed *the good* ineffable, as it is fit it ſhould, but, from the habitude of things poſterior to it, enables us to collect the final cauſe: for it does not refuſe to call it that for the ſake of which all things ſubſiſt. But when it aſſerts that all things are for the ſake of *the good*, it excites in us the conception of the communion and coordination of that which is the object of deſire with the deſiring natures. And the third dogma evinces that *the good* is the cauſe of all beautiful things. But this is to ſay ſomething concerning it, and to add to the ſimplicity of the firſt cauſe, and not to abide in the conception of the end, but to conjoin with it the producing principle of things ſecond. And it appears to me that Plato here indicates the natures which are proximately unfolded into light after the firſt. For it is not poſſible to ſay any thing concerning it except at one time being impelled to this from all things, and at another from the beſt of things: for it is the cauſe of hyparxis to all things, is firſt participated by the beſt of things, and unfolds its own ſeparate union through the idiom of theſe.

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is nothing of this kind: but the ſoul ſpeaks of that which is poſterior to this. Indeed, O ſon of Dionyſius and Doris, this your inquiry concerning the cauſe of all beautiful[1] *things, is as of a nature endued with a certain quality. Or rather it is a parturition reſpecting this ingenerated in the ſoul; from which he who is not liberated will never in reality acquire truth.*

You have ſaid, that you thought of mentioning this to me, in the garden, when we were ſeated under the laurel trees, and that it was your invention. But I have ſaid, that if this appears to you to ſubſiſt in this manner, you have freed me from a long diſcuſſion. Nor ſhall we ever find any other inventor; but about this I ſhall be very buſily employed. Perhaps however you have heard this from ſome one, or perhaps you have been impelled to advance thus far by a *divine allotment*. You have not however apprehended what a ſtability the demonſtrations of this thing poſſeſs; but you ſpring forward at different times in a different manner, about that which is the object of phantaſy, while in the mean time the thing of which we are now ſpeaking is not any thing of this kind. Nor is this the caſe with you alone: but be well aſſured that no one, when he firſt hears me, is in the beginning otherwiſe affected. And one indeed, finding more difficulty, and another leſs, they are ſcarcely at length liberated from parturition. But nearly all of them labour not a little. As this therefore has been, and is the caſe, in my opinion, we have nearly found that about which you inquire in your letters, I mean, how we ought to be affected towards each other. For after you have diſcuſſed theſe particulars, with the aſſiſtance of other perſons, and

We aſcribe to it therefore *the one* and *the good*, from the donation from it which pervades to all things. For of thoſe things of which all participate, we ſay there is no other cauſe than that which is eſtabliſhed prior to all theſe. But *the about which* (το περι ο), *the through which* (το δι ου), *the from which* (το αφ' ου), particularly ſubſiſt in the intelligible gods: and from theſe they are aſcribed to the firſt god. For whence can we ſuppoſe the unical gods derive their idioms, except from that which is prior to them? To this ſummit of intelligibles therefore the term *about* is adapted, becauſe all the divine orders occultly proceed about this ſummit which is arranged prior to them. But the term *through which* pertains to the middle order of intelligibles: for all things ſubſiſt for the ſake of eternity and an hyparxis perfectly entire. And the term *from which* is adapted to the extremity of intelligibles: for this firſt produces all things, and adorns them uniformly.

[1] In all the editions of Plato that I have ſeen, κακων is here erroneouſly printed inſtead of καλων. I ſay erroneouſly, becauſe not only the authority of Proclus but the ſenſe of the paſſage proves it to be ſo.

have

have compared them with the opinions of others, and conſidered them by themſelves, then, if your inquiry has been properly conducted, you will accord both with them and us. How then is it poſſible that theſe things, and all of which we have ſpoken, ſhould not take place?

You have, therefore, acted rightly in now ſending Archidemus to us. And after he has returned to you and has related my opinion, other doubts will perhaps riſe in your mind. If, therefore, you conſult properly, you will ſend Archidemus to me again. But he, as if laden with merchandiſe, will again return to you. And if you do this, twice or thrice, and ſufficiently examine the things which I ſhall ſend, I ſhould wonder if you are not much better diſpoſed with reſpect to the particulars you are in doubt of than at preſent. You ſhould, therefore, boldly act in this manner: for neither you, nor Archidemus, can engage in any merchandiſe more becoming or more acceptable to divinity than this. Be careful, however, that theſe things do not fall among men void of diſcipline: *for, as it appears to me, there are ſcarcely any particulars which will appear more ridiculous to the multitude than theſe; nor again, any which will appear more wonderful and enthuſiaſtic to thoſe that are well born.* But when often repeated and continually heard, and this for many years, they are ſcarcely at length, with great labour, purified like gold.

But hear the wonderful circumſtance which takes place in this affair: for there are many men who have heard theſe things, who are able to learn and able to remember, who are ſagacious in examining and judging, who are now advanced in years, and who have heard theſe things for not leſs than thirty years; theſe men now ſay, that things which formerly appeared to them to be moſt incredible, now appear to them to be moſt credible and perſpicuous. And things which were formerly conſidered by them as moſt credible, now appear to them to be the very contrary. Looking therefore to this, be careful leſt you repent of what you have now unworthily uttered. But the greateſt means of defence in this caſe, conſiſts not in writing, but learning: for things which are written cannot be kept from the public view. On this account, I have never at any time written any thing about theſe particulars. Nor is there any book profeſſedly compoſed by Plato, nor will there be. But what has now been ſaid, is to be

aſcribed

aſcribed [1] to Socrates, who was a worthy character, even while a young man. Farewell, and be perſuaded by me; and when you have often read this Epiſtle, commit it to the flames. And thus much for theſe particulars.

With reſpect to Polyxenus, you wonder that I do not ſend him to you. But I ſay the ſame at preſent as I have formerly ſaid concerning Lycophron, and the others that are with you, viz. that, both naturally and from the method of your diſcourſe, you very much excel them in the art of ſpeaking. Nor is any one of them willingly confuted as ſome ſuppoſe, but unwillingly. And you appear indeed to have uſed and beſtowed gifts upon them ſufficiently well. Many other things may be ſaid about theſe particulars, as well as about others of the ſame kind. But if you uſe Philiſtion, do not ſpare him. And if you can, employ Speuſippus, and diſmiſs him. Speuſippus indeed ſtands in need of your aſſiſtance. But Philiſtion promiſed me that he would very willingly come to Athens, if you would diſmiſs him. You will likewiſe do well to diſmiſs him who belongs to the ſtone quarries. But the requeſt is trifling, both reſpecting his domeſtics, and Egeſippus the ſon of Ariſton: for in one of your letters to me you ſay, that if any one either injures him, or his domeſtics, and you perceive it, you will not ſuffer a continuance of the injury. Beſides, it is worth while to ſpeak the truth reſpecting Lyſiclides: for he alone, of thoſe who came from Sicily to Athens, has made no alteration reſpecting our intimacy with each other, but continually ſpeaks of our paſt conduct as laudable and good.

[1] Plato means nothing more by this, than that what has been above ſaid is conformable to the doctrine of Socrates.

EPISTLE III.

PLATO to DIONYSIUS—Health.

YOU inquire, by your letter, whether it is better in ſalutations to uſe the word *health*, or rather to write, as I am accuſtomed to do in letters to my friends, *proſperity*. For you, as thoſe who were then preſent relate, flattering the god who is worſhipped at Delphi, call him by this very appellation. And as they ſay, you write *hail*, and yet preſerve the voluptuous life of a tyrant. But I addreſs neither man nor divinity with this ſalutation. Not divinity, becauſe in ſo doing I ſhould place him in an order contrary to his nature; as he is far removed from pleaſure and pain. Nor man, becauſe pleaſure often produces detriment and pain, and generates in the ſoul, indocility, oblivion, ſtupidity, and inſolence. And thus much reſpecting ſalutation, which, after you have read, you may take as you pleaſe.

But not a few report, that you ſaid to certain ambaſſadors who were with you, that you intended to reeſtabliſh the Grecian cities in Sicily, to rectify the government of the Syracuſians, and give them a kingdom inſtead of a tyranny. You aſſert, however, that though you very much deſired, yet being impeded by me, you had not then an opportunity to put theſe intentions in execution; that I now teach Dion to do the very ſame things himſelf; and that, according to your conceptions of things, we ſhall ſubvert your government. You indeed know whether you derive any advantage from ſuch aſſertions; but you certainly injure me by ſpeaking contrary to the truth: for I am become ſufficiently odious both to the mercenary ſoldiers and the Syracuſian vulgar, through Philiſtides and many others, on account of my reſidence in the acropolis. For then thoſe that dwelt out of the tower blamed me as the author of every crime, and aſſerted that you did every

every thing through my perſuaſions. However, you moſt clearly know, that of my own accord I meddled very little with politics, and that this was only at firſt, when I thought I might in ſome degree be beneficial, while with a ſufficient degree of earneſtneſs I was compoſing my books of Laws; to which you, or ſome other perſon, have made additions contrary to my intention. For I hear that, afterwards, ſome of you acted in a fraudulent manner with reſpect to theſe writings: and theſe things indeed are manifeſt to thoſe that are able to diſtinguiſh the nature of my diſpoſition. But, as I juſt now ſaid, I do not ſtand in need of calumny from the Syracuſians, and certain others whom you may have perſuaded by theſe aſſertions; but I am much more in want of an apology againſt the former calumny, than that which has now ariſen after it, as being greater and more vehement.

Againſt theſe two calumnies, therefore, it is neceſſary I ſhould make a two-fold apology. In the firſt place aſſerting, that I very properly avoided engaging with you in political affairs: and in the ſecond place, that my advice was not that which you ſay it was, and that I did not impede you, when you deſigned to reeſtabliſh the Grecian cities. Hear then, in the firſt place, the particulars of my firſt apology. I came to Syracuſe, in conſequence of being called by you and Dion, who was already approved of by me, and who had formerly been my gueſt. He likewiſe had arrived at that period of life which we call a middle age, and in which thoſe that are endued with the ſmalleſt degree of intellect, will apply themſelves to ſuch affairs as were then the ſubject of your deliberations. But you were very young, and very ignorant of thoſe particulars in which you ought to have been ſkilled; and you were likewiſe perfectly unknown to me. After this, ſome man, or god, or a certain fortune in conjunction with you, expelled Dion, and you were left alone. Do you think therefore, that at that time I had any communion with you in political affairs; perceiving as I did, that a prudent counſellor was baniſhed by you, and that an imprudent perſon was left, with a multitude of baſe men; ſo that he did not govern in reality, but while he thought he had dominion, he was governed by men of this deſcription? In theſe circumſtances, what ought to have done? Does it not neceſſarily follow, that I ought to have done what I did do? I mean, to

bid farewell to politics, in order to avoid the calumnies of the malevolent, and to endeavour that you and Dion, who were far ſeparated from, and diſcordant with each other, might become in the higheſt degree mutual friends. You are my witneſs, that I never at any time remitted my endeavours to accompliſh this. At the ſame time, we could ſcarcely agree that I ſhould return home, and that when the war was finiſhed, in which you were then engaged, I and Dion ſhould come to Syracuſe; and that you would call us. Theſe were the tranſactions which happened when I firſt came among the Syracuſians, and on my returning home with ſafety.

After this, peace being made, you called me, not, however, according to the agreement, but you wrote to me that I ſhould come alone, and that you would ſend for Dion afterwards. On this account I did not come, which diſpleaſed Dion, who thought it would be better to comply with your requeſt. On the following year a three-banked galley and letters came from you, and in theſe epiſtles you ſay, that if I will come, the affairs of Dion ſhall be ſettled according to my mind; but that if I did not come, the very contrary ſhould take place. I am aſhamed to ſay how many letters then came, both from you, and others through you, from Italy and Sicily, to me, and to ſuch as were my kindred and familiars; all of them exhorting and requeſting me to comply by all means with your entreaties. It appeared, therefore, to all theſe, beginning from Dion, that I ought to ſet ſail, and not behave effeminately, though I excuſed myſelf on account of my age, and mentioned my doubts that you would not be ſufficient to reſiſt my calumniators, and thoſe who wiſhed to ſow diſſenſion between us. For I then ſaw, and now ſee, with reſpect to the great and ſurpaſſing poſſeſſions both of private perſons and monarchs, that in proportion to their magnitude, they nouriſh calumniators, and thoſe that deviſe noxious pleaſures; a greater evil than which neither wealth, nor the power of any other prerogative can produce. However, bidding farewell to all theſe conſiderations, I determined to come, that my friends might not accuſe me of ruining, through my negligence, the affairs of Dion, when they might have been ſafe.

You well know all that happened on my arrival. For I indeed thought, according to the compact made by you in your letters, that you would in the

firſt

firſt place recall Dion, and reſtore him to his former familiarity with you. If, as I perſuaded you, you had done ſo at that time, perhaps, as my opinion propheſies, things would have been better for you, and the Syracuſians, and the other Greeks. Afterwards, I thought that the property of Dion ought to be reſtored, and that it ought not to be given to thoſe among whom you thought proper it ſhould be divided. Beſides this, I thought that the uſual ſum of money ſhould be ſent to him every year, and that it ought rather to be increaſed than diminiſhed on account of my being preſent. But as none of theſe things took place, I determined to depart. After this, however, you perſuaded me to ſtay for a year, affirming that you would reſtore all the property of Dion, ſo that one half would be ſent to Corinth, and that the other half ſhould be left for his ſon. I could relate many other things which you promiſed to do, but have not performed; but I omit them, on account of their multitude: for as you ſold all the poſſeſſions of Dion without his conſent, though you affirmed you would not unleſs he conſented to it, you have placed a moſt glorious colophon, O wonderful man, on all your promiſes. For you deviſed a thing neither beautiful nor elegant, nor juſt, nor advantageous; I mean, you attempted to frighten me, as being ignorant of the tranſactions at that time, that I might ceaſe entreating you to ſend money to Dion. For when you baniſhed Heraclides, which did not appear juſt either to the Syracuſians, or to me, and I, together with Theodotus and Euribius, requeſted you to pardon him, making uſe of this as a ſufficient pretext, you ſaid that it had been for ſome time paſt evident to you, that I was not at all concerned about you, but only for Dion, and his friends and kindred. And now, as Theodotes and Heraclides are calumniated as being the familiars of Dion, you aſſert that I endeavour, by every poſſible device, that they may not ſuffer puniſhment. And thus much for the political tranſactions of you and me. And if you have ſeen any thing elſe diſcordant in me with reſpect to you, think it is reaſonable that all this ſhould have happened, and do not wonder that it has: for I ſhould deſervedly appear to be depraved to a man endued with any portion of intellect, if, perſuaded by the magnitude of your authority, I ſhould betray my antient friend and gueſt when acting evilly through you, and yet, as I may ſay, being in no reſpect a worſe character than you are; and if I ſhould prefer you though acting unjuſtly, and ſhould do every thing which you enjoin for the ſake of accumulating wealth. For if there

there had been any change in my conduct, no other cauſe than this would have been aſſigned of ſuch mutation. And thus much for this; you being the occaſion of the deceitful friendſhip and diſagreement between you and me.

But my diſcourſe now nearly brings me in connection to the ſecond part of my apology. Attend therefore diligently, and conſider whether I appear to you to aſſert that which is falſe, and not the truth: for I ſay, that when Archidemus and Ariſtocritus were with you in the garden, about twenty days before I returned home from Syracuſe, you reproached me with the very ſame thing as at preſent; I mean, that I was more concerned for Heraclides, and every other perſon, than for you. You likewiſe interrogated me before them, whether I remembered, on my firſt coming to Syracuſe, that I adviſed you to reeſtabliſh the Grecian cities. But I acknowledged that I did remember: and, even now, it appears to me that it were beſt to do ſo. I muſt likewiſe relate, O Dionyſius, what was ſaid after this: for I aſked you, whether I ſhould adviſe you to do this alone, or ſomething elſe beſides this. But you anſwered me in an angry and inſolent manner; and on this account the injurious reply which you then made me is now become a true viſion inſtead of a dream. But you aſked me, in a very undiſguiſed manner, and laughing at the ſame time if I remember, whether I exhorted you as one properly inſtructed to do all theſe things or not. I replied, that you very properly reminded me. You then aſked me whether I exhorted you as one learned in geometry, or how? But after thi I did not ſay what I might have ſaid, fearing leſt, for the ſake of a trifling word, the navigation which I expected ſhould be contracted, inſtead of being ample. That, therefore, for the ſake of which all this has been ſaid by me, is as follows: I am unwilling to be calumniated by you, as having hindered you from reeſtabliſhing the Grecian cities, which were ſubverted by the Barbarians, and aſſiſting the Syracuſians, by giving them a kingdom inſtead of a tyranny. For you cannot falſely aſſert any thing of me, which leſs becomes me than this.

Indeed, if there appeared to be any ſufficient judgment of this affair, I could adduce other arguments, ſtill clearer than theſe, to prove that I exhorted you to do theſe things, but that you were unwilling to do them: for it is by no means difficult to ſhow, in a perſpicuous manner, that by thus acting

acting you would have done the beſt for yourſelf, the Syracuſians, and all Sicily. If, therefore, you deny that you ſaid theſe things, when at the ſame time you did ſay them, this is ſufficient to condemn you. But if you acknowledge that you did, think after this, that Steſichorus was a wiſe man, and imitating his recantation[t], betake yourſelf from a falſe aſſertion to one that is true.

[t] See the Phædrus of Plato, where the circumſtance here alluded to is cited at length.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE IV.

PLATO to DION of SYRACUSE.—Proſperity.

I THINK that my alacrity with reſpect to caſual actions is apparent at all times, and that I very ſeriouſly apply myſelf to accompliſh them, not more for the ſake of any thing elſe, than emulation in things beautiful. For I conſider it as juſt, that thoſe who are in reality worthy men, and who act in this manner, ſhould obtain that renown which is their due. At preſent, therefore, through the favour of divinity, things ſubſiſt in a proper manner: but with reſpect to future events there is the greateſt conteſt. For to excel in fortitude, ſwiftneſs, and ſtrength, may appear a thing poſſible to be accompliſhed by others; but to excel in truth, juſtice, magnificence, and graceful conduct reſpecting all theſe, pertains to thoſe, beyond all others, who aſpire after the honour attendant on ſuch things as theſe. Now, therefore, what I ſay is manifeſt. But at the ſame time, we ought to remind ourſelves, that it is proper, as you well know, that we ſhould differ more from other men than other men from boys. Hence it is evident that we ought to become ſuch characters as we aſſert ourſelves to be; eſpecially ſince, through the favour of divinity, we may ſay that this will be eaſy for us to accompliſh: for others, in order to effect this, muſt neceſſarily wander through many places. But the ſtate of your affairs is ſuch, that this muſt be accompliſhed by you in one particular part of the earth; and in this part the eyes of all men are eſpecially turned towards you. As you are therefore beheld by all men, prepare yourſelf to exhibit to the world a ſpecimen of the ancient Lycurgus and Cyrus, or any other, who appears to have ſurpaſſed in the moral and political virtues; eſpecially ſince many, and indeed nearly all, men ſay, there is great reaſon to expect that, when Dionyſius is taken away, things will be in a ruinous ſtate, through the emulation of you, Heraclides, Theodotus, and other illuſtrious perſons.

If

If, therefore, this ſhould happen to be the caſe, which we muſt hope will not, do you apply a remedy, that affairs may be brought to the beſt condition. It will perhaps ſeem to you ridiculous that I ſhould mention theſe things, becauſe you are not ignorant of them: but I ſee that in the theatres the combatants are incited by boys, and not by their friends, though it might be ſuppoſed that theſe would be induced earneſtly to exhort them, through benevolence. Now therefore do you begin the conteſt, and inform me by a letter if you require my aſſiſtance. Affairs here are juſt as when you were with us. Inform me, likewiſe, what you have done, or what you are now doing: for though we hear many things, we know nothing; and now letters from Theodotus and Heraclides are come to Lacedæmon and Ægina. But we, as I have ſaid, though we hear many things about theſe particulars, yet we know nothing with certainty. Think likewiſe, that you appear to certain perſons to be leſs affable than is proper. Do not therefore forget, that the power of acting ariſes from pleaſing mankind, but that moroſeneſs occaſions a deſertion of aſſociates. May proſperity attend you.

EPISTLE V.

DION to PERDICCAS.

I HAVE perſuaded Euphræus, as you requeſt me in your letter, to pay conſtant attention to your affairs. But it is juſt, hoſpitable, and holy, that I ſhould both adviſe you reſpecting other things, and how you ought to uſe Euphræus. I ought, however, moſtly to adviſe you in that of which you are now indigent through your age, and the ſcarcity of youthful monitors. For there is a particular ſound from the ſeveral polities, juſt as if it were emitted from certain animals, one from a democracy, another from an oligarchy, and another again from a monarchy. Many aſſert that they underſtand theſe voices, but, except a few, they are very far from underſtanding them. Whichever of theſe polities therefore emits a proper ſound, both towards the gods, and towards men, and produces actions correſpondent to its ſound, that polity always flouriſhes and is preſerved. But when it imitates another ſound, it is corrupted. For this Euphræus will be uſeful to you in no ſmall degree, though he will likewiſe poſſeſs fortitude in other things. for I hope that he will diſcover the reaſons of a monarchy, not leſs than your aſſociates. If you employ him therefore for this purpoſe, you will both derive advantage to yourſelf, and greatly benefit him.

But if any one, hearing theſe things, ſhould ſay, Plato profeſſed to know what is advantageous to a democracy, but though he had an opportunity, in his own city, of ſpeaking to the people, and giving them the beſt advice, yet he never was known to riſe and addreſs them; to this it may be anſwered, that Plato came late to his country, and that he became acquainted with the people when they were advanced in years, and after they had been accuſtomed by thoſe prior to him to do many things contrary to his

his advice: for he would moſt willingly have conſulted for its good, as for that of his father, if he had not thought he ſhould have expoſed himſelf to needleſs danger. But I think that the ſame thing will take place with reſpect to his advice to me: for if we ſhould appear to be incurable, he will bid a long farewell to us, and will abſtain from adviſing either me or mine. May you be proſperous.

EPISTLE VI.

PLATO to HERMIAS, ERASTUS, and CORISCUS—Proſperity.

IT appears to me, that ſome one of the gods has benevolently and abundantly procured for you good fortune, if you only receive it in a becoming manner: for you dwell near to, and are able to benefit each other in the greateſt degree. And to Hermias I ſay, that neither a multitude of horſes, nor any other warlike apparatus, nor even an abundance of gold, poſſeſſes greater power, than friends that are ſtable, and endued with ſound manners. But to Eraſtus and Coriſcus I ſay, though I am an old man, that beſides this beautiful wiſdom of ideas, that wiſdom is requiſite which poſſeſſes a guardian and defenſive power againſt the baſe and unjuſt: for they are unſkilled in fraud, through living for a long time with us, who are orderly, and not vicious men. On this account I have ſaid, that they ſtand in need of theſe two kinds of wiſdom, leſt they ſhould be compelled to neglect true wiſdom, and ſhould pay more attention than is proper to human and neceſſary wiſdom. But Hermias appears to me to have received this power from a nature which is not yet connate, and from art through experience. What then do I ſay? To you, Hermias, I, as being more ſkilled in the manners and diſpoſition of Eraſtus and Coriſcus than you are, aſſert, indicate, and teſtify, that you will not eaſily find men whoſe manners deſerve greater confidence than theſe your neighbours. I adviſe you, therefore, to cultivate an acquaintance with theſe men as much as poſſible. And again, I adviſe you, Eraſtus and Coriſcus, to cultivate in return an acquaintance with Hermias, and endeavour, by mutual offices of kindneſs, to be united in the bonds of friendſhip.

But

But if any one of you ſhall appear to diſſolve this union (for human affairs are not altogether ſtable), ſend hither to me and mine an epiſtle containing an accuſation of the delinquent. For I think that the reaſons which our anſwer to this letter will contain, unleſs there has been ſome great cauſe for this diſſolution, will again bind you in your former friendſhip and union, more than any incantation. Indeed, if all we and you philoſophize as much as we are able, and as far as is permitted to each of us, the things which have now been oracularly delivered will poſſeſs their proper authority. But if we do not act in this manner, I will not relate the conſequences: for I predict a good omen to you, and I ſay, that if divinity pleaſes, you will perform all theſe good actions. But it is requiſite that this Epiſtle ſhould be read by you three together; or at leaſt by two of you in common, as often as poſſible; and that you ſhould uſe it by compact, and an eſtabliſhed law; at the ſame time taking an oath, with an earneſtneſs by no means inelegant, and with diſcipline, the ſiſter of this earneſtneſs, and ſwearing by that god, who is the leader[1] of all things preſent and future, and by the father and lord of this leader and cauſe: whom, if we truly philoſophize, we ſhall all clearly know, in as great a degree as is poſſible to happy men.

[1] By that god who is the leader of all things, Plato means Jupiter the artificer of the univerſe; and by the father and lord of this leader, the ineffable principle of things.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE VII.

PLATO to the Kindred and Aſſociates of DION—Proſperity.

YOU write to me, that it is requiſite to think that your ſentiments about politics are the ſame as thoſe of Dion; and that I ſhould be exhorted to join with you as much as poſſible, both in word and deed. Indeed, if you have the ſame opinion and deſire with him, I ſhall certainly join with you; but if you have not, it will be requiſite to deliberate frequently on the ſubject. But his thoughts and deſire were not ſuch as you conjecture. I, however, as knowing them, can clearly relate what they were.

When I firſt came to Syracuſe, I was nearly forty years old, and the age of Dion was then the ſame as that of Hipparinus is at preſent. He has likewiſe always perſevered in the opinion which he then entertained; I mean, that the Syracuſians ought to be free, and that they ſhould be governed by the beſt laws. So that it is by no means wonderful, if ſome god has cauſed Dion to accord with him in opinion reſpecting a polity. But the manner in which this was effected, is a thing which deſerves to be heard both by young and old. I will, however, endeavour to relate the affair to you from the beginning: for at preſent it will be opportune.

When I was a young man I was affected in the ſame manner as the many. For I determined, as ſoon as I became my own maſter, to betake myſelf immediately to the common affairs of the city. In the mean time, the following political circumſtances happened to me: The polity which exiſted at that time being reviled by many, a change took place. Then one and fifty men being choſen as governors, eleven of them preſided in the city, and ten in the Piræus; and each of theſe directed the affairs in the city. But the remaining thirty were inveſted with ſupreme authority. Some of theſe being my familiars, were well known to me, and immediately called on

on me to attend to politics, as a thing proper for me to ſtudy. But the manner in which I was affected was not at all wonderful, on account of my youth: for I thought that they ought to govern the city ſo as to bring it from an unjuſt life to juſt manners. And in conſequence of this, I very diligently attended to their conduct. But I perceived that theſe men, in a ſhort time, evinced that the former polity was golden in compariſon with theirs: for, beſides acting unjuſtly in other reſpects, they ſent Socrates, who was my friend, and older than I am, and who, I am not aſhamed to ſay, was the moſt juſt of any one then exiſting; they ſent him, I ſay, together with certain others, in order to bring back one of the citizens by force, that he might be puniſhed with death. They likewiſe endeavoured to make Socrates join with them in the management of affairs, whether he was willing or not. He refuſed however to comply, and determined to expoſe himſelf to every danger, rather than be a partaker of their impious deeds. All which when I perceived, together with other ſimilar particulars of no ſmall importance, I was indignant, and withdrew myſelf from the evil men of that time.

Not long after this, the thirty tyrants were cut off, and the whole of the then exiſting polity was ſubverted. Again, therefore, I was incited, though in a more moderate degree, to engage in common and political affairs. But many circumſtances then took place, at which any one might be indignant, owing to the diſordered ſtate of affairs at that time. Nor was it wonderful, that in ſuch mutations certain enemies ſhould be puniſhed in a more ſevere manner, although thoſe that returned were very equitable. However, through a certain fortune, it happened, that our aſſociate Socrates was brought into a court of juſtice, and was accuſed of the greateſt impiety, and which pertained to Socrates the leaſt of all men. For ſome led him along as an impious perſon, but others gave ſentence againſt him, and condemned *him* to death, who at that very time was unwilling to partake of the unholy deed reſpecting the removal of one of his exiled friends. On perceiving theſe things therefore, together with the men who had the management of political affairs, and their laws and manners, the more I conſidered them as I advanced in years, by ſo much the more difficult did the right adminiſtration of political concerns appear to me: *for this cannot be accompliſhed without friends and faithful aſſociates.* But at that time, it was not eaſy to find

find theſe: for our city was then no longer governed according to our fathers manners and purſuits; and it was not poſſible to obey ſuch as were new, with any degree of eaſe, in conſequence of the written laws and the manners being corrupted.

This likewiſe was wonderful in the affair, that I, who at firſt was ardently deſirous of engaging in political concerns, when I beheld the diſordered ſtate of things, was at length giddy with the view. However, I did not withdraw my attention from them, but determined to ſee whether ſomething better might not take place reſpecting theſe very things, and the whole polity, and always to wait a fit opportunity of acting. At laſt I perceived that all the cities exiſting at preſent were badly governed. For as to what relates to laws, they are nearly in an incurable ſtate, without the aſſiſtance of ſome wonderful apparatus in conjunction with fortune. I am therefore compelled to ſay, praiſing *genuine philoſophy*, that through this we are enabled to perceive ſuch political concerns as are juſt, and all the affairs of private individuals. *Hence, the human race will not be liberated from evils, till either the genus of thoſe that philoſophize with rectitude and truth obtains the government of political affairs, or thoſe that govern in cities, from a certain divine allotment, truly philoſophize.* With this conception, I firſt came to Italy and Sicily. But on my arriving thither, I was by no means pleaſed with the life which is called happy; a life full of the Italian and Syracuſian tables, and which conſiſts in repletion twice a day, in never lying alone by night, and ſuch other particulars as follow a life of this kind: for from theſe manners, no man under the heavens would ever become wiſe, if he is nouriſhed in them from his youth, however admirable his natural diſpoſition may be: nor will ſuch a one ever become temperate. And the ſame thing may be ſaid reſpecting the other virtues. But no city can acquieſce in its laws, while the citizens are of opinion, that it is proper to conſume all their poſſeſſions in ſuperfluous coſt; and that, neglecting every thing elſe, they ſhould give themſelves up to feaſting and venereal delight. For it is neceſſary that ſuch cities as theſe ſhould never ceaſe changing into tyrannies, oligarchies, and democracies, and that the powerful among them ſhould not even endure the name of a juſt and equitable polity. With theſe, and the above-mentioned conceptions, I came to Syracuſe: perhaps through the interference of fortune. It appeared indeed, that the adminiſtration of the preſent

preſent affairs reſpecting Dion and the Syracuſians, was deviſed by *ſome one of the natures more excellent*[1] *than mankind.* And I am afraid, that you, on conſulting me a ſecond time, will be leſs perſuaded by me than before. However, I affirm that the beginning of all the tranſactions was my journey to Sicily. For I aſſociated with Dion who was then a young man; and in my diſcourſe, explained to him, and adviſed him to do, ſuch things as appeared to me to be beſt for mankind; not knowing that certain perſons were then ſecretly contriving a diſſolution of the tyranny. For Dion being very docile, both with reſpect to other things, and what was then ſaid by me, he ſo acutely apprehended, and readily embraced my doctrines, that he ſurpaſſed all the young men with whom I was ever acquainted. He was likewiſe determined to paſs the remainder of his life in a manner ſuperior to many of the Italians and Sicilians, viz. in purſuing virtue, rather than pleaſure and luxury. Hence he was hated by thoſe, who lived conformably to tyrannic inſtitutes, even till the death of Dionyſius.

After this he perceived that the very ſame conception, which he had framed through the aſſiſtance of right reaſon, did not ſubſiſt in him alone, but in certain other perſons, though they were not numerous, among whom he thought was Dionyſius the younger. He likewiſe hoped that if this were the caſe, both his own life, and that of the other Syracuſians, would be tranſcendently more bleſſed. On this account he thought that I ought by all means to come with the utmoſt celerity to Syracuſe, that I might aſſiſt them in their undertakings; remembering how eaſily, by my converſation, he was inflamed with the deſire of leading the moſt beautiful and beſt life. If he could but enkindle this deſire in Dionyſius, as he was attempting to do, he was in hopes that a happy and true life, without ſlaughter and death, and the evils which exiſt at preſent, would flouriſh through every part of Syracuſe.

Dion rightly conceiving that this would be the caſe, perſuaded Dionyſius to ſend for me, and himſelf requeſted that I would by all means come with the utmoſt celerity, before certain other perſons, aſſociating with Dionyſius, turned him to a life different from that which is beſt. But it is neceſſary to relate more fully what he ſaid. Why, ſays he, ſhould we expect a fitter

[1] Viz. by ſome one of thoſe who are eſſentially dæmons or heroes.

opportunity than that which now preſents itſelf to us through a certain divine fortune? He likewiſe mentioned the empire of Italy and Sicily, the power of Dionyſius in this empire, and his vehement deſire after philoſophy and erudition. He informed me how much inclined his own kindred and familiars were to the doctrines and mode of life which I inculcated, and that he himſelf was moſt ſufficient to incite Dionyſius to embrace them. He added, that in conſequence of this, if at any time, there was now every reaſon to hope that theſe perſons would become philoſophers and rulers of mighty cities. With theſe therefore, and many other ſuch reaſons, did he urge me to comply with his requeſt. But I was fearful of the event; as the deſires of young men are haſty, and are often borne along in a direction contrary to themſelves.

However, I knew that the diſpoſition of Dion was naturally grave, and that his age was ſufficiently mature. Hence, while I was conſidering and doubting whether I ſhould go and comply with his requeſt, or not, it at the ſame time occured to me that I ought to go; and that if ever any one thought of attempting to give perfection to laws and a polity, now was the time to make the attempt. For I conſidered, that if I could only perſuade one perſon, I ſhould ſufficiently produce every good. With this conception and this confidence, and not from the motives which ſome have thought, I left my home; feeling at the ſame time in myſelf the greateſt ſhame leſt I ſhould ever appear to myſelf to be nothing more than a man of words, and ſhould never voluntarily accompliſh any thing in deeds. I was likewiſe fearful, leſt the hoſpitality and friendſhip of Dion ſhould be expoſed to no ſmall dangers; who, if he ſhould fall into any calamity, or be baniſhed by Dionyſius, and his other enemies, would fly to us, and thus addreſs us: "I come to you, O Plato, an exile, but am neither indigent of horſes nor ſoldiers to oppoſe my enemies, but I am in want of words and perſuaſion, by which I know you are eſpecially able to convert young men to probity and juſtice, and unite them in friendſhip and fellowſhip with each other; through a defect of which on your part I have now left Syracuſe, and have betaken myſelf hither. As to what relates to myſelf indeed, this will bring you leſs diſgrace: but as to philoſophy, which you always praiſe, and which you ſay is diſhonoured by other men, is it not now betrayed by you together with

with me? If, indeed, we had been inhabitants of Megara, you would have come to my aſſiſtance when I had called you, or I ſhould have conſidered you as the moſt depraved of all men. But now, excuſing yourſelf through the length of the journey, and the magnitude of the voyage and the labour, you think you ſhall avoid infamy, though this is far from being the caſe."

If Dion had thus addreſſed me, I ſhould certainly have been at a loſs for a becoming anſwer. I, therefore, came to Syracuſe, with reaſon and juſtice, leaving my own purſuits, which were not unbecoming, under a tyranny, which was neither adapted to my diſcourſes nor myſelf. But when I came thither I liberated myſelf, and thus preſerved the allotment of hoſpitable Jupiter, and of a philoſopher, unblameable. This allotment indeed would have been diſgraceful, if, being in any reſpect effeminate and timid, I had been a partaker of vicious ſhame. On my arrival then (for there is no occaſion to be prolix) I found all things about Dionyſius full of ſedition, and calumnies reſpecting the tyranny of Dion. I defended Dion, therefore, to the utmoſt of my power, but I was able to effect but little. For, on the fourth month nearly after my arrival, Dionyſius accuſed Dion of endeavouring to obtain the tyranny by ſtratagem, and diſgracefully ſent him into exile in a ſmall ſhip. After this all of us that were the friends of Dion were fearful leſt Dionyſius ſhould accuſe and puniſh any one of us as cooperating with Dion in his ſtratagem. It was likewiſe reported in Syracuſe, that I was put to death by Dionyſius, as being the cauſe of every thing that then happened. But he perceiving that we were all thus affected, and dreading leſt ſomething of greater conſequence ſhould ariſe from our fear, received all of us benevolently, conſoled me, deſired me to confide in him, and requeſted that I would by all means ſtay; as he would derive no advantage from my flight, but from my continuing at Syracuſe. On this account, he pretended to requeſt me very much to ſtay. However, we know that the requeſts of tyrants are mingled with neceſſity.

Contriving, therefore, to prevent my departure, he obliged me to reſide in the acropolis, whence no ſailor could lead me away, not becauſe he would be hindered by Dionyſius, but becauſe he could not accompliſh this without his orders. Nor was there any merchant, or provincial magiſtrate, who, on ſeeing me leaving the country, would not immediately have brought me back again to Dionyſius; eſpecially ſince the report at that time was con-

trary to that which was circulated before; for now it was ſaid that Dionyſius again received Plato with wonderful kindneſs. And indeed this was the caſe: for it is neceſſary to ſpeak the truth. He behaved therefore to me with increaſing kindneſs every day, and was delighted with my manners and habits. But he wiſhed me to praiſe him more, and to conſider him as my friend in a far greater degree than Dion: and this he ſtrove to accompliſh in a wonderful manner. However, he neglected the moſt beautiful means of effecting his purpoſe, if it could have been effected, I mean aſſociating and becoming familiar with me, by hearing and learning diſcourſes on philoſophy. But this he was fearful of doing, leſt, as was aſſerted by my calumniators, he ſhould be impeded in his deſigns, and Dion ſhould have the entire management of affairs. However, I endured every thing, perſevering in the opinion which I entertained when I firſt came to Syracuſe, and trying if by any poſſible means Dionyſius could be brought to a deſire of a philoſophic life. But he rendered my endeavours ineffectual by his oppoſition. And ſuch are the particulars of my firſt voyage to Sicily.

However, in conſequence of the earneſt ſolicitations of Dionyſius, I made a ſecond voyage to Sicily. But on what account I came thither, and what I did there, I may reaſonably and juſtly relate to you, when I adviſe you how it is proper to act in the preſent ſtate of affairs. I ſay I may relate this to you, for the ſake of thoſe who aſk why I came a ſecond time to Sicily. I ſpeak in this manner, that ſuperfluous things may not be preferred by me to ſuch as are important.

I think, indeed, that he who gives his advice to a ſick man, and one who uſes bad diet, ſhould perſuade him in the firſt place to change his mode of living; and if the diſeaſed perſon is willing to comply with him in this, that he ſhould then perſuade him to other things; but if he is unwilling to comply, then I ſhould think that his adviſer, if he abandons him, acts like a man and a phyſician, but if he ſtill continues with him, that he acts like one effeminate and deſtitute of art. I aſſert the ſame thing likewiſe of a city, whether it has one governor, or many. For if the polity proceeds in a right way, it is the province of a man, endued with intellect, to give it uſeful advice; but if the very contrary of this happens to be the caſe, and the people do not by any means wiſh to tread in the veſtiges of an upright polity, but proclaim to their adviſer that he muſt relinquiſh his concern about the polity,

polity, and not diſturb it, for if he does he ſhall ſuffer death; and at the ſame time exhort him to be ſubſervient to their wills and deſires, and thus adviſe them how they may always procure pleaſures with celerity and eaſe; when this is the caſe, I ſhould conſider him who endures to give ſuch advice, as effeminate, but him who does not endure it, as a man.

In conſequence of this conception, when any one conſults me about one of the greateſt concerns of his life, ſuch as about the acquiſition of riches, or the attention pertaining to the body or ſoul, if he appears to me to live daily in an orderly manner, or is willing to be perſuaded when I give him my advice, then I readily join with him in conſultation, nor do I deſiſt till the affair is brought to a concluſion. But if either he does not at all conſult me, or, if he does, obviouſly neglects to follow my advice, in this caſe I ſhould not of my own accord give advice to ſuch a one, nor would I be compelled to give it, even if he were my ſon. But I would voluntarily give advice to a ſlave, and, if he were unwilling, force him to follow it. I ſhould not however think it holy to force my father, unleſs he was void of underſtanding through diſeaſe.

Again, if thoſe that conſult me live according to an eſtabliſhed mode which is pleaſing to themſelves, but not to me, I would not hate them, becauſe I had admoniſhed them in vain, nor yet flattering be ſubſervient to them, and afford them thoſe means of gratifying their deſires, which, if I were to embrace, I ſhould not wiſh to live. With the ſame conceptions reſpecting his country, a prudent man ought to live, expoſing its errors, if it appears to him not to be well governed, when this can be done, without ſpeaking in vain, or loſing his life. But he ſhould never by violence effect a change in the government of his country, when it cannot be brought to the beſt condition, without the expulſion and ſlaughter of the citizens, but in this caſe, leading a quiet life, he ſhould pray for the good both of himſelf and the city.

In the very ſame manner I adviſe you to act. And I adviſed Dionyſius to live daily in ſuch a manner with Dion, that he might both have the maſtery over himſelf, and acquire faithful friends and aſſociates, that the ſame thing might not befall him which happened to his father. For his father having obtained the poſſeſſion of and reeſtabliſhed many and great cities in Sicily, which had been ſubverted by the Barbarians, could not eſtabliſh in the politics

tics of theſe faithful men, neither from his own aſſociates, nor from among ſtrangers, nor from his younger brothers, whom he himſelf had educated. Nor yet could he find men worthy to be truſted, either among the private perſons whom he had made governors, or the poor, whom he had made very rich. But among theſe he could not procure one faithful aſſociate, either by perſuading or teaching, or the benefits which he conferred. But he was ſeven times worſe than Darius, who neither confiding in his brothers, nor in thoſe that were educated by him, but alone aſſociating with himſelf in the government of his kingdom a Mede and captive eunuch, he divided ſeven parts of his dominions between them, each of which was larger than all Sicily, and found them to be faithful adherents, and neither inſidious to him, nor to each other. He likewiſe gave an example how a good legiſlator and king ought to act. For he eſtabliſhed laws by which the Perſian government is preſerved even at preſent. To which we may add, that the Athenians, after they had taken poſſeſſion of many Grecian cities, which they had not founded themſelves, and which had been ſubverted by the Barbarians, preſerved their empire over them for ſeventy years, in conſequence of procuring to themſelves friends in each of the cities.

But Dionyſius having collected all Sicily into one city, and through his wiſdom confiding in no one, was with difficulty ſaved. For he was deſtitute of friends, and men in whom he could confide, than which there can be no greater ſign of vice, as on the contrary the poſſeſſion of theſe is the greateſt proof of virtue. I therefore and Dion adviſed Dionyſius to procure himſelf friends from his aſſociates, and ſuch as were his equals in age, and who unanimouſly cultivated virtue, ſince, through the ſituation of his father's affairs, he neither cultivated learning, nor had proper aſſociates. But we particularly adviſed him to accord with himſelf. For we aſſerted that he was in a wonderful manner deficient in this reſpect, not indeed in perſpicuous terms (for this was not ſafe), but in an obſcure manner, contending in our diſcourſe, that when this is the caſe, every man will become the ſaviour both of himſelf and thoſe whom he governs; but that when he does not accord with himſelf, he will cauſe the very contrary of this to take place. If therefore, as we ſaid, he was conſiſtent with himſelf, and acquired prudence and temperance, and if afterwards he reſtored the deſolated cities of Sicily, and bound them together with ſuch laws and polities, that they might

might be friendly both to him and to each other, in reſiſting the incurſions of the Barbarians, then he would not only double, but in reality multiply his paternal kingdom. For thus the Carthaginians would much more readily become ſubject to his power, than they were to that of Gelon; nor would he on the contrary, like his father, be compelled to pay a tribute to the Barbarians.

This was the ſubſtance of what we ſaid, and the advice which we gave to Dionyſius, at the very time when it was reported in many places that we were forming ſtratagems againſt him. Indeed, the men who raiſed theſe reports prevailed over Dionyſius, expelled Dion, and threw us into fear. But, in ſhort, Dion, departing from Peloponneſus and Athens, admoniſhed Dionyſius in reality. When therefore Dion had liberated and twice reſtored the city to its inhabitants, the Syracuſians were then affected in the ſame manner towards him, as Dionyſius had been before. For Dionyſius had endeavoured to educate Dion ſo as that he might become a king worthy of his kingdom, and be his aſſociate through the whole of life. But thoſe that calumniated Dion, reported that he endeavoured to gain the tyranny by ſtratagem, and did every thing at that time, that the mind of Dionyſius, which was allured by diſcipline, might neglect the affairs of government, and commit them entirely to Dion, who, by fraudulent uſurpation, would expel Dionyſius from the empire.

Theſe things being then reported a ſecond time among the Syracuſians, vanquiſhed by a very abſurd and baſe victory thoſe who were the cauſes of the victory. But it is proper that the particulars of this affair ſhould be heard by you, who now call upon me to ſettle the preſent affairs. I therefore being an Athenian, the aſſociate of Dion, and one who joined with him in oppoſing the tyrant, that he might make peace inſtead of war, was vanquiſhed in oppoſing the calumniators. But Dionyſius, by loading me with honours and riches, endeavoured to perſuade me to ſtay with him, and to make me his friend, that I might ſerve as a witneſs that he had not undeſervedly expelled Dion. However, he was entirely diſappointed in his expectations. But Dion afterwards returning home, brought with him two Athenian brothers, who had not become his friends from philoſophy, but from that caſual aſſociation of moſt friends, which ariſes from performing the

the rites of hoſpitality, and from being mutually initiated in ſacred myſteries. From theſe cauſes, and from offering to attend Dion in his return to Syracuſe, he had contracted a friendſhip with them. But theſe men, on their coming to Sicily, when they underſtood that Dion was calumniated as endeavouring by ſtratagem to obtain the tyranny, by thoſe very men whom he had liberated, not only betrayed their aſſociate and gueſt, but becoming as it were perpetrators of murder with their own hands, they aſſiſted the murderers with arms. However, I ſhall neither paſs by in ſilence, nor relate the particulars of this baſe and unholy deed: for it has been elegantly related by many others, and will be again in ſome future period of time.

But I will wipe away the infamy with which the Athenians are branded. For I ſay, that *he* was an Athenian, who could never be induced either by riches or honours to betray the city. For he was not made a friend through illiberal benevolence, but through the communion of liberal diſcipline; in which alone, he who is endued with intellect ought to confide, rather than in the alliance of ſouls and bodies. Theſe men, therefore, are not of conſequence ſufficient to bring diſgrace on the city for killing Dion: for they were men of no renown. But I have ſaid thus much for the ſake of giving advice to the friends and kindred of Dion.

I give you likewiſe the ſame advice as before, and addreſs you in the ſame words the third time, viz. that you ſhould neither ſubject Sicily, nor, in my opinion, any other city, to deſpotic men, but to the laws; for this is neither better for the governors nor the governed, nor for their children, nor their children's children, but the experiment is perfectly pernicious. But little and illiberal ſouls delight to ſeize gain of this kind, underſtanding nothing of things juſt and good, human and divine, whether pertaining to the preſent time, or to futurity. Of the truth of theſe things, I endeavoured firſt to perſuade Dion, and afterwards Dionyſius, and now, in the third place, you. Be perſuaded therefore by me, for the ſake of Jupiter the third ſaviour.

In the next place, look to Dionyſius and Dion, the former of whom, not following my advice, now lives in an unbecoming manner; but the latter, who acted conformably to my perſuaſions, died beautifully. For he who aſpires after the moſt excellent things, both for himſelf and his country, will endure whatever may befall him in an upright and beautiful manner: for no

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one of us is naturally immortal[1], nor if this ſhould happen to be the caſe with any one of us, would he on that account become happy, as it appears he would to the multitude. For in things inanimate, there is nothing either of good or ill which deſerves to be regarded: but good or ill happens to every ſoul, either during its union with, or ſeparation from, body. But it is always proper thus to believe in antient and ſacred diſcourſes, which inform us that the ſoul is immortal, that it has judges of its conduct, and that it ſuffers the greateſt puniſhments when it is liberated from the body. On this account it is requiſite to think that it is a leſſer evil to ſuffer than to do the greateſt injuries. This, indeed, the man who is a lover of wealth, and who is poor in ſoul does not hear, and if he did hear, he would deride it, in conſequence of thinking that he ought impudently to ſeize on all ſides, like a wild beaſt, whatever he can eat or drink, and whatever can contribute to venereal delight, which is a thing ſervile and ungrateful, and is not properly denominated pleaſure. Such a one being blind, does not perceive that he can never ſatisfy inſatiable deſire, nor ſee what a mighty evil is unholy conduct, nor what the particulars are with which it is always attended in conjunction with every unjuſt deed. For he who acts unjuſtly, muſt neceſſarily attract to himſelf impiety, both while he rolls on the earth, and when he accompliſhes under the earth a journey, perfectly and in every reſpect diſhonourable and miſerable.

When I ſaid theſe, and other things of the like kind to Dion, I perſuaded him of their truth. But I was moſt juſtly enraged with his murderers, in the ſame manner nearly as with Dionyſius: for both of them injured me, and all the reſt, as I may ſay, in the higheſt degree. For they deſtroyed a man who was willing to uſe juſtice: but Dionyſius, who did not by any means wiſh to uſe juſtice, through the whole of his government, obtained the greateſt power. If, however, under his government, philoſophy and power had been united in reality, they would have preſented to all men, both Greeks and Barbarians, a true and ſufficiently luminous opinion, that neither any city nor any man can ever be happy, unleſs they paſs through life with prudence[2], and in ſubjection to juſtice; whether they poſſeſs theſe in themſelves, or are properly educated and inſtructed in the manners of holy governors.

The conduct, therefore, of Dionyſius in theſe things was noxious: but other

[1] Viz. the union of the ſoul with this terrene body is not an immortal union.

[2] See the General Introduction prefixed to this work for the accurate meaning of this word.

things in which I was injured are ſmall when compared to theſe. But he who ſlew Dion, did not know that he had done the ſame thing as Dionyſius. For I clearly know, as far as it is poſſible for one man to ſpeak confidently of another, that if Dion had retained his government, he would never have changed it into any other form than that which he firſt gave to his own country, Syracuſe, when he delivered it from ſlavery, cauſed it to aſſume a joyful and ſplendid appearance, and eſtabliſhed it in liberty. After this, he would have adorned the citizens, by every poſſible contrivance, with ſuch laws as are adapted to them, and are the moſt excellent. And beſides theſe things, he would have diligently endeavoured to make all Sicily inhabited, and free from the Barbarians, by expelling ſome and ſubjecting others, more eaſily than this was done by Hiero. But if theſe things had taken place, through a man juſt, brave, temperate, and who was a philoſopher, the ſame opinion of virtue would have been produced among the multitude, as would have flouriſhed among all men, if Dionyſius had followed my advice. But now either ſome dæmon, or ſome pernicious character, replete with iniquity and impiety, and, what is of the greateſt conſequence, with the audacity of ignorance, in which all evils are rooted, and from which they germinate and afterwards produce the moſt bitter fruit,—this dæmon, or this dire perſon, has a ſecond time ſubverted and deſtroyed every thing. However, for the ſake of augury, we now ominate good things the third time.

I adviſe therefore you, my friends, to imitate Dion, and acquire that patriotic benevolence which he poſſeſſed, and that temperate mode of living which he adopted. But you have clearly heard from me, what are the auſpices by which you ſhould endeavour to accompliſh his wiſh: and if there is any one among you, who is unable to live in a Doric manner, according to paternal inſtitutes, but follows the Sicilian mode of living, and that which was adopted by the murderers of Dion, neither call on him to join with you, nor believe that he will ever be ſincere and faithful in any undertaking. But you ſhould exhort the reſt to reeſtabliſh the whole of Sicily, and introduce both in Sicily and all Peloponneſus equitable laws, without dreading the Athenians: for men are to be found there who ſurpaſs all others in virtue, and who hate the audacity of thoſe that ſlaughter their gueſts.

But if theſe things ſhould take place afterwards, and the many and all various ſeditions and diſcords which ſpring up daily urge us to immediate exertion;

exertion; in this caſe, every man who, through a divine fortune, partakes, though in a ſmall degree, of right opinion, ought to know, that there will be no end to the evils reſulting from ſedition, till thoſe who vanquiſh in battle refrain from ſlaughtering and baniſhing their fellow-citizens, and from the remembrance of injuries, and giving reſpite to their deſire of vengeance, become reconciled to their enemies; and till obtaining the empire over themſelves, they eſtabliſh common laws, which no leſs pertain to themſelves, than to thoſe they have vanquiſhed, at the ſame time compelling them to uſe theſe laws. But they ſhould compel them by a two-fold neceſſity, viz. of fear and ſhame. By the neceſſity of fear, evincing their power; in conſequence of being ſuperior to them: but by the neceſſity of ſhame, through their appearing to ſurpaſs them, both in vanquiſhing pleaſures, and in ſubjection to the laws. For there is no other way by which a city labouring under ſedition can find a period to its evils. But ſeditions, enmities, hatred, perfidy, will always ariſe in cities, which are thus affected towards themſelves. Thoſe, therefore, that have the greateſt power in cities, if they deſire the welfare of their country, ſhould chooſe among themſelves, in preference to others, ſuch men as they have heard to be the moſt excellent characters: and, in the firſt place, they ſhould chooſe old men, who poſſeſs children, wives, and eſtates, together with ſuch of their progenitors as are moſt worthy and renowned, and poſſeſs ſufficient property. But ten thouſand and fifty inhabitants will be ſufficient for a city of this kind. Theſe ſhould be ſent from their places of abode with prayers and the greateſt honours: but after they are called from home, they ſhould be bound by an oath, and exhorted to eſtabliſh laws, that they may not attribute more to the victors than the vanquiſhed, but impart the equal and that which is common to the whole city. All things, however, conſiſt in the eſtabliſhment of laws. For when the victors are more willing to be ſubject to the laws than thoſe that are vanquiſhed, all things will be well, and full of felicity, and every evil will be exiled. But if this is not the caſe, there is no occaſion to call me, or any other, to join with him in the adminiſtration of affairs, who is not perſuaded by the precepts I have now enjoined. For theſe are the ſiſters of the things which I and Dion very wiſely attempted to accompliſh among the Syracuſians. They were, however, ſecond attempts: for the firſt were thoſe common goods, which we attempted to effect in conjunction with Dionyſius. But a certain fortune ſuperior to man-

kind fruſtrated our attempt. Do you therefore now endeavour to accompliſh theſe things more proſperouſly, through a good deſtiny, and a certain divine fortune. And thus much concerning my advice and epiſtle, and my firſt viſit to Dionyſius.

But my ſecond voyage to Sicily was both becoming and proper, of which he may now hear an account who is ſo inclined. For the firſt time of my reſidence in Sicily paſſed away as I have already ſaid, before I could adviſe the kindred and aſſociates of Dion; but after this I perſuaded Dionyſius, to the utmoſt of my power, to ſuffer me to depart: but we mutually agreed, that when a peace took place (for there was then a war in Sicily), Dionyſius ſhould recall Dion and me, as ſoon as his government was more ſecurely eſtabliſhed. He likewiſe thought it proper that Dion ſhould underſtand that I was not then baniſhed by him, but was to return to him at a certain time. And I agreed to theſe conditions.

A peace therefore taking place, Dionyſius ſent for me, but required that Dion ſhould abſent himſelf, for another year: bu the requeſted me by all means to come. Dion therefore exhorted and entreated me to ſet ſail; for it was very much reported from Sicily, that Dionyſius was again wonderfully inflamed with a deſire of philoſophy: and on this account Dion earneſtly requeſted me to ſet ſail for Sicily. But I, though I knew that many ſuch things happened to young men reſpecting philoſophy, at the ſame time thought it more ſafe not to comply with the requeſt of Dionyſius and Dion. I therefore anſwered both of them, that I was an old man, and that nothing which was done at preſent was according to the agreement. But it ſeems that after this Archytas[1] had betaken himſelf to Dionyſius: for, before I ſet ſail from Sicily, I had made Archytas, and certain other Tarentines, the gueſts and friends of Dionyſius. There were likewiſe certain others among the Syracuſians who were the auditors of Dion, and among theſe ſome wh were full of depraved doctrines reſpecting philoſophy, and who appeared to me to endeavour to diſcourſe with Dionyſius about things of this kind, as if Dionyſius had heard all ſuch particulars as were the ſubject of my thoughts. But he was not naturally unapt with reſpect to learning, and was ambitious in a wonderful degree. Perhaps, therefore, he was pleaſed with the diſcourſe of theſe men; and he was ma-

[1] A famous Pythagorean philoſopher.

nifeſtly

nifeſtly aſhamed that he heard nothing from me when I went to ſee him. Hence he was at the ſame time inflamed with a deſire of hearing me more clearly, and ſtimulated by ambition. But on what account he did not hear me diſcourſe, when I firſt came to Sicily, I have related above.

After therefore I had returned home ſafe, and refuſed to comply with his ſecond invitation, Dionyſius appeared to be perfectly ambitious, and through his deſire of renown to be afraid leſt I ſhould ſeem to certain perſons to deſpiſe him, and that my diſlike of his diſpoſition, habits, and mode of living, had induced me to refuſe complying with his requeſt. But it is juſt that I ſhould ſpeak the truth, and endure with equanimity, if any one on hearing the paſt tranſactions ſhould deſpiſe my philoſophy, and think that the tyrant was endued with intellect: for Dionyſius ſent to me, the third time, a three-ranked galley, for the ſake of procuring me an eaſy paſſage. He ſent alſo Archidemus, whom he thought I moſt eſteemed of all the familiars of Archytas that were then in his dominions, together with other illuſtrious perſons in Sicily. But all theſe announced to us the ſame thing, viz. that Dionyſius was wonderfully given to philoſophy. Beſides this, he ſent me a long epiſtle, knowing how I was affected towards Dion, and that Dion was deſirous I ſhould ſet ſail and come to Syracuſe. The letter, therefore, was compoſed with a view to all theſe particulars, and the beginning of it was as follows:

Dionyſius to Plato: after which followed ſuch things as are uſual, and he ſaid nothing after this, except that complying with his requeſt I ſhould now come to Sicily. He then proceeded: "In the firſt place the particulars reſpecting Dion ſhall be accompliſhed according to your wiſh; but I know you wiſh for moderate meaſures, and that I would accede to them. However, unleſs you come, your deſires reſpecting Dion will not be gratified, nor yet reſpecting other things pertaining to yourſelf." This is what he wrote. But the other parts of his letter were prolix, and foreign to the purpoſe. Other letters likewiſe came to me from Archytas, and other Tarentines, praiſing the philoſophic diſpoſition of Dionyſius, and adding, that unleſs I now came their friendſhip with Dionyſius, which had been effected through me, and which was of no ſmall conſequence with reſpect to political affairs, would be entirely deſtroyed.

As therefore, at that time, I was thus incited to comply with the requeſt of Dionyſius,

Dionyſius, ſome drawing me from Sicily and Italy, and others at Athens impelling me, as it were, by their prayers; and again reaſon proclaiming, that I ought not to betray Dion, together with the gueſts and others belonging to Tarentum:—when I likewiſe conſidered, that it was nothing wonderful, if a young man who was formerly unwilling to hear reſpecting things of great moment ſhould become docile, and be inflamed with a deſire of the beſt life, and that it was proper to prove clearly, in what manner he was affected, and not by any means betray him, nor become myſelf the cauſe of a diſgrace ſo truly great, if the caſe with reſpect to Dionyſius was in reality ſuch as it was reported to be;—ſcreened by this reaſoning as with a veil, I commenced my journey, fearing many things, and propheſying as it ſeems not altogether well. I came therefore to Sicily the third time under the protection of the ſaviour Jupiter. And this voyage I actually accompliſhed, being again fortunately ſaved. But for theſe things I return thanks to Dionyſius, after divinity; becauſe when many were willing to ſlay me, he prevented them, and conducted himſelf with ſome degree of moderation in my affairs.

When therefore I came to Sicily, I thought it was proper, in the firſt place, to try whether Dionyſius was in reality enkindled by philoſophy as by a fire, or whether the report concerning him at Athens was entirely vain. But there is a certain method of making an experiment about things of this kind, by no means ignoble, but truly adapted to tyrants, and eſpecially to thoſe that are full of depraved doctrines, which, as ſoon as I arrived, I perceived was very much the caſe with Dionyſius. But to ſuch as theſe, it is requiſite to ſhow that philoſophy is a thing of the greateſt conſequence, and that it it only to be obtained by great ſtudy and mighty labour. For he who hears that this is the caſe, if he is truly a lover of wiſdom, and is adapted to and worthy of its acquiſition, being a divine perſon, will think that he hears of an admirable way, that he ought immediately to betake himſelf to this path, and make it the great buſineſs of his life. After this, he will not ceaſe exciting both himſelf, and the leader of this way, till he either obtains the conſummation of his wiſhes, or receives a power by which he may be able to conduct himſelf without a guide.

Such a one, therefore, will ſo live, that all his actions may accord with theſe conceptions. But before all things he will be perpetually intent on philoſophy,

philoſophy, and will daily procure for himſelf ſuch nutriment, as may eſpecially render him docile, of a good memory, and able to reaſon; living ſoberly, and hating intoxication.

But thoſe that are not lovers of wiſdom in reality, but are coloured over with opinions, like thoſe whoſe bodies are burnt by the ſun, when they perceive what a multitude of diſciplines, what mighty labour, and what temperate food are requiſite, to the acquiſition of philoſophy, ſuch as theſe, thinking that philoſophy is a thing difficult and impoſſible for them to obtain, cannot be brought to make it the object of their purſuit. But ſome of theſe perſuade themſelves, that they have ſufficiently heard the whole of philoſophy, and that they require nothing further. This mode of experiment is perſpicuous and moſt ſafe, when employed upon the effeminate, and ſuch as are incapable of enduring labour: for thus they can never accuſe him who points out to them the arduouſneſs of the undertaking, but muſt blame themſelves as unable to engage in all that is requiſite to the acquiſition of philoſophy.

This method of examination I employed upon Dionyſius; but I neither enumerated all the requiſites, nor did Dionyſius require that I ſhould. For there were many things, and thoſe of the greateſt conſequence, in which he pretended to be ſufficiently knowing, through the depraved doctrines which he had heard from others. But I am informed that he afterwards wrote about the things which he then heard, as if the compoſition was the reſult of his own art, when at the ſame time it contained nothing of his own. However, I am entirely ignorant as to the truth of this report. But I know that certain others have written about the ſame things, though without underſtanding what they wrote.

Thus much however I ſhall ſay reſpecting all thoſe who either have written, or ſhall write, affirming that they know thoſe things which are the objects of my ſtudy, (whether they have heard them from me or from others, or whether they have diſcovered them themſelves,) that they have not heard any thing about theſe particulars conformable to my opinion: for I never have written, nor ever ſhall write, about them. For a thing of this kind[1] cannot be expreſſed by words like other diſciplines, but by long familiarity, and living in conjunction with the thing itſelf, a light as it were leaping from

[1] Plato here means by *a thing of this kind*, true being, the proper object of intellect.

a fire

a fire will on a ſudden be enkindled in the ſoul, and there itſelf nouriſh itſelf. Indeed, thus much I know, that things which have been written or ſaid by me, have been ſaid in the beſt manner; and I do not feel the ſmalleſt degree of pain from things being aſcribed to me that are badly written.

But if it appeared to me that the particulars of which I am ſpeaking could be ſufficiently communicated to the multitude by writing or ſpeech, what could we accompliſh more beautiful in life than to impart a mighty benefit to mankind, and lead an intelligible nature into light, ſo as to be obvious to all men? I think, however, that an attempt of this kind would only be beneficial to a few, who from ſome ſmall veſtiges previouſly demonſtrated are themſelves able to diſcover theſe abſtruſe particulars. But with reſpect to the reſt of mankind, ſome it will fill with a contempt by no means elegant, and others with a lofty and arrogant hope, that they ſhould now learn certain excellent things. I intend, therefore, to ſpeak further about theſe particulars: for thus perhaps I ſhall ſay ſomething clearer reſpecting them than I have yet ſaid. For there is a certain true diſcourſe which is adverſe to him, who dares to write about things of this kind, and which has often been delivered by me before, and as it ſeems muſt be delivered by me at preſent.

There are three things belonging to each of thoſe particulars through which ſcience is neceſſarily produced. But the fourth is ſcience itſelf. And it is requiſite to eſtabliſh as the fifth that which is known and true. One of theſe is the name of a thing; the ſecond its definition; the third the reſemblance; the fourth ſcience. Now take each of theſe, deſiring to learn what we have lately aſſerted, and think as follows concerning them all. A circle is called ſomething, whoſe name we have juſt expreſſed. After this follows its definition, compoſed from nouns and verbs. For that which every where is equally diſtant from the extremes to the middle, is the definition of that which we ſignify by the name of a round, and a circumference, and a circle. But the third is the circle which may be painted, or blotted out, which may be made by a wheel, or deſtroyed. None of which affections, the circle itſelf, which each of theſe reſpects, ſuffers, as being of a different nature. But the fourth is ſcience and intellect, and true opinion about theſe. And the whole of this again muſt be eſtabliſhed as one thing which neither ſub-

ſiſts

ſiſts in voice, nor in corporeal figures, but is inherent in ſoul[1]. It is therefore manifeſt, that this fourth is different from the nature itſelf[2] of the circle, and again different from the three we have previouſly mentioned. But among the number of theſe, intellect, by its relation and ſimilitude, proximately adheres to the fifth, while the reſt are more remote from its nature. The ſame may likewiſe be affirmed of a ſtraight and crooked figure, of colour, and of the good, the beautiful, and the juſt. And again of every body, whether faſhioned by the hand, or the work of nature, whether fire or water, and the reſt of this kind; likewiſe of every animal, and the manners of ſouls; and of all actions and paſſions. For unleſs among theſe ſome one after a manner receives that fourth, he will never perfectly participate the ſcience about the fifth. For, in addition to what has been ſaid, theſe four no leſs endeavour to evince about every thing the quality which it poſſeſſes; but likewiſe its being, through the imbecility of reaſons. On this account, no one endued with intellect will ever dare to conſider as equally immutable, things which are the objects of intellectual viſion, and ſuch as have a ſubſiſtence in corporeal figures.

But again, it is requiſite to attend to what we have juſt now ſaid. Every circle, which by the hands of men is either painted, or faſhioned by a wheel, is plainly contrary to our fifth: for it every where participates of the right line. But we muſt affirm that the circle itſelf has neither more nor leſs of any thing whatever; that is, it poſſeſſes in itſelf nothing of a contrary nature. Beſides, none of theſe is endued with any ſtability of name: for nothing hinders our applying the appellation of ſtraight to that which we now denominate round, and calling the ſtraight by the denomination of the round; nor will there be any leſs ſtability in theſe, when their names are changed into the contrary. The ſame reaſoning is likewiſe true of definition, ſince it is compoſed from nouns and verbs which poſſeſs no ſtability. And in a variety of ways it may be proved, that no one of theſe four is certain and firm. But the greateſt thing of all, as I juſt before obſerved, is

[1] Viz. in the dianoëtic part of the ſoul: for the forms, or eſſential reaſons ſubſiſting in this part, are the objects of ſcience.

[2] For the circle itſelf is an *intellectual form*, and is not to be apprehended by the diſcurſive energies of the dianoëtic part, but by the ſimple projections of intellect.

this, that ſince there are two things, eſſence and quality, when the ſoul ſeeks to know not the quality of a thing, but what it is, unleſs it firſt inveſtigates each of theſe four, and ſufficiently diſcuſſes them by a reaſoning proceſs and ſenſible inſpection, and this continually through every thing which is aſſerted and ſhown, it will be filled, as I may ſay, with all poſſible ambiguity and obſcurity.

In ſuch things therefore, as through a depraved education we are not accuſtomed to inveſtigate the truth, but are contented with an image exhibited to our view, we do not become ridiculous to each other, when being interrogated, we are able to diſcuſs and argue about thoſe four. But in ſuch particulars as we are compelled to ſeparate that fifth from other things, and evince its nature, he who wiſhes to ſubvert what we have evinced, vanquiſhes, and cauſes him who explains this fifth, either by ſpeech, or writing, or anſwers, to appear to the multitude of his hearers entirely ignorant of the things about which he attempts either to write or ſpeak; men ſometimes being ignorant, that it is not the ſoul of the writer or ſpeaker that is confuted, but the nature of each of the above-mentioned four particulars, when it is badly affected. But the proceſſion through all theſe, and the tranſition to each upwards and downwards, ſcarcely at length produces the ſcience of that which naturally ſubſiſts in an excellent condition, in the ſoul of one naturally well affected. But when any one is naturally ill affected, as is the caſe with the habit of ſoul poſſeſſed by the multitude, who are badly diſpoſed, with reſpect to learning, and whoſe manners are depraved, not even Lynceus himſelf can enable ſuch as theſe to ſee. But in one word, neither docility nor memory will confer on any one the power of perceiving things of this kind, who is not allied to them: for they are not inherent from the firſt in foreign habits. So that thoſe who are not naturally adapted and allied to what is juſt, and other things that are beautiful, though they may be docile, and of a good memory with reſpect to other particulars; and again, thoſe that are allied to the juſt and beautiful, but are indocile and of a bad memory, will never learn, as far as it is poſſible to learn, the truth pertaining to virtue and vice. For it is neceſſary to learn this, and at the ſame time the falſehood and truth of the whole of eſſence, with all poſſible exerciſe, and a great length of time, as I ſaid in the beginning. But after agitating together the ſeveral names and reaſons, and ſenſible perceptions of theſe things, confuting

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in a benevolent manner, and employing queſtions and anſwers without envy, then ſtriving as much as is poſſible to human power, prudence and intellect about each of theſe will ſcarcely at length ſhine forth.

On this account, every worthy man will be very far from writing[1] about things truly worthy, as he will thus ſubject himſelf to envy and ambiguity. But, in one word, it is requiſite to know from theſe things, that when any one ſees the writings of another, whether of a legiſlator on the laws, or on certain other ſubjects, he will ſee that theſe are not ſuch writings as are conſidered by him to be the moſt worthy of all others, if he is himſelf a worthy character: but the objects of his purſuit are ſituated in a moſt beautiful region. And if he ſhould find in writings ſuch things as truly deſerve the higheſt regard, it might then be ſaid, that not the gods indeed, but men deſtroy the intellects of men. And thus much for this fable and digreſſion, which he who acutely follows will well underſtand.

Whether therefore Dionyſius has written any thing about the higheſt and firſt natures, or any other perſon inferior or ſuperior to him, according to my deciſion, he has neither heard nor learnt any thing ſound reſpecting theſe natures; for otherwiſe he would have venerated them in the ſame manner as I do, and would not have dared to hurl them into incongruity and indecency. For he could not write about them, for the ſake of recalling them to his memory; as there is no occaſion to fear that any one will ever forget them, when they are once comprehended by the ſoul: for they lie in the ſhorteſt ſpace of all things. But perhaps he did this for the ſake of baſe ambition, either aſſerting that theſe doctrines were his own, or as partaking of diſcipline of which he was unworthy to partake, loving the renown which ariſes from ſuch participation.

Perhaps, however, we may allow that Dionyſius has written about theſe things, if what he has aſſerted was produced by one converſation. But, O Jupiter, ſays the Theban, how was it produced! For I diſcuſſed theſe things with him as I have ſaid, and only once; but never afterwards. In the next place, he who is anxious to find out the cauſe of what then happened reſpecting theſe things, ought to know why we did not diſcuſs them a ſecond and a third time, and often: whether it was that Dionyſius, having only heard them

[1] Viz. he will be unwilling to write perſpicuouſly about the moſt ſublime truths, unleſs the age in which he lives renders it neceſſary ſo to do, in order to preſerve them to poſterity.

once, thought that he knew them, and knew them ſufficiently, or that he diſcovered them himſelf, or had formerly learnt them from others. Or was it that he thought the things that were ſaid were trifling? Or did a certain third thing happen to be the caſe, viz. that they were in reality too great for him, who was ſolicitous to lead a life of prudence and virtue? For if it is ſaid that he conſidered the things about which he wrote as trifling, this will be oppoſed by many witneſſes who aſſert the contrary, and who are much better judges about things of this kind than Dionyſius. But if he invented them, or learnt them, and they deſerve to be made ſubſervient to the diſcipline of a liberal ſoul, is it not wonderful that he ſhould ſo readily deſpiſe the leader and maſter of theſe things?

But how he deſpiſed him I will now relate. Not long after this he would not permit the procurators of Dion to ſend that portion of his wealth to Peloponneſus, which ſome time before he had ſuffered him to poſſeſs and enjoy, as if he had entirely forgotten the letter which he wrote to me. For he aſſerted that this property did not belong to Dion, but to Dion's ſon, who, as he was his own grandſon, was according to law underr his protection. And ſuch were the tranſactions of that time.

From hence, however, we may accurately ſee how Dionyſius was affected towards philoſophy; and it is lawful for me to be indignant whether I am willing or not: for it was then ſummer, and the time for ſhips to ſail. But it ſeemed that I ought not to be more offended with Dionyſius than myſelf, and with thoſe who compelled me to come the third time to the ſtrait about Scylla, and

"Dire Charybdis meaſure o'er again[1]."

I was therefore forced to tell Dionyſius, that it was impoſſible for me to ſtay with him while Dion was uſed ſo ignominiouſly. But he conſoled me, and requeſted me to ſtay; thinking it would not be well for him that I ſhould be ſo ſwift a meſſenger of ſuch tranſactions as theſe: and when he could not perſuade me, he ſaid he would prepare my diſmiſſion. However, being enraged, I was determined to depart in a fleet of ſhips, thinking that I ought to ſuffer every thing, if he ſhould attempt to ſtop me; as I was manifeſtly injured, though I had done no injury. But when he found that I could not by any

[1] Odyſſ. lib. xii. v. 428.

means

means be induced to ſtay, he deviſed the following mean to retard my departure. On the day after theſe things had taken place, he thus plauſibly addreſſed me: Dion, ſays he, and the affairs of Dion, about which we have often diſagreed, ſhall be entirely removed from you and me; for on your account I will act as follows towards Dion. I think it fit that he ſhall take up his reſidence in Peloponneſus, not as an exile, but as one who may come hither, when it ſhall ſeem good to him, to me, and to you who are his friend. This ſhall take place, if he forms no ſtratagems againſt me; and you, your familiars, and the familiars of Dion, that are here, ſhall be bound for his fulfilling this agreement. But the money which he may receive ſhall be depoſited n Peloponneſus and Athens, with thoſe you ſhall think fit: Dion too ſhall enjoy the benefit of this money, but ſhall not be authorized to take it away without your conſent; for I ſhould not very much believe that juſtice would be done to me, if he had the entire poſſeſſion of this wealth, which is not inconſiderable. But I have greater confidence in you and your familiars. See, therefore, whether theſe things are agreeable to you, and ſtay for the ſake of them this year, at the expiration of which you ſhall receive this money and depart. I well know, indeed, that Dion will be greatly indebted to you for acting in this manner on his account.

When I heard theſe things, I was perfectly indignant, but at the ſame time I ſaid that I would conſider the affair, and give him my opinion on the following day. This was our compact at that time. I therefore conſulted with myſelf after this, but in a very confuſed manner; but the following conſideration firſt preſented itſelf to me, as the leader of my conſultation: What if Dionyſius intends to do nothing of what he promiſes to do, but on my departure both he and many others ſhould write in a plauſible manner to Dion, what he has now ſaid to me, that he indeed was willing, but that I was unwilling he ſhould act in this manner, and that I entirely neglected his concerns; and beſides this, if Dionyſius, being unwilling I ſhould depart, ſhould give no orders to any pilot, but ſhould eaſily ſignify to all men, that he did not conſent to my ſetting ſail, what ſailor would be willing to take me on board, from the palace of Dionyſius? For, in addition to other evils, I dwelt in the garden which ſurrounded the palace; from whence the porter would not be willing to diſmiſs me, without an order from Dionyſius. But if I ſtay another year, I can indeed ſend an account of theſe tranſactions to Dion, and acquaint him with my

my ſituation and conduct. And if indeed Dionyſius ſhould do any thing of what he promiſes to do, my conduct will be not entirely ridiculous: for perhaps the property of Dion, when rightly eſtimated, does not amount to leſs than a hundred talents[1]. But if the iſſue of affairs ſhould be ſuch as it is likely to be, I ſhall be at a loſs how to act. At the ſame time, it is perhaps neceſſary that I ſhould ſtay a year longer, and endeavour in reality to fruſtrate the machinations of Dionyſius.

Thus thinking with myſelf, I told Dionyſius, on the following day, that I thought it beſt to ſtay; but I ſaid he ought not to conſider me as poſſeſſing abſolute authority over Dion. I added, that he ſhould write to Dion in conjunction with me, acquainting him with the compact we had made, and aſking him whether he was ſatisfied with theſe things, and with me, and whether he wiſhed for any thing further. Laſtly, that he ſhould write to him as ſoon as poſſible, and ſhould not make any innovation in his affairs. This is what was ſaid, and theſe are nearly the things in which we agreed.

But after this the ſhips ſailed, and therefore it was no longer poſſible for me to depart. Dionyſius, therefore, as if recollecting ſomething he had omitted, ſaid that the half of Dion's property ought to remain with his ſon, and that the other half ſhould be ſent to Dion. This property, he ſaid, he would ſell, and when he had ſold it, deliver one half to me to be ſent to Dion, and keep the other half for his ſon; for he added, it will be moſt juſt to act in this manner. I therefore, being ſtruck with what he ſaid, thought it would be entirely ridiculous to ſay any thing further. At the ſame time, however, I obſerved to him, that we ought to wait for an anſwer from Dion, and again ſend him an account of theſe particulars. But Dionyſius, after this, in a very juvenile manner, ſold the whole of Dion's property to whom and for what he pleaſed, without making any mention of it whatever to me: and again I in like manner ſaid nothing to him reſpecting the affairs of Dion; for I thought I ſhould be able to do nothing further in them. And thus far I gave aſſiſtance both to philoſophy and my friends.

But after this, I and Dionyſius ſo lived together, that I like a bird was always looking out, and longing to fly away, but he was deviſing after what manner he might prevent my flight, and gave up no part of the property of

[1] i. e. upwards of 13,300l.

Dion.

Dion. At the ſame time, however, we were ſaid to be ſociable through the whole of Sicily. But at that period, Dionyſius endeavoured to diminiſh the pay of the mercenaries, contrary to the cuſtom of his father; and the ſoldiers being enraged, aſſembled in a body, and declared this ſhould not take place. Dionyſius therefore endeavoured to force them to ſubmiſſion, and for this purpoſe ſhut the gates of the acropolis: but the ſoldiers immediately marched to the walls, vociferating a certain barbarous and warlike pæon; at which Dionyſius being terrified, granted the ſoldiers all they deſired, and thoſe that carried creſcent ſhields more than their uſual pay. But a report was rapidly ſpread that Heraclides was the cauſe of this diſturbance; upon hearing which, Heraclides immediately diſappeared. Dionyſius therefore endeavoured to take him; but not being able to diſcover his place of retreat, he ordered Theodotes to attend him in the gardens, in which at that time I happened to be walking. Other parts, therefore, of their diſcourſe I neither known or heard; but what Theodotes ſaid to Dionyſius before me I both know and remember. For he ſaid, Plato, I am perſuading Dionyſius, that if I were able to bring Heraclides hither, he would anſwer to the crimes which are now laid to his charge: and if it does not appear fit to Dionyſius that he ſhould dwell in Sicily, yet I think it is proper that, receiving his wife and ſon, he ſhould be permitted to ſet ſail for Peloponneſus, and there reſide, not injuring Dionyſius in any reſpect, and enjoying his own property. I have therefore, prior to this, ſent, and ſhall again ſend for him. But whether he complies with my firſt or ſecond citation, I think it proper that he ſhould receive no injury, either here or in the ſuburbs, but that he ſhall be ſent out of the kingdom, till Dionyſius ſhall think fit to recall him; and I requeſt Dionyſius to accede to theſe terms. Do you accede or not? ſays he, ſpeaking to Dionyſius. He anſwered, I do accede; nor ſhall he ſuffer any thing worſe than what has now been mentioned, though he ſhould make his appearance in your houſe.

However, on the evening of the following day, Eurybius and Theodotes came to me in great haſte and wonderfully alarmed: and Theodotes ſaid to me, Plato, was you not a witneſs yeſterday to the compact which Dionyſius made with me and you reſpecting Heraclides? To which I replied, Undoubtedly I was. But now, ſays he, the ſoldiers with creſcent ſhields are running every where in order to take Heraclides, and there is reaſon to fear that

that he is concealed at no great diſtance. Attend us therefore to Dionyſius with every poſſible artifice. In conſequence of this, we followed and came to him; and they indeed ſtood ſilent and weeping; but I ſaid, Theſe men, Dionyſius, are afraid leſt you ſhould make ſome alteration reſpecting Heraclides, contrary to your compact yeſterday: for it appears to me that he is evidently at no great diſtance from hence. But Dionyſius on hearing this was violently enraged, and his countenance exhibited all various colours, ſuch as anger produces: but Theodotes falling at his feet, and taking his hand, wept, and ſuppliantly implored him not to do any ſuch thing. Then I, reſuming the diſcourſe, conſoled him and ſaid, Take courage, Theodotes, for Dionyſius dares not to act contrary to the compact which he made yeſterday. But he looking at me, and in a very tyrannic manner, With you, ſays he, I made no compact, neither great nor ſmall. To which I replied, By the gods, you promiſed me, that you would not do the very things, which this man now requeſts you not to do. Having thus ſaid, I turned from him and left the place.

After this Dionyſius endeavoured to find Heraclides: however, Theodotes ſent meſſengers to him, and exhorted him to fly. But Dionyſius ſent Tiſias and the ſoldiers with the creſcent ſhields, and ordered them to purſue him. Heraclides, however, as it is ſaid, eſcaped their purſuit, and in the ſmall part of a day fled into the dominions of the Carthaginians. But now, from the enmity towards me which this occaſioned, Dionyſius appeared to have a pretext for doing that which, for a long time, he had been attempting to accompliſh by ſtratagem, I mean, withholding the property of Dion. And in the firſt place he ſent me from the acropolis, pretending it was requiſite that the women ſhould perform a ſacrifice, which laſts for ten days, in the gardens in which I reſided. He therefore ordered me at that time to take up my reſidence, out of the acropolis, with Archidemus: but when I was there, Theodotes ſending for me, was indignant at many of the then tranſactions, and complained of Dionyſius. But Dionyſius hearing that I had been with Theodotes, made this another pretext of enmity towards me, ſimilar to the former, and ſent a certain perſon to aſk me, whether I had really been with Theodotes at his requeſt. To which I readily replied, I had. The meſſenger therefore ſaid, Dionyſius ordered me to tell you, that you by no means do well, in always preferring to him Dion and the friends of Dion. This is what

what was ſaid; and after this Dionyſius never again ſent for me to his palace, as it was now clear that I was the friend of Theodotes and Heraclides, and an enemy to him; and he no longer conſidered me as well affected towards him, becauſe the property of Dion was entirely conſumed.

After this I dwelt out of the acropolis among the mercenary ſoldiers: but as well others as certain Athenian citizens, who acted as ſervants to Dionyſius, came to me and informed me that I was calumniated by the ſoldiers. And beſides this, certain perſons threatened to kill me, if they could apprehend me. I deviſed therefore the following means of preſervation: I ſent to Archytas, and other friends at Tarentum, and informed them of my ſituation: but they, under the pretext of a certain embaſſy from the city, ſent Lamiſcus, who was one of my friends, with a galley of thirty ranks; and he, on his arrival, informed Dionyſius that I wiſhed to depart, and deſired him by all means to grant my requeſt. To this Dionyſius aſſented, and diſmiſſed me with a paſſport. However, I neither aſked for the money belonging to Dion, nor did any one give it me.

But when I came to Peloponneſus to the Olympic games, I there met with Dion, who was beholding the celebration of them, and informed him of the paſt tranſactions; but he, calling Jupiter to witneſs, immediately declared to me, and my domeſtics and friends, that he would prepare to puniſh Dionyſius, both on account of his deceiving me, while I was his gueſt (for thus he ſaid and thought), and expelling and baniſhing him unjuſtly. On hearing this, I perſuaded him to call his friends if he were willing. But I ſaid, as to myſelf, ſince you have forced me after a manner, together with others, to become the companion and gueſt of Dionyſius, and a partaker with him of ſacred rites, he will doubtleſs think that I ought to conduct myſelf as an equitable medium between both parties, eſpecially ſince, when I was accuſed by many of forming ſtratagems in conjunction with you againſt him and his tyranny, he did not put me to death, though he was not prevented from doing ſo by fear. To this I added, that my age rendered me unfit to engage in the concerns of war; and that I ſhould act as a mediator between them, if at any time their friendſhip would require the aſſiſtance of a conciliator. But I informed them, that as long as they were averſe to each other, they muſt call others to their aſſiſtance. I ſaid theſe things, in conſequence of hating my wandering and adverſe fortune about Sicily.

However, as they were not perſuaded by the arguments which I adduced, they have been the cauſes of all the evils that exiſt at preſent. Indeed, if Dionyſius had given to Dion the property which was his due, or if he had been perfectly reconciled to him, we may ſay, as far as the condition of human affairs permits us to judge, that nothing adverſe would have happened: for I could eaſily have kept Dion from hoſtile meaſures, both by my will and power. But now, being impelled againſt each other, they fill all things with evils; though indeed Dion had the ſame wiſh, which I ſhould ſay both I and every other moderate perſon ought to have, reſpecting his own power, and that of his friends, and reſpecting his own city, I mean the wiſh to benefit when in authority, and when in the greateſt power to impart the greateſt benefits. But this will not be effected by him who endeavours to enrich himſelf and his friends, who forms ſtratagems againſt the city, and being poor collects together conſpirators, and having no dominion over himſelf is through timidity vanquiſhed by pleaſure: who beſides this flays thoſe that are wealthy, calling them enemies, ſeizes their wealth, and at the ſame time proclaims to his adjutants and aſſociates, that no one ought to accuſe him, as he is poor. After the ſame manner, he who benefits his city will be honoured by it, in conſequence of diſtributing by decrees the property of a few among the many. And this will likewiſe be the caſe, when any one governing a great city, and at the ſame time many leſſer cities, unjuſtly diſtributes to his own city the wealth of the leſſer. For after this manner, neither Dion, nor any other perſon, would ever voluntarily take upon them an authority, which would always be pernicious to himſelf and poſterity; but he will endeavour to eſtabliſh ſuch a polity, and ſuch laws, as are the moſt juſt, and the beſt, and which can be affected by the feweſt deaths and baniſhments.

This conduct indeed was now adopted by Dion, who preferred ſuffering things impious to the commiſſion of them; but who, at the ſame time that he was cautious leſt he ſhould ſuffer them, fell, after he had arrived at the ſummit of advantage over his enemies. Nor did he in this ſuffer any thing wonderful: for the ſoul of a pious man will never be wholly deceived reſpecting things impious, temperate, and prudent. But neither perhaps is it wonderful, if the ſame thing has happened to him as to a good pilot, from whom the future ſtorm is not entirely concealed, but who may be ignorant of a ſudden tempeſt, which is of an unexpected magnitude, and by which he may be violently overwhelmed.

overwhelmed. After the ſame manner, through the feweſt circumſtances, was Dion deceived: for he was not entirely ignorant that his enemies were bad men, though he was unacquainted with the profundity of their ignorance, and of the reſt of their depravity and voracity. Through being deceived in this he fell, and by his fall involved Sicily in infinite grief. What therefore I adviſe you to do, after the preſent relation of theſe particulars, I have already nearly mentioned. But it appeared to me neceſſary to ſhow on what account I came a ſecond time to Sicily, through the abſurdity and irrationality with which this circumſtance ſeems to be attended. If, therefore, what has been now ſaid ſhall appear to any one to be reaſonable, and if he ſhould think that I had a ſufficient pretext for undertaking this voyage, the contents of this Epiſtle will alſo be ſufficient.

EPISTLE VIII.

PLATO to the Kindred and Familiars of DION—Proſperity.

AS I perceive that affairs are in a very proſperous condition, I will endeavour, as far as I am able, to ſend you a true account of them. But I hope I ſhall not only, in the firſt place, give you ſalutary advice, but, in the ſecond place, all thoſe that are in Syracuſe; and, in the third place, your enemies and adverſaries, except ſome one of them ſhall have been guilty of an impious deed. For theſe things are incurable, and can never be expiated. But conſider what I now ſay.

The tyranny being diſſolved, all Sicily is at ſtrife about theſe very things. And ſome wiſh to reſtore again the former government, but others to bring the tyranny entirely to an end, while in the mean time the ſeveral plans about things of this kind appear to the multitude to be right, ſo long as they tend to injure their enemies, and benefit their friends, in the higheſt degree. It is however by no means eaſy for him who inflicts many evils on others not to ſuffer many himſelf. Nor is it neceſſary, in order to ſee this clearly, to ſearch for examples at a great diſtance, ſince the circumſtances which have now taken place about Sicily are ſufficient for this purpoſe: for ſome attempt to injure, and others to take vengeance on the injurers. But you are ſufficiently acquainted with theſe particulars, to be able to teach them to others. In theſe things, therefore, there is nearly no difficulty. But what is advantageous to all enemies and friends, or what is the leaſt noxious to both, this it is neither eaſy to perceive, nor, when ſeen, to accompliſh. Indeed this conſultation and inquiry appears to reſemble prayer. Let it therefore be in every reſpect a certain prayer. For *it is requiſite to begin every thing from the gods, both in ſpeaking and underſtanding.* But when brought to a concluſion, it will ſignify to us the following diſcourſe.

From the time that the war began to the end of it, one alliance nearly ruled over both you and your enemies; an alliance which your fathers once eſtabliſhed,

eſtabliſhed, in conſequence of being involved in the greateſt difficulties, at that time when the Sicily of the Greeks was expoſed to the extreme danger of becoming the prey of Barbarians, through being entirely ſubverted by the Carthaginians. For then they choſe Dionyſius, as being a young man, and ſtrenuous in ſuch warlike affairs as were properly adapted to him. But they gave him as an adviſer Hipparinus, who was his ſenior: and for the ſafety of Sicily, inveſting theſe two with abſolute power, they denominated them, as they ſay, tyrants. And whether any one is willing to think that a divine fortune and a god, or the virtue of the governors, or both, together with the citizens of that time, were the cauſe of the ſafety of Sicily, let this be juſt as he pleaſes. Safety, however, to the men of that time, was thus obtained. As therefore they conducted themſelves in this manner, it is juſt that thoſe who were ſaved ſhould return them thanks. But if the tyranny afterwards improperly uſed any gift of the city, for this it has partly been accuſed, and partly has ſuffered puniſhment. Certain puniſhments, therefore, have neceſſarily been properly inflicted on them for their conduct. For if you could either avoid them, without great danger and labour, or they could eaſily recover the antient government, we ſhould not adviſe you to do ſuch things as we ſhall perſuade you to do hereafter. But now it is proper that both of you ſhould underſtand and call to mind, how often you have been in hope of obtaining your deſire, and have thought that but little was wanting to the accompliſhment of all things according to your intention. However, this little that was wanting became every where the cauſe of great and infinite evils, and has not yet arrived at any end. But the antient evils always adhere together, and though the end preſents itſelf to the view, yet a new beginning continually ſprings forth. The whole too of the tyrannic and popular genus appears to have periſhed under this circle. But if that which it ſeems reaſonable to expect, though of an execrable nature, ſhould take place, all Sicily nearly will become deſtitute of the Greek tongue, in conſequence of being transferred to a certain Phœnician or Opic[1] dynaſty and power. All the Greeks, therefore, with all poſſible diligence and earneſtneſs, ought to bring a remedy for theſe things. If indeed any one can give better adviſe than that which I ſhall give, he may with the greateſt rectitude be called a lover of Greece.

[1] The Opici were the antient inhabitants of Campania.

But

But I will now endeavour, with all poſſible freedom of ſpeech, and making uſe of a certain common and juſt mode of diſcourſe, to evince to you what appears to me to be the truth. I ſhall however for this purpoſe ſpeak in the character of an arbitrator, and according to my antient cuſtom give advice both to him who tyrannizes and him who is ſubject to tyranny. And now, in the firſt place, I adviſe every tyrant to fly from the appellation, and the thing itſelf, and change his tyranny, if poſſible, into a kingdom. But it is poſſible, as the wiſe and good Lycurgus evinced in reality: for he, when he ſaw that the race of his kindred in Argos and Meſſene had arrived from the power of kings to that of tyrants, and that they were deſtroying both themſelves and the city,—he, I ſay, fearing both for his country and race, applied a remedy, by introducing the government of elderly men, and the diviſion of the Ephori, as the means of preſerving the royal government. And it is owing to this that it has been preſerved for ſo many generations with glory; ſince here law became the proper king of men, and men did not tyrannize over the laws. To effect this indeed my preſent diſcourſe perſuades all men, exhorting thoſe that aſpire after tyranny to turn and fly, with an unwearied celerity, from the felicity of hungry and ſtupid men, and endeavour to transfer themſelves to a royal form of government, become ſubſervient to royal laws, and thus obtain the greateſt honours with the conſent both of men and the laws.

But I adviſe thoſe that purſue free manners, and avoid a ſervile yoke as an evil, to be cautious leſt, through an inſatiable avidity of a certain unſeaſonable liberty, they fall into the diſeaſe of their anceſtors, who, through an unmeaſured love of freedom, ſuffered all the evils of extreme anarchy. For thoſe that governed in Sicily before Dionyſius and Hipparinus, lived as they thought happily, becauſe they lived luxurioufly, and governed even governors themſelves. They likewiſe diſſolved the authority of the twelve military chiefs prior to Dionyſius, and judged no one according to law, that they might not be ſubject to any one who governed either with juſtice or law. But they were in every reſpect entirely free, and on this account they became ſubject to tyrannic governments. For both ſlavery and freedom when they are tranſcendent, are attended with every evil. But when they ſubſiſt according to meaſure, they are attended with every good. And the ſervice of divinity is attended with meaſure, but that of men is without meaſure.

Divinity

Divinity too is the law to temperate men, but pleaſure to the intemperate.

Since theſe things, therefore, naturally ſubſiſt in this manner, I exhort that the advice which I give to the friends of Dion be given to all the Syracuſians, as the common advice of Dion and myſelf. But I will unfold what he while living and able ſaid. Though perhaps ſome one may inquire what the advice of Dion has to do with the preſent affairs. Hear:—"O Syracuſians, receive before all things ſuch laws as appear to you to be neither conducive to gain, nor the gratification of your deſires; but as there are three things, viz. ſoul, body, and riches, it is requiſite that the care of the ſoul ſhould rank in the firſt place; that of the body in the ſecond place, ſituated under the care belonging to the ſoul; and, in the third place, the honour pertaining to riches, as in a ſtate of ſervitude to both body and ſoul. The divine inſtitution effecting theſe things, will be a law rightly eſtabliſhed for you, and rendering thoſe by whom it is uſed truly happy. But the diſcourſe which calls the rich happy, is itſelf miſerable and ſtupid, is the diſcourſe of women and children, and renders thoſe that are perſuaded by it like itſelf. Indeed, that theſe things to which I exhort you are true, you will know in reality, if you have taſted of what has now been ſaid by me reſpecting laws. But a moſt true examination appears to have taken place reſpecting all things. However, ſuch laws being received, ſince Sicily is in danger, and you neither ſufficiently vanquiſh, nor are remarkably vanquiſhed, it will perhaps be juſt and advantageous to all of you to purſue the middle path, as well for thoſe of you that avoid the ſeverity of government, as for thoſe of you that deſire its reſtoration. For your anceſtors formerly, which is a thing of the greateſt conſequence, preſerved the Greeks from the Barbarians; ſo that it is now lawful to diſcourſe concerning the preſent polity. For if at that time the Greeks had periſhed, we could neither have diſcourſed in any reſpect concerning them, nor would any hope whatever have remained. Now therefore to ſome let there be liberty in conjunction with a royal government; but to others in ſubjection to it; the laws at the ſame time having dominion not only over the other citizens, but over kings themſelves, whenever they are found to act contrary to law. But in all theſe affairs, eſtabliſh kings in conjunction with the gods, with a mind ſound and free from guile.

And,

And, in the firſt place, eſtabliſh my ſon [1] on a two-fold account, viz. for my ſake, andfor the ſake of my father. For he at that time freed the city from the Barbarians: but I freed it twice from tyrants, as you yourſelves can teſtify. But, in the ſecond place, make him a king, who has the ſame name [2] with my father, I mean the ſon of Dionyſius: and this do for the ſake of the aſſiſtance which he now affords, and on account of his pious manners; for though he is the ſon of a tyrant, yet he has voluntarily liberated the city; and has thus procured for himſelf and his race ever-living honour, inſtead of the tranſient and unjuſt renown of a tyranny. In the third place, it is proper to invite willingly to the kingdom of the Syracuſians, the city alſo being willing, Dionyſius the ſon [3] of Dionyſius, who is now the general of the enemy's army, if he aſſents to the kingly form of government, fearing the changes of fortune, commiſerating his country, and paying due reverence to temples and ſepulchres; leſt through a love of contention he ſhould involve all things in ruin, and thus gratify the Barbarians by the deſtruction of his country.

Theſe three kings, therefore, whether you give or deprive them of a Lacedæmonian power, you ſhould by common conſent eſtabliſh after the manner which I have before mentioned to you, and which now again hear. If the offspring of Dionyſius and Hipparinus are willing, for the ſafety of Sicily, that the preſent calamities ſhould ceaſe, and are thus deſirous to procure honours for themſelves and their race, both for the future and preſent time, on this condition, as I have before ſaid, call them to the government, inveſting with the power of making a reconciliation, ſuch ambaſſadors as they ſhall think fit for the purpoſe, whether they are choſen from among yourſelves, or from other cities, or from both; and beſides this, as many as they ſhall chooſe to allow.

Theſe, in the firſt place, ſhould eſtabliſh laws and a polity, in which it will be requiſite that the kings ſhould be lords of the ſacred, and ſuch other concerns as ought to be entruſted to the benefactors of their country. Guardians of the laws too ſhould be created, thirty-five in number, and

[1] Dion, who is here ſuppoſed to be ſpeaking, means his ſon Hipparinus.

[2] Viz. Hipparinus, the ſon of Hipparinus.

[3] Viz. the ſon of the ſecond Dionyſius.

theſe,

theſe, together with the people and ſenate, ſhould be the governors of war and peace. There ſhould likewiſe be different courts of juſtice: and the thirty-five guardians of the laws ſhould be the judges of death and baniſhment. And beſides theſe, judges ſhould be choſen from thoſe that acted laſt in the capacity of governors; ſo that one who appears to be the beſt and the moſt juſt ſhould be choſen from each government. Theſe too, on the following year, muſt judge ſuch of the citizens as deſerve death, or impriſonment, or exile. But the king ſhall not be permitted to be a judge of theſe deciſions, as being a prieſt, and conſequently purified from murder, bonds, and exile. While living, I conceived that theſe things ſhould take place, and I think ſo at preſent. And then indeed, in conjunction with you, I ſhould have vanquiſhed my enemies, if foreigners and the furies had not prevented me from effecting what I intended to effect.

In the next place, if the event of things had anſwered my expectations, I ſhould have cauſed the reſt of Sicily to be inhabited, after having expelled the Barbarians from the places which they now occupy, ſuch of them however being excepted as fought for the common liberty againſt the tyranny. I ſhould likewiſe have reſtored the former inhabitants of Grecian places to their antient and paternal abodes. I therefore adviſe and call upon all of you to conceive and act in the very ſame manner at preſent: and let him who is unwilling to do ſo, be conſidered in common as an enemy. But neither are theſe things ſuch as it is impoſſible to accompliſh: for he who judges thoſe things to be impoſſible, which ſubſiſt in the ſouls of two perſons, and which from reaſoning will readily be found to be the beſt of things, is by no means wiſe. But by the two, I mean the ſoul of Hipparinus the ſon of Dionyſius, and the ſoul of my ſon. For I think if theſe two agree, the other Syracuſians, and all thoſe who are lovers of their country, will likewiſe be unanimous. But paying due honours, and praying to all the gods, and to thoſe other natures whom it is proper to reverence in conjunction with the gods, and beſides this perſuading and inciting both your friends and enemies, benignantly, and in every poſſible way, do not deſiſt, till by what we have now ſaid, urging you in the ſame manner as divine dreams urge thoſe that are awake, you obtain clear evidence and proſperous fortune in perfection."

EPISTLE IX.

PLATO to ARCHYTAS the Tarentine—Proſperity.

THE familiars of Archippus and Philonides came to us, bringing with them the letter which you gave them, and relating the ſtate of your affairs. Such things therefore as pertain to the city, they accompliſhed without difficulty; for they were not in every reſpect laborious. But as to what relates to yourſelf, they ſaid that you are indignant becauſe you cannot be freed from an attention to public concerns. That it is indeed the moſt pleaſant thing in life, for a man to attend to his own affairs, eſpecially if he chooſes to act in the ſame manner as you do, is nearly obvious to every one; but you ought alſo to conſider this, that each of us is not born for himſelf alone; but that our country claims one part of our birth, our parents another part, and our friends the remaining part. Much too muſt be given to the occaſions which occupy our life. As your country, therefore, calls upon you to attend to public affairs, it would perhaps be abſurd not to obey its call: for at the ſame time too, it happens that a place is left for depraved men, who apply themſelves to politics, not from the beſt motives. But of theſe things enough.

At preſent we take care of Echecrates[1], and ſhall do ſo in future; and this for your ſake, and that of his father Phrynion, and for the ſake of the young man himſelf.

[1] This is the perſon to whom the laſt diſcourſe of Socrates was related by Phædo. See the Dialogue of that name.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE X.

PLATO to ARISTODORUS—Proſperity.

I HEAR that you are now in the moſt eminent degree the aſſociate of Dion, and that you are at all times moſt wiſe with reſpect to thoſe manners that are ſubſervient to philoſophy. For I ſay that firmneſs, faith, and integrity, conſtitute true philoſophy. But I think that other wiſdom and ſkill, which tend to other things, when denominated elegant ſubtilties, will be rightly named. But now farewell; and continue to abide in the manners in which you now abide.

EPISTLE XI.

PLATO to LAODAMAS—Proſperity.

WE have before written to you, that your coming to Athens is of great conſequence with reſpect to all you ſay. But as you declare you cannot come, if either I ſhould be able to come, or Socrates, as you mention in your letter, this will be the ſecond plan to be adopted. Socrates however, at preſent, labours under the infirmity of the ſtrangury; and it would be diſgraceful for me to go thither, if the particulars, for the ſake of which you incite me to make this journey, are not accompliſhed: but I have not much hope that they will be accompliſhed. However, to diſcuſs every particular would require a long epiſtle. And at the ſame time my body, through age, is not able to bear the fatigue of wandering, and to encounter all thoſe dangers with which the land and ſea are ſurrounded; eſpecially at the preſent time, when travelling is full of danger. But I give you as advice, that which Heſiod, through me as the relator, ſays, "that to opine is vile, but to underſtand is difficult." For if there are any who think that a city can be well eſtabliſhed by the mere promulgation of laws, without ſome one endued with authority preſiding in the city, and attending to the conduct of its inhabitants, in order that both ſlaves and the free born may be temperate and brave,—thoſe who entertain this opinion do not think rightly.

But again, if there are men among you who deſerve this authority, let them obtain it. But if there is occaſion for ſome one to inſtruct them, I think that neither he who can teach, nor thoſe who are capable of being inſtructed, are with you. All that remains, therefore, is to pray to the gods: for cities, prior to the preſent time, have been nearly conſtituted

in

in this manner. And after they have been well peopled, through the intervention of great concerns, which have taken place through war and other tranſactions, then at ſuch like ſeaſons an illuſtrious and good man has obtained a mighty power. But prior to this, it is proper and neceſſary to beſtow great attention on theſe things. Conſider what I ſay, and do not act imprudently, in conſequence of thinking that ſomething ought to be done with expedition. May proſperity attend you.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XII.

PLATO to ARCHYTAS the Tarentine—Proſperity.

IT is wonderful with what pleaſure we received the commentaries which came from you, and how very much we were delighted with the genius of their author. To us indeed, he appeared to be a man worthy of his antient progenitors. For thoſe men are ſaid to have been ten thouſand in number; and according to the fable, they were the beſt of all thoſe Trojans that were excited by Laomedon.

With reſpect to the commentaries by me, about which you write, they are not yet finiſhed. However, ſuch as they are, I have ſent them to you. With reſpect to guardianſhip, we both accord in our ſentiments, ſo that in this particular there is no need of exhortation[1].

[1] There is another epiſtle after this which is aſcribed to Plato, but which I have not tranſlated, becauſe it is obviouſly ſpurious. That it is ſo, will be at once evident to the intelligent reader from the following ſentence in it, της μεν γαρ σπουδαιας επιστολης θεος αρχει, θεοι δε της ηττονος, viz. "The word *god* is the beginning of a ſerious epiſtle, the word *gods* of one that is not ſo." Very properly therefore in all the early editions of Plato is the reader admoniſhed that this epiſtle is ſpurious by the word νοθευεται; and it is ſingular that Fabricius ſhould doubt whether it might not be genuine, becauſe Diogenes Laertius enumerates thirteen epiſtles of Plato, and this with the preceding makes thirteen. For of the thirteen which are extant, two, as the reader will perceive, are written by Dion.

THE END OF THE EPISTLES.

ADDITIONAL