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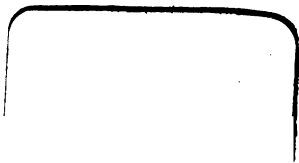
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FIVE BOOKS OF PLOTINUS,

VIZ.

ON FELICITY;

ON THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF EVIL;

ON PROVIDENCE;

**ON NATURE, CONTEMPLATION, AND
THE ONE;**

AND ON THE DESCENT OF THE SOUL:

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION,

CONTAINING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON
THESE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.

BY THOMAS TAYLOR.

If intellect has the same proportion to that which is intelligible (or the proper object of intellect) as sense to that which is sensible; and if intellect is better than sense, then that which is intelligible will be better than that which is sensible. Hence, this being admitted, the objects of intellectual vision cannot be derived from objects of sense, because they would thus be subordinate and not superior to sensibles.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following five books, which are on the most interesting subjects, may likewise be considered as forming one of the most important parts of the works of the celebrated Plotinus. Of this extraordinary man, who, on account of the profundity and elevation of his mind, was justly denominated, by the Platonic philosophers that succeeded him, *the great*, I have given the life, in the second volume of my translation of Proclus on Euclid, and which it would consequently be superfluous at present to repeat. I shall, therefore, only now add concerning him, in addition to what I have there delivered, that however divinely some

of the most important dogmas of the Platonic philosophy were unfolded by him, yet many others were more perfectly discussed by succeeding Platonists, and particularly by Proclus, the Coryphæus of all genuine philosophers.

As in the following translation therefore I have endeavoured to render the profound meaning of Plotinus obvious to such as have been benefited by any of my former publications, and for whom alone the present work is designed, I shall present the reader with such additional information on the subjects which are here discussed, as I have obtained by a diligent study of Proclus and Olympiodorus, those two great luminaries of philosophy posterior to Plotinus, and by

whom the doctrines of the ancients seem to have been interpreted in the greatest perfection possible to man.

I. In the first place, then, I shall observe, concerning FELICITY, that *every being is then happy when it acquires the proper perfection of its nature*; and consequently all vital beings are capable of receiving felicity that are capable of arriving at the perfection of their nature. Hence, as the *nature or being* of every thing consists in that part of the thing which is most excellent; for that which is most excellent is most principal, and nothing can have a more principal subsistence than being— as this is the case, human felicity consists in a perfect intellectual energy; for intellect is our principal part. Hence

too, as the form of life is different in different beings, the perfection likewise of each will be limited by different measures. The first form therefore of felicity, ~~and~~ which is at the same time all-perfect, is that of the universe. The second is that of the mundane gods, whom Plato in the Phædrus calls *blessed* gods, and represents following the mighty Jupiter. The third form of felicity is that which subsists in the genera superior to the human nature; for the virtue of angels is different from that of dæmons, and this last from that of heroes. The fourth subsists in those unpolluted souls, such as Hercules, Theseus, Pythagoras, Plato, &c., who descend into generation without being contaminated with its defilements, and who preserve an untamed

and undeviating life. The fifth form of felicity subsists in gregarious and multi-form souls, such as those of the bulk of mankind : and the last takes place in irrational animals.

In the next place, observe, that though the human soul may in this life partake of true felicity, by converting itself wholly to intellect, yet it can then only be uninterruptedly blessed, when it ascends with its ethereal vehicle perfectly pure to the pure spheres, or to the more sublime air or æther ; for then, on account of the prosperous condition of the body with which it is connected, and the place in which that body subsists, it is by no means hindered in the energies of divine contemplation. As the power

and amplitude too, of the more elevated are greater than the inferior spheres, and as the virtue of the soul in the former is more excellent than in the latter, by how much the one surpasses the other, by so much longer will the soul live in the superior than in the subordinate spheres. Besides, by how much more powerful intellect, which is elevated to supernal natures, is than the imagination which verges to sensibles, by so much longer is the life of the rational soul, when converted to the luminous visions of intellect, than when bound as it were to the dark and figured eye of the phantasy, and beholding nothing but the ever-flowing and fallacious objects of sense. Lastly, those souls live for a shorter time on the earth, and for a

longer time in the celestial spheres, who, from possessing prerogatives superior to those of the herd of mankind, originally belong to more excellent stars, and to dæmons of a more exalted rank.

I only add farther, concerning this book ON FELICITY, that when Plotinus asserts in it, that we possess an intellect perpetually vigilant and in energy, without experiencing any remission, it is in consequence of his believing that the whole of the rational soul does not descend into body, but that its supreme part, intellect, always abides in the intelligible world. This opinion he mentions explicitly at the end of his book *On the Descent of the Soul*; but against this opinion Proclus very justly objects,

that if our intellect thus remains in the intelligible world, it either perpetually understands without transition, or transitively : but if without transition, it will be intellect alone, and not a part of the soul ; and if transitively, that which is perpetually, and that which is sometimes intelligent, will form one essence. To which we may add (says he) the absurdity resulting from supposing that the summit of the soul is perpetually perfect, and yet does not rule over the other powers and give them perfection. The fact is, indeed, that our intellect, though it subsists in energy, has a remitted union with things themselves, and though it energizes from itself, and contains intelligibles in its essence, yet, from its alliance to the discursive nature

of soul, and its inclination to that which is divisible, it falls short of the perfection of an intellectual essence and energy profoundly indivisible and united, and the intelligibles which it contains degenerate from the transcendantly fulgid, and self-luminous nature of first intelligibles. Hence, in obtaining a perfectly indivisible knowledge, it requires to be perfected by an intellect whose energy is ever vigilant and unremitting, and its intelligibles, that they may become perfect, are indigent of the light which proceeds from separate intelligibles. Aristotle, therefore, very properly compares the intelligibles of our intellect to colours, because these require the splendor of the sun; and denominates an intellect of this kind, *intellect in capacity*, both on

account of its subordination to an essential intellect, and because it is from a separate intellect that it receives the full perfection of its nature.

II. With respect to the second book, which treats of *the Origin and Nature of Evil*, it is necessary to observe, that from the intricacy of the subject, some of the ancients were induced to believe that evil has no kind of existence whatever; others, who admitted its existence, asserted at the same time, that there was no such thing as providence; and others, who acknowledged a providence, believed in consequence of this, that all things are good: for if divinity was willing that evil should exist, how can he be good? since every thing which is

essentially good benefits all things, in the same manner as that which is essentially hot imparts heat; but it is not lawful for that which is good to produce any thing else than good. But if divinity was not willing that evil should exist, how is it possible that it can have a subsistence? For if this were admitted, something would exist contrary to the will of the father of all things. In answer to this doubt, it must be observed, that the habitude or relation which divinity has to things differs from that of ours; and again, things are related to divinity in a manner different from what they are to us; for there is one kind of relation of wholes to parts, and another of parts towards each other. With reference to divinity, therefore, nothing is

evil, not even among things which are called evils; for these he employs to beneficent purposes. But, on the other hand, with respect to partial natures, there is a certain evil with which they are naturally connected, and the same thing is evil to a part, but to the universe, and to wholes, good; for so far as a thing has being, and so far as it participates of order, it is good.

To be convinced, however, that there is no such thing as perfect evil, it will be necessary to make the following division: of all things in the universe, some are wholes, *i. e.* natures which participate of one perfect form; and others are parts. And of parts some externally preserve their own good, such as partial

intellects and partial dæmons, but others are not always able to preserve it; and of these, some are moved by other natures, but others are self-motive. And of the self-motive natures, some possess evil established in the will, but others extend it to action. But as to wholes, they are entirely good, not only supplying themselves, but likewise parts, with good. And as to such things as are parts, but preserve their proper good, these possess good secondarily and partially; but parts which are moved by others, and derive their subsistence from others, are likewise suspended from the providence of the natures through which they subsist, and are transmuted by them in a becoming manner: and this is the case with such bodies as are generated

and corrupted ; for if it is necessary that there should be generation, it is likewise necessary that there should be corruption, since generation subsists according to mutation, and is itself a certain mutation ; but if there is corruption, it is also necessary that the unnatural should be introduced among things. As therefore that which is corrupted is indeed corrupted with respect to itself, but is not destroyed with respect to the universe, for it becomes either air or water, or some one of the other things into which it is changed, in like manner that which is contrary to nature is disordered with respect to itself, but is orderly and regular with respect to the universe. But as to such natures as are partial, but self-motive, and which, energizing according to ex-

ternals, cause evil to take place with respect to themselves, this is also good in a certain respect with reference to divinity; for though the action arising from a depraved will is not simply good, yet it is good so far as it partakes of divine justice, and is indeed beneficial to this or that particular life: for of goods, some subsist as good to all things, others as good to things which differ according to species, and others as good to individuals considered as individuals. Thus, for instance, hellebore is neither good to all things nor yet to all bodies, nor to all bodies that are diseased, but to a body with a particular disease, and is from a certain principle conducive to health. Every intemperate and unjust action therefore is good to those by whom it is

committed, so far as it is attended with punishment from divine justice: for again, of goods, some are precedaneous and others preparative; and the precedaneous are such as are desirable for their own sakes, but the preparative, for the sake of other things. The punishment therefore which is inflicted by divinity on evil actions is a preparative good; for the design of divinity in punishing is to purify the soul and properly dispose it for the reception of the highest good. Hence unjust actions, by being attended with punishment, become the means of good to the offending soul, but simply considered, are very remote from the nature of good.

In short, there is no evil which is not

in a certain respect good, because the beneficent illuminations of providence extend to all things, and even irradiate the dark and formless nature of matter. But if any one should ask, whether divinity was willing that there should be evil, or was unwilling? We reply, that he was both willing and unwilling: for considered as imparting being to all things, he was willing; for every thing in the universe, which has in any respect being, proceeds from a demiurgic cause. But he was not willing, considered as producing all things good; for he concealed evil in the utility of good. Evil, therefore, neither subsists in intellectual natures, for the whole intellectual order is void of evil, nor in *whole* souls, or *whole* bodies, for all *wholes* are free from

evil, on account of their perpetually subsisting according to nature. Hence evil must either subsist in partial souls or partial bodies, but yet not in the essences of these, because all their essences are of divine origin; nor in their powers, for these subsist according to nature. It remains, therefore, that evil must subsist in their energies. But among souls, it cannot be in the energies of such as are rational, for all these aspire after good; nor in the energies of such as are irrational, for these energize according to nature; but it must take place *in the privation of symmetry between the two*. And, with respect to bodies, evil can neither subsist in their form, for it desires to rule over matter; nor in matter, for it aspires after the supervening irradia-

tions of form ; but *in the asymmetry of form with respect to matter*. And from hence it is evident that every thing evil is according to a *parypostasis*, *i. e.* has a shadowy kind of being ; that at the same time it is coloured by good ; that consequently all things are good through the will of divinity ; and that even evil is necessary to the perfection of the universe, as without its shadowy nature generation could not subsist.

From all that has been said, therefore, we must conclude, in opposition to Plotinus, that matter is not the first evil, and evil itself ; for matter is the offspring of deity, and consequently must be, in a certain respect, good. Matter, indeed, is the first indefinite, and is neither good

nor evil, but a thing necessary to the universe, and the most distant of all things from *the good itself*. Nor is the soul's debility owing to her lapse into matter; for as this lapse is voluntary, the soul must have sinned prior to her descent.

III. We now come, in the third place, to the book *On Providence*, in which the reader will find many admirable dogmas worthy the profound and elevated genius of Plotinus. The following additional information on this most interesting subject, from the adytum of philosophy, will, I doubt not, be gratefully received by the Platonic reader.

Certain philosophers posterior to Plato,

on seeing the unstable condition of sublunary things, were fearful that they were not under the direction of providence and a divine nature; for such events as are said to take place through fortune, the apparent inequality respecting lives, and the disordered motion of material natures, induced them greatly to suspect that they were not under the government of providence: besides, the persuasion that divinity is not busily employed in the evolution of all-various reasons, and that he does not depart from his own blessedness, induced them to frame an hypothesis so lawless and dire. For they were of opinion that the passion of our soul, and the perturbation which it sustains by descending to the government of bodies, must happen to

divinity if he converted himself to the providential inspection of things. Farther still, from considering that different objects of knowledge were known by different gnostic powers; as, for instance, sensibles by sense, doxastics* by opinion, things scientific by science, and intelligibles by intellect, and at the same time neither placing sense, nor opinion, nor science in divinity, but only an intellect immaterial and pure;—hence they asserted that divinity had no knowledge of any other things than the objects of intellect †: for, say they, if matter is external to him, it is necessary that he should be pure from apprehensions which

* *i. e.* Objects of opinion.

† This opinion was embraced by the more early Peripatetics.

are converted to matter; but being purified from these, it follows that he must have no knowledge of material natures: and hence the patrons of this doctrine deprived him of a knowledge of, and providential exertions about, sensibles, not through any imbecility of nature, but through a transcendancy of gnostic energy; just as those whose eyes are filled with light are said to be incapable of perceiving mundane objects, at the same time that this incapacity is nothing more than transcendancy of vision. They likewise add, that there are many things which it is beautiful not to know. Thus to the entheastic (or such as are agitated by a divine fury) it is beautiful to be ignorant of whatever would destroy the deific energy; and to the scientific not

to know that which would defile the intuitive perception of science.

But other philosophers ascribe, indeed, to divinity a knowledge of sensibles, in order that they may not take away his providence, but at the same time convert his apprehension to that which is external, represent him as pervading through the whole of a sensible nature, as passing into contact with the objects of his government, impelling every thing, and being locally present with all things; for (say they) he would not otherwise be able to exert a providential energy in a becoming manner, and impart good to every thing according to its desert*.

* This was the opinion of the Stoics.

Others again affirm that divinity has a knowledge of himself, but that he has no occasion to understand sensibles in order to provide for them, but that by his very essence he produced all things, and adorns whatever he has produced, without having any knowledge of his productions. They add, that this is by no means wonderful, since nature operates without knowledge in an unphantastic manner; but that divinity differs from nature in this, that he has a knowledge of himself, though not of the things which are fabricated by him. And such are the assertions of those who were persuaded that divinity is not separated from mundane natures, and of those who deprived him of the knowledge of inferior concerns, and of a

knowledge operating in union with providence.

With respect to these philosophers, we assert, that they speak truly, and yet not truly, on this subject : for if providence has a subsistence, neither can there be any thing disordered, nor can divinity be busily employed, nor can he know sensibles, through passive sense ; but these philosophers, in consequence of not knowing the exempt power and uniform knowledge of the gods, appear to deviate from the truth. For thus we interrogate them : Does not every thing energize in a becoming manner when it energizes according to its own power and nature ? as, for instance, does not nature, in conformity to the order of its

essence, energize naturally, intellect intellectually, and soul animastically? And when the same thing is generated by many and different causes, does not each of these produce according to its own power, and not according to the nature of the thing produced? Or shall we say that each produces after the same manner, and that, for example, the sun and man generate man according to the same mode of operation, and not according to the natural ability of each, viz. the one, partially, imperfectly, and with a busy energy, but the other without anxious attention, by its very essence, and totally? But to assert this would be absurd; for a divine operates in a manner very different from a mortal nature.

If, therefore, every thing which energizes, energizes according to its own nature and order, some things divinely and supernaturally, others naturally, and others in a different manner, it is evident that every gnostic being knows, according to its own nature, and that it does not follow that because the thing known is one and the same, on this account the natures which know, energize in conformity to the essence of the things known. Thus sense, opinion, and our intellect, know that which is white, but not in the same manner: for sense cannot know what the essence is of a thing white, nor can opinion obtain a knowledge of its proper objects in the same manner as intellect; for opinion knows only *that* a thing is, but intellect knows

the cause of its existence. Knowledge therefore subsists according to the nature of that which knows, and not according to the nature of that which is known. What wonder is it therefore that divinity should know all things in such a manner as is accommodated to his nature, viz. divisible things, indivisibly, things multiplied, uniformly, things generated; according to an eternal intelligence, totally, such things as are partial; and that, with a knowledge of this kind, he should possess a power productive of all things, or, in other words, that by knowing all things with simple and united intellections, he should impart to every thing being, and a progression into being? For the auditory sense knows audibles in a manner different from the

common sense; and prior to, and different from these, reason knows audibles, together with other particulars which sense is not able to apprehend. And again, of desire, which tends to one thing, of anger, which aspires after another thing, and of *proairesis*, (*προαιρεσις*), or that faculty of the soul which is a deliberative tendency to things in our power, there is one particular life moving the soul towards all these, which are mutually motive of each other. It is through this life that we say, I desire, I am angry, and I have a deliberative tendency to this thing or that; for this life verges to all these powers, and lives in conjunction with them, as being a power which is impelled to every object of desire. But prior both to reason, and this

one life, is *the one* of the soul, which often says, I perceive, I reason, I desire, and I deliberate, which follows all these energies, and energizes together with them; for we should not be able to know all these, and to apprehend in what they differ from each other, unless we contained a certain indivisible nature, which has a subsistence above the common sense, and which, prior to opinion, desire, and will, knows all that these know and desire, according to an indivisible mode of apprehension.

If this be the case, it is by no means proper to disbelieve in the indivisible knowledge of divinity, which knows sensibles without possessing sense, and divisible natures without possessing a di-

visible energy, and which, without being present to things in place, knows them prior to all local presence, and imparts to every thing that which every thing is capable of receiving. The unstable essence therefore of apparent natures, is not known by him in an unstable, but in a definite manner; nor does he know that which is subject to all-various mutations dubiously, but in a manner perpetually the same; for by knowing himself, he knows every thing of which he is the cause, possessing a knowledge transcendantly more accurate than that which is co-ordinate to the objects of knowledge; since a causal knowledge of every thing is superior to every other kind of knowledge. Divinity therefore knows without busily attending to the

objects of his intellection, because he abides in himself, and by alone knowing himself, knows all things. Nor is he indigent of sense, or opinion, or science, in order to know sensible natures; for it is himself that produces all these, and that, in the unfathomable depths of the intellection of himself, comprehends an united knowledge of them, according to cause, and in one simplicity of perception: just as if some one having built a ship, should place in it men of his own formation, and, in consequence, of possessing a various art, should add a sea to the ship, produce certain winds, and afterwards launch the ship into the new-created main. Let us suppose too, that he causes these to have an existence by merely conceiving them to exist, so

that by imagining all this to take place, he gives an external subsistence to his inward phantasms, it is evident that, in this case, he will contain the cause of every thing which happens to the ship through the winds on the sea, and that by contemplating his own conceptions, without being indigent of outward conversion, he will, at the same time, both fabricate and know these external particulars. Thus, and in a still greater degree, that divine intellect, the artificer of the universe, possessing the causes of all things, both gives subsistence to, and contemplates, whatever the universe contains, without departing from the speculation of himself. But if, with respect to intellect, one kind is more partial, and another more total, it is evident

that there is not the same intellectual perfection of all things, but that where intelligibles have a more total and undistributed subsistence, there the knowledge is more total and indivisible, and where the number of forms proceeds into multitude and extension, there the knowledge is both one and multiform. Hence, this being admitted, we cannot wonder on hearing the Orphic verses, in which the theologist says,

*Αυτὴ δὲ ζῆνος κ, ἐν οὐμμοσὶ πατρὸς ἀνακτοῦ
Ναιουσ' ἀθάνατοι ἴε θεοί, θνητοὶ τ' ἀνθρώποι,
Ὅσσα ἴε ἠν γαγαῶσα, κ, υγιεὶν ὅσσα ἐμειλλεν.*

i. e.

There, in the sight of Jove, the parent king,
Th' immortal gods and mortal men reside,
With all that ever was, and shall hereafter be.

For the artificer of the universe is full of

all intelligibles, and the causes of all things subsist in him distinctly, and intellectually separated from each other.

In the next place, it is necessary to know that providence, as the name implies, is *an energy prior to intellect*, and consequently, from its transcending all intellectual and sensible natures, is superior to fate, which is a beneficent exertion of the gods, resulting from, and subsisting in, bodies. Hence, whatever is under the dominion of fate, is likewise under the dominion of providence, deriving its connection from fate, but the good which it possesses from providence; but, on the contrary, all things which are under the government of providence are not indigent of fate; for in-

tellectual beings are exempt from its dominion. As there are two genera of things therefore, the one intellectual and the other sensible, so there are two kingdoms of these, viz. one of providence, which comprehends intellectual and sensible natures, and the other of fate, which rules over sensibles alone. And providence differs from fate, in the same manner as a god differs from that which is divine indeed, but which is so by participation, and not according to a primary subsistence. Just as with respect to light, that which subsists in the sun is primary, but that which is in the air secondary: and life is primarily in the soul, but secondarily in the body. Providence therefore is a god essentially, but fate is something divine, and not a

god, for it depends on providence, and has the same relation to it as an image to its exemplar.

Should it be asked whether providence extends itself to all things, to wholes and parts, to eternal and corruptible natures, we reply, that even the most minute particulars depend on the beneficent providence of the artificer of the universe; for nothing can escape its all-comprehending power, whether you regard the essence of a thing, or its subsistence as an object of knowledge. It is said, indeed, and with great propriety, that the whole circle has a central subsistence in the centre, since the centre is the cause, but the circle the thing caused; and on the same account every

number subsists monadically in unity. But in *the one* of providence, all things are contained in a much more exalted manner, since it is far more transcendently one than a centre, and an arithmetical monad.

Hence, nothing but the inaptitude of our nature can resist the all-pervading power of providence: and, indeed, even in this case, providence is not hindered either in its knowledge or beneficent care of our concerns; but as those who are asleep, or who shut their eyes, enjoy indeed that heat of the sun which is imparted to terrestrial natures, but deprive themselves of his illuminative power, and this through their own free will, and not through the god angrily

withdrawing from them his rays; in like manner those who, through a certain depravity, are said to be deprived of the providence of the gods, are not entirely beyond the reach of its influence. For, as the Athenian guest in Plato well observes, there is not any thing so small, that by descending into the profundities of the earth it can escape the inspection of providence, which beholds all things, and even such as are the least; nor is there any thing so great that it can pass beyond the heavens, and by this means be situated out of the dominions of that providence which governs the universality of things. Guilty souls, therefore, while they deprive themselves of those powers of the gods which impart to us every kind of good, necessarily become

exposed to that punishment which divinity benevolently inflicts, in order to bring them from a condition contrary, to one conformable to nature.

Hence too, since the knowledge of the gods is transcendently more excellent than the nature of the things known, they must know things past, present, and to come, by one bounded and immutable knowledge, and consequently must have a definite apprehension of whatever is contingent. For the knowledge of the gods does not keep pace with the ever-flowing nature of things in generation; nor is there any thing of past or future in the ineffable unity of their perception, but all things subsist in them, according to an ever-abiding

no, which is prior to all temporal representation, and signifies their firm and immutable nature,

Should it be urged, that the ambiguous answers which the ancient oracles gave respecting future events prove that the gods have no definite knowledge of things contingent, we reply, with the great Syrianus, that the knowledge and intelligence of the gods is very different from the energy of the prophets, who is, indeed, moved by the gods, but generates in herself divisible discourse, poetic measures, and ambiguous knowledge: for the nature of that which is illuminated is not such as that which illumines. Besides, oracles were often delivered in ambiguous terms, with a

view to the advantage of those that heard them, viz. in order to exercise their cogitative powers; for the gods make use of us as self-motive natures, as such govern all our actions, and distribute all things to us according to our deserts.

Again, should any one ask why punishments do not immediately follow the perpetration of crimes, but are inflicted afterwards, and sometimes not till long after the accomplishment of guilt, we reply, that the ingrafted root of wickedness, like land which produces thorns, (for though the produce of such ground is cut down a thousand times, yet it is always productive of the like) renders the same operations without being mol-

lified by punishment. Providence, therefore, waits the arrival of that period, which it knows will be profitable to the cure of souls: to which we may add, that hasty anger is not a good dispensator of punishments. Plato, being about to scourge one of his servants, was seen for some time holding the whip in an elevated position, and when asked the reason of his standing in that manner, replied, that he was punishing his overhasty anger. Archytas said to his servants in a field, who had disobeyed his orders, and were expecting to be punished for their neglect, it is well for you that I am angry. Theano likewise said to her servant, if I were not angry I should chastise you. It was a law among the Egyptians, that a pregnant

woman, who was condemned to die, should not be put to death till she was delivered : what wonder is it, therefore, that providence should preserve those that are worthy of death, but at the same time able to accomplish illustrious actions, till they have accomplished them? If Themistocles had immediately suffered the punishment which his conduct deserved, when a young man, who would have freed Athens from the Persian evils? Who would have expounded the Pythian oracle? If Dionysius had perished in the beginning of his tyranny, who would have freed Sicily from the Chalcedonians? If Periander had been punished in a short space of time, who would have freed Apollonia, the pleasant island of the Leucadians, and Anac-

torium, from the machinations of their enemies? To which we may add, that though the time of deferred punishment appears long to us, yet to the eye of providence it is nothing; as, on the other hand, the place in which we at present reside is perfectly small with respect to the punishment of great offences, but in the infernal regions there are many and indiscrivable places of punishment, and an innumerable multitude of torments, accommodated to the guilt of the souls that reside there.

Besides, such is the magnitude of necessary punishment, that the whole of it does not take place at once. But remorse is naturally implanted in offending souls. For they say, that the tyrant

Apollodorus saw himself in a dream scourged and boiled by certain persons, and heard his heart crying aloud from the kettle, *I am the cause of these thy torments*. It is reported too, of Ptolemy, who was called *thunder*, that certain of his friends dreamt he was called to the judgement seat by Seleucus, and that vultures and wolves sat as his judges. And such are the preludes of destined punishment, which are inherent in guilty souls.

Again, should it be asked, why certain children are punished for the crimes of their parents, (which the Pythian oracle said was the case with the posterity of Pelops, and which Proclus informs us the mysteries evinced,) and why cities

are punished for the sins of individuals, we reply, that the equity of divine vengeance in this particular will become immediately apparent, if we direct our attention to the pre-existence of human souls, and consider that many are punished in the present, for offences which they have committed in a former life; and that those whose guilt is of a similar kind, are, by the wise administration of providence, brought together, so as to form one family, or one city, and thus are as much collectively the object of punishment as an offending individual.

Lastly, should it be inquired, since the providence of divinity knows all things and reduces them to good, how angels, dæmons, heroes, and undefiled souls

govern the world in conjunction with the gods, we reply, that the providence of the gods is universal and total, but that of their attendants partial, subordinate, and limited.

IV. In the next place follows the book *On Nature, Contemplation, and the One*, which abounds with divine conceptions, and contains some of the most arcane doctrines of the Platonic philosophy. I shall only observe concerning nature, in addition to what is here delivered, that it subsists between soul and corporeal powers; for a medium of this kind is necessary, in order to connect soul, which has a self-motive essence, with body, which is entirely alter-motive, or moved by another.

Hence, it is inferior to soul, through its being divided about bodies, and its incapacity of conversion to itself, but it surpasses corporeal powers through containing the reasons of all things, and generating and vivifying every part of the visible world: for nature verges towards bodies, and is inseparable from their fluctuating empire; but soul (viz. the soul of the world) is separate from body, is established in herself, and subsists both from herself and another; from another, that is, from intellect, through participation, and from herself on account of her not verging to body, but abiding in her own essence, and at the same time illuminating the obscure nature of matter with a secondary life. Nature, therefore, is the last of the

causes which fabricate this corporeal and sensible world, bounds the progressions of incorporeal essences, and is full of reasons and powers through which she governs mundane affairs. And she is a goddess considered as deified, but not according to the primary signification of the word; for she has not a superessential subsistence. But she governs the whole world by her powers, by her summit comprehending the heavens, but through these ruling over the fluctuating empire of generation, and every where weaving together partial natures in amicable conjunction with wholes. In short, nature is the one life of the world, through which, as a root, all bodies, celestial and sublunary, wholes and parts, blossom into existence. This life

too is productive of seeds, and is the cause to all bodies of generation, nutrition, and increase: but this life is void of phantasy, as is evident from its subsistence in our bodies; for it is distributed through every part of these, and becomes by this means passive¹ in the highest degree, whereas the phantasy, which is the summit of the irrational life, is undistributed and impassive.²

V. We come now to the last of these books of Plotinus, which the Platonic reader will find to be in every respect worthy the uncommonly profound and divine genius of Plotinus. In addition, therefore, to what he has so admirably delivered on this important subject, *the Descent of the Soul*, I shall, in the first

1 - subject to feeling, pain, sensation.
2 - not "

place, offer a few arguments in defence of the soul's pre-existence, which is necessarily included in the doctrine of its descent. Unless the soul, then, had a being prior to her connection with the present body, she never would be led to search after knowledge; for if the objects of her investigation were things which she had never before been acquainted with, how could she ever be certain that she detected them? Indeed, it would be as impossible on this hypothesis for the soul to know any thing about them, even when she perceived them, as it would be to tell the meaning of the words of an unknown language on hearing them pronounced. The Peripatetics, in order to subvert this consequence, have recourse to an intellect

in capacity, which is the passive recipient of all forms : but the doubt still remains ; for how does this intellect understand ? For it must either understand the things which it already knows, or things which it does not know. But the Stoics assert, that natural conceptions are the causes of our investigating and discovering truth. If, therefore, these conceptions are in capacity, we ask the same question as before ; but if they are in energy, why do we investigate things which we know ? But the Epicureans affirm that anticipations are the causes of our investigations. If then they say that these anticipations subsist articulately, investigation must be vain ; but if inarticulately, why do we seek after any thing besides these anticipations ; or, in other

words, why do we seek after distinct knowledge, of which we have no anticipation ?

Again, there are numberless instances of persons that are terrified at certain animals, such as cats, lizards, and tortoises, without knowing the cause of their terror. The nephews of Berius, (says Olympiodorus*) that were accustomed to hunt bears and lions, could not endure the sight of a cock. The same author adds, that a certain apothecary could look undisturbed at asps and dragons, but was so vehemently frightened at a wasp, that he would run from it crying aloud, and quite stupified with

* MS. Comment, in Phædonem.

terror. Thus too (says he) Themison, the physician, could apply himself to the cure of every disease except the hydrophobia; but if any person only mentioned this disease, he would be immediately agitated, and suffer in a manner similar to those afflicted with this malady. Now it is impossible to assign any other satisfactory cause of all this, than a reminiscence of having suffered through these animals in a prior state of existence.

Farther still, infants are not seen to laugh for nearly three weeks after their birth, but pass the greatest part of this time in sleep; however, in their sleep they are often seen both to laugh and cry. But how is it possible that this can any otherwise happen than through the

soul being agitated by the whirling motions of the animal nature, and moved in conformity to the passions which it had experienced in another life? Besides, our looking into ourselves when we are endeavouring to discover any truth, evinces that we inwardly contain truth, though concealed in the darkness of oblivion. The delight too which attends our discovery of truth, sufficiently proves that this discovery is nothing more than a recognition of something most eminently allied to our nature, and which had been, as it were, lost in the middle space of time between our former knowledge of the truth and the recovery of that knowledge: for the perception of a thing perfectly unknown and unconnected with our nature, would produce

terror instead of delight ; and things are pleasing only in proportion as they possess something known and domestic to the natures by which they are known.

In the next place, I shall present the reader with the following remarkable account of the manner in which the soul descends, from the elegant Aristides, (De Musica, p. 103, &c.) who says, that this account is ancient, and was delivered by men celebrated for their wisdom.

“ The soul, as long as she is seated
 “ in a purer place of the universe, in
 “ consequence of not being mingled
 “ with the nature of bodies, is pure and
 “ inviolate, and revolves, together with

“ the ruler of the world ; but when,
“ through an inclination to these inferior
“ concerns, she receives certain phan-
“ tasm from places about the earth,
“ then she gradually imbibes oblivion
“ of the goods she possessed in her for-
“ mer superior station, and at the same
“ time descends. But by how much
“ the more she is removed from supe-
“ rior natures, by so much the more
“ approaching to inferiors, is she filled
“ with insanity, and hurled into corpo-
“ real darkness ; because, through a di-
“ minution of her former dignity, she
“ can no longer be intelligibly extended
“ with the universe : but on account of
“ her oblivion of supernal goods, and
“ consequent astonishment, she is borne
“ downwards into more solid natures,

“ and such as are involved in the ob-
 “ scurity of matter. Hence, when her
 “ desire of body commences, she af-
 “ fumes and draws from each of the su-
 “ perior places some portions of corpo-
 “ real mixture. As she passes, there-
 “ fore, through the ethereal orbs, she
 “ receives whatever is luciform and ac-
 “ commodated to heating, and natu-
 “ rally connecting the body; involving
 “ herself, through an inordinate direc-
 “ tion, in certain bonds from these cir-
 “ cles, and the mutual motions of their
 “ lines, after the manner of a net. But
 “ when she is carried through places
 “ about the moon, which possess a com-
 “ munion of air, and of a repercussive
 “ spirit, as she produces by this means
 “ a vehement noise through her motion

“ according to nature, she becomes
 “ filled with a subject spirit; and ex-
 “ tending the superficies and lines of
 “ her orbs, and being partly drawn
 “ downwards through the bulk of her
 “ spirit, and partly naturally contend-
 “ ing for supernal effences, she loses
 “ her spherical figure, and is transmuted
 “ into a human form. She changes
 “ therefore the superficies subsisting
 “ about a luciform and ethereal matter
 “ into a membranous form; but the
 “ lines approaching to a fiery nature,
 “ and coloured with the redness of fire,
 “ she changes into the form of nerves,
 “ and afterwards assumes a humid spirit
 “ from these inferior regions. So that
 “ this, first of all, becomes a certain
 “ natural body to the soul, compacted

“ from certain membranous superficies,
 “ and from parts possessing the form of
 “ nerves, lines, and spirit : for they
 “ say that this is the root of the body ;
 “ this they denominate a harmony, and
 “ affirm, that through this our external
 “ shelly vestment is nourished and con-
 “ nected.”

In the third place, should it be asked
 why souls fall into bodies? I answer,
 with Proclus, because they wish to imi-
 tate the providential energies of the
 gods, and on this account proceed into
 generation, and leave the contemplation
 of true being : for as divine perfection
 is twofold, one kind being intellectual
 and the other providential, and one kind
 consisting in an abiding energy and the

other in motion, hence souls imitate the prolific, intellectual and immutable energy of the gods by contemplation, but their providential and motive characteristic, through a life conversant with generation. As the intelligence too of the human soul is partial, so likewise is her providence; but being partial it associates with a partial body. But still farther, the descent of the soul contributes to the perfection of the universe: for it is necessary that there should not only be immortal and intellectual animals, such as are the perpetual attendants of the gods, nor yet mortal and irrational animals only, such as are the last progeny of the demiurgus of the universe, but likewise such as subsist between these, and which are by no

means immortal*, but are capable of participating of reason and intellect. And in many parts of the universe there are many animals of this kind; for man is not the only rational and mortal animal, but there are many other such-like species, some of which are more dæmoniacal, and others approximate nearer to our essence. But the descents of a partial soul contribute to the perfect composition of all animals, which are at the same time mortal and rational.

Should it be again asked, why therefore partial souls descending into generation are filled with such material per-

* For the whole composite which we call man is not immortal, but only the rational soul.

turbation, and such numerous evils? We reply, that this takes place through the inclination arising from their free will; through their vehement familiarity with body; through their sympathy with the image of soul, or that divisible life which is distributed about body; through their abundant mutation from an intelligible to a sensible nature, and from a quiet energy to one entirely conversant with motion; through a disordered condition of being, naturally arising from the composition of dissimilar natures, viz. of the immortal and mortal, of the intellectual and that which is deprived of intellect; of the indivisible and that which is endued with interval; for all these become the cause to the soul of this mighty tumult and labour

in the realms of generation. For we pursue a flying mockery which is ever in motion; and the soul indeed, by verging to a material life, kindles a light in her dark tenement the body, but she herself becomes situated in obscurity; and by giving life to the body, she destroys herself and her own intellect, in as great a degree as these are capable of receiving destruction: for by this means the mortal nature participates of intellect, but the intellectual part of death, and the whole becomes a prodigy, as Plato beautifully observes in his books of laws, composed of the mortal and immortal, of the intellectual and that which is deprived of intellect. For this physical law, which binds the soul to the body, is the death of the immortal life, but is

[lxvii]

the cause of vivification to the mortal
body.

The hymn to Apollo is added at the
request of a lady of singular worth, and
the translator's very particular friend.

PLOTINUS

ON

FELICITY.

B

2

PLOTINUS

ON

FELICITY.

SINCE it is universally believed that to live well and to be happy are placed in the same subject, may we not inquire whether felicity is to be attributed to other animals besides man? For if it is allowed them, as far as the condition of their birth permits, to pass through life without impediment, what should hinder their living well, that is, in such a manner as to be happy? For whether living well is supposed to consist in the

found and proper possession of *being*, or in acting agreeably to the design of Nature, according to both these acceptations living well belongs to other animals as well as to man. Thus birds are well conditioned, or enjoy a sound existence, and sing agreeable to the institutions of Nature in their formation, and after this manner they may appear to possess a desirable life. But if we constitute felicity as a certain end, which is something extreme in the appetite of nature, in this way all animals will be happy when they arrive at this extreme, and which, when obtained, Nature in them makes a stop, as having accomplished the whole of their existence, and filled it with all that is wanting from beginning to end. But if any one objects to felicity being transf-

ferred to brutes, asserting that in this case it must belong to creatures the most vile and abject, and to plants themselves, whose slender existence arrives at its proper end ; such a one may appear to speak absurd, while he affirms other animals cannot live well because they are reckoned of no worth ; but he is not compelled to allow felicity to plants which he grants to all animals, because plants are destitute of sense. And, perhaps, some one may allow felicity to plants, since life is present even to these : but to live partly happens well and partly the contrary ; as a power is given to plants that they should be well conditioned and bear fruit peculiar to their Nature, and sometimes that the contrary of this should take place. Hence,

if pleasure is the end which all beings pursue, and living well consists in this, it will be absurd to take away living well from the brutes. The same consequences will ensue if tranquillity be supposed the universal end; as likewise from admitting that to live according to nature is to live well. But whoever denies felicity to plants because they are not endued with sentient powers, cannot assign this to all animated beings: since if by sensation they mean not to be ignorant of passion or affection, it is necessary that *good itself* should be a passion prior to that which is said not to be concealed, as this is the possession of a *being* according to Nature, although such a possession is concealed; and in the same manner that which is peculiar, although

it may not yet be acknowledged as peculiar: besides it is necessary that that which is sweet should exist prior to our perception of its being sweet. Hence, then, if wherever good is possessed a being is well conditioned, why is it necessary to add sensation? unless they place good not in a certain present affection or constitution, but rather in knowledge and sensation. But, in this case, they should affirm that sense itself, and the energy of a sensitive life, is good, and ought to confess that good is present to every percipient being considered as percipient. But if they affirm good to be constituted from both, as from the perception of a certain thing, or affection, after what manner, since both passion and its perception, considered

by themselves, are indifferent, can they assert that to be good which is the result of both? But if they say that to live well is a certain good affection, and that state of being when any one acknowledges good as present to himself, it is proper to interrogate such whether any one from simply acknowledging this as present lives well, or whether it is necessary he should not only know it is pleasant but that it is good? But if it be necessary he should know it to be good there will not for this purpose be any need of sense, but of some power more excellent than sense. To live well, therefore, will not belong to him who is diffused all over with pleasure, but to him who is capable of knowing that pleasure is good. And so the cause of living well will not

be pleasure, but that *power* which is able to judge that pleasure is good : and, indeed, that which judges is more excellent than passion and affection, for it is either reason or intellect, but pleasure is passion only. But that which is irrational is by no means more excellent than Reason. How then can reason, neglecting itself, place that which exists in an opposite rank as more excellent than itself ? But those who attribute to plants, and to a sense of this kind, a well-conditioned state of existence, appear to conceal from themselves that they inquire after living well as after something superior to mere sensation, and that they place a better condition of being in a life more perfect and entire.

Again, whatever of felicity, they say, consists in a rational life, but not in life simply considered, (not even if it is sensual) is, perhaps, rightly said. But it is requisite to interrogate such, on what account they place felicity about the rational soul? whether they connect reason with felicity because reason is more sagacious, and can more easily investigate those things which are first according to Nature? or whether it is united with felicity, though it should not be able to investigate with sagacity? But if reason participates more of felicity on account of its power of invention, felicity may be present where reason is absent, to those beings who are capable of pursuing things first according to nature. Reason, therefore, will perform the of-

face of a minister, and will not by any means be eligible for its own sake, nor again will it be the perfection of that which we denominate virtue. But if you should say reason does not derive its dignity from things first according to nature, but is to be cultivated on its own account, it remains to inform us what besides this is the work of reason, what is its nature, and what causes its perfection? For, indeed, it is necessary it should be perfect, not on account of its inspection concerning things prior by nature, but that its perfection should consist in something else, and that it should inherit another nature; and again that it should not be in the number of things first according to nature, nor that from which these first beings are

composed, nor at all of this kind, but that it should be of all these the most excellent; for otherwise I cannot see how they can be able to assign the cause of its venerableness and worth. But such as these, until they find out a better nature, must be permitted to doubt what it is to live well, to whom a power of this kind may belong, and after what manner, and among which of the preceding, felicity may be found.

Let us, therefore, resuming the question from the beginning, inquire in what felicity ought to consist: indeed, since we constitute felicity in life, if we should think life a term synonymous to vital beings, we ought to assign to all animals an ability of becoming hap-

py, and should think that those beings live well in energy, to whom a life one and the same is present, and which all animals are naturally capable of receiving. Nor ought we, on such a supposition, so to distribute a matter of this kind as to allow an ability of happiness to the rational nature and not to the irrational; for life will be that common something which, whoever participates, ought to be capable of obtaining felicity, since beatitude would consist in a certain life. Hence those who affirm that felicity consists in a rational life, and not in life universal, do not, I think, sufficiently perceive that they establish felicity as something different from life: but they are compelled to call the rational power a quality, about which fe-

licity abides. According to these, however, a rational life exists as the subject; since about the whole of this felicity is entirely conversant; on which account it seems to be placed about another species of life, distinguished from reason in the same manner as that which is prior from that which is posterior. Since, then, life is multifariously predicated, and is diversified according to first and second, and so on in regular subordination; and since to live is affirmed equivocally in one respect of a plant, but in another of a brute, differing in plenitude and exility, certainly to live well, and simply to live, must be affirmed of all these in a certain analogical proportion. And if one vital being is but the image of another, doubtless one habit of living

well ought to be judged but the image of another. But if to whatever possesses a sufficiency of life, that is, which in no part is destitute of life, felicity belongs, certainly felicity will be present alone to beings possessing a sufficiency of life; since that which is best is present to these, and that is best in the order of beings which subsists truly in life, and is itself perfect life: for thus neither will its good be adventitious, nor will the approach of any thing external cause its subject to be placed in good. For what can be added to a perfect life that it may become the best? But if any one should say that the nature of good must be added, his sentiments will be correspondent to our own, inquiring after this as abiding in the soul; for it

has often been said by us, that perfect and true life flourishes in an intellectual nature, but that others are imperfect, mere images of life, neither living perfect nor pure; and again not possessing in reality more of life than its privation. And now, since we have summarily affirmed that all vital beings live from one principle in such a manner as not equally to participate of life, it necessarily follows that the principle of life is the first life, and the first perfection.

If, then, man can possess a perfect life, certainly man from its possession must be happy, otherwise we must attribute felicity to the gods alone if they only possess a life of this kind. But, because we confess that felicity may likewise

abide in men, let us consider after what manner this subsists : that man possesses a perfect life, not indeed if alone possessing one that is sensual, but from his participation of reason and true intellect, is already sufficiently evident ; but it may be inquired whether he enjoys this perfect life, as something different from himself ? Certainly he is not a happy man unless he possesses this felicity either in capacity or energy. But shall we say it abides in him as a part, and call it a perfect species of life ? Or shall we not say that a man of a different description from the happy man, possesses this as a part, by possessing it in a certain capacity, but that he is happy who exists in energy in a perfect life, and is arrived to that degree of excellence as to become

with it perfectly the same? External circumstances surround such a one, which he does not assert to be parts of himself, because he is unwilling they should surround him; but if he wished to be connected with them, they would, in this case, belong to him. To such a one as this, then, it may be asked, what is good? Perhaps he is good to himself from that which he possesses; but that which is of a superior nature is the cause of that which flourishes in himself, and which is participated as good by others in a manner different from that good which it is considered in itself. But an evidence may from hence be derived, that he who is so affected desires nothing farther; for what should he inquire after? Nothing surely of a subor-

dinate nature ; since he is conjoined with that which is best. He therefore who lives in this manner possesses a sufficient life ; and if he is endued with virtue, he will be sufficient to the enjoyment of felicity and the possession of good ; for there is no good which he does not possess ; but that which he inquires after he seeks as necessary, not indeed for himself, but as requisite to something belonging to him, external and adventitious, that is, to body, with which he is connected, and not as peculiar, or belonging to the interior man : indeed this he well knows, and cares for his body in such a manner as may best promote his enjoyment of an intellectual life. Hence he is not the less happy in adverse fortune, for, as well as a life

of this kind, he abides in the same state of felicity. Besides, in the death of his domestics and friends, he is not ignorant of the nature of death : and the deceased themselves, if worthy while living, were well acquainted with the nature of death. But if any molestation is produced by the dissolution of his familiars and necessary friends, it does not affect the true inward man, but that part alone in the worthy man which is destitute of intellect, the peculiar molestations of which the happy soul does not receive.

But against this definition of felicity it may be objected, can the soul be happy while its energies are prevented by pains of the body and disease ? Besides,

what is to be said if the worthy man should be delirious or mad? For this is sometimes effected by enchantments or desire. How can a man in such circumstances live well and be happy? Not to mention the miseries resulting from want and an abject fortune; and, perhaps, some one considering these, may adduce against us the calamities of Priam, and affirm, that however he may bear these misfortunes with ease, yet his *will* can never concur with their endurance. But it will be said, a happy life ought to be agreeable to our desire, since the worthy man is not soul alone, but the nature of body must be enumerated with his essence, as far as the passions of the body are transferred to his soul; and again, that for the sake of the body particular

things are pursued or avoided by the worthy man. Hence, since pleasure is necessary to a happy life, how can a man be happy when surrounded with difficulties and pains? even if he is a good man whom adversity of this kind oppresses? Indeed to the gods alone a disposition of this kind, blessed and self-sufficient, belongs: but to men, with whose souls something inferior is connected, felicity is to be inquired after about the whole composite, and not about one part alone, although the most excellent; which, as often as the subordinate part is ill-conditioned, is necessarily prevented from the proper energies of its nature; or if this be not admitted, it is necessary to cast aside body

and corporeal sense, and thus self-sufficient to inquire after felicity.

But if reason places felicity in being free from sickness and danger, and in never falling into great adversities, no one can be happy while things of such a contrary nature are dependant. But if felicity consists in the possession of true good, why is it requisite, neglecting this, to inquire after other things which ought not to be associated with felicity? For if felicity was the accumulation of things good, and at the same time necessary, or of goods greater and less, which are not only necessary but are called *goods*, it is requisite that these likewise should be present. But if it is proper that there should be some

one end, and not many ends, (or else a man would not inquire after the end, but after ends) it is necessary to pursue that alone which is the last and most excellent, and which the soul seeks after as something which may reside in the depths of its essence. But inquiry and will do not tend to the non possession of this most excellent end; for discursive reason does not chuse a declination of things inconvenient from a principal desire of Nature, but alone flies from and repels such as are present, or desires to conjoin things convenient. But the principal appetite of the soul is directed to that which is best, with which, when present, it is filled, and enjoys perfect repose: and this is the life which the prime desire of the soul pursues. But

that something of necessaries should be present, is not the wish of the soul, if we consider the soul's desire properly, and not according to the abuse of words; since we alone think the presence of these requisite, because, to the utmost of our ability, we decline from every thing evil: nor yet is this employment of declination to be principally desired, for it is far more desirable never to want such a declination from evil. The truth of this is sufficiently evident from necessaries when present, such as health, and a privation of pain; for which of these in a wonderful manner attracts the soul to itself? Since it is customary to neglect present ease and health, and to be unconscious of their possession. But such things as when present possess

no gentle attractive power of converting the soul to themselves, cannot add any thing to our felicity ; and it is consonant to reason to believe, that things whose absence is caused by the presence of their offending contraries, are necessary rather than good : they are not, therefore, to be enumerated with the end, but while they are absent, and their contraries depend, the end of life is to be preserved perfect and entire. But, it may be said, on what account does the happy man desire these to be present and reject their contraries ? Perhaps we may reply, not because they confer any thing to felicity, but rather are, in some respects, necessary to existence itself, in the present state ; but that their contraries either lead to non-

existence, or disturb, by their presence, a man enjoying the end, at the same time not destroying that end; and because he who enjoys that which is best, desires to possess it alone, and not in conjunction with any thing else. But though any thing else should occur, it would not take away the end, which is not absent while this is present. And, indeed, though something should happen to the happy man against his desire, he will not, on this account, lose any part of his felicity; for if this be admitted, he must be daily changed, and fall off from felicity; as when he loses a son, or suffers any loss in his domestic concerns; since there are innumerable accidents which take place contrary to the will, and which detract nothing from

the true and invariable end of life. But it may be said that great adversities only lessen felicity ; but what is there among human concerns so great, which will not be despised by him who betakes himself to things far more excellent and sublime, and is no longer dependent on such as are subordinate ? For since the worthy man would not esteem the greatest prosperity of any moment or worth, such as the sovereign command of nations, on the establishing of cities, why should he think the loss of dominion, or destruction of his country, a grievous misfortune ? But if he thinks any thing of this kind to be a great evil, or evil at all, he is to be reckoned ridiculous ; and is no longer a truly worthy man, while he accounts timber and stones,

and by Jupiter the death of mortals, as a matter of great concern, when he ought to esteem death far better than corporeal life. But what if he should be sacrificed, would he think death an evil to himself because he is to be slain near the altars? Will he likewise account it a great matter that he is to be buried ignobly, and at a small cost, and is judged unworthy of a more lofty monument? But it is entirely pusillanimous to reckon such things worthy of concern: besides, if he should be led captive, he possesses a power of freeing himself by death, if he cannot in such a condition be happy. But if his domestic grand-children are led captive, will he be less happy? What then shall we say should he depart from life with-

out having beheld relatives of this kind, would he migrate from such a life with an opinion that such a connection could not have subsisted? But to think in this manner would be absurd. But may he not think it possible for his kindred to be oppressed by such casualties? Will he be less happy in futurity in consequence of the possibility of this opinion being realized? Rather indeed, though he should think so, he will be happy. Hence, though such circumstances should take place at present, he will consider that the nature of the universe is such, that he should bear things of this kind, and that it is requisite he should follow the general order; besides, many who are led captive, act better than before: and it is in the arbitration

of those who are bound to make themselves free ; but if they abide in captivity, they either continue for some particular reason, and in this case there is nothing truly grievous in their condition, or they abide without reason, and in this case it is not proper to be the cause of their own perturbation. Indeed the worthy man is never oppressed with evil through ignorance of his own concerns, nor changed by the fortunes of others whether prosperous or adverse : but when his pains are vehement, as far as it is possible to bear he bears them, and when they are excessive, they may cause him to be delirious : yet he will not be miserable in the midst of the greatest pains : but his intellectual splendor will assiduously

shine in the penetralia of his soul, like a bright light secured in a watch tower, which shines with unremitted splendor, though surrounded by stormy winds and raging seas. But what shall we say if, through the violence of pain, he is no longer sensible, or is just ready to destroy himself? Indeed if the pain is so vehemently extended, he will, if sensible, consult what is requisite to be done, for in these concerns the freedom of the will is not taken away. But it is requisite to know that circumstances of this kind do not appear to men excellent in virtue so dreadful as to others, nor yet reach to the inward man; neither torments, nor griefs, belonging to himself, nor the particular difficulties with which others are oppressed, or this

would be a certain debility of our soul; which is then sufficiently evident, when we think it requisite that such misfortunes should be concealed from us, such as death, when imminent or distant inconveniences, surveying ourselves, and not the seeming evils, lest we should be affected with any molestations. But all this is the fault of our imbecility, which we ought vigorously to repulse, nor (yielding to such weakness) fear lest any thing of molestation should happen. But if any one objects that we are so constituted by nature that we ought to grieve for domestic misfortunes, he should understand that, in the first place, all men are not so affected, and, in the next place, that it is the business of virtue to reduce the common con-

dition of nature to that which is better, and to something more honest than the decisions of the vulgar; but it is more honest to consider as things of no moment, all that appear grievous to our common nature: for the worthy man ought not to be as one rude and unskilful, but, like a strenuous wrestler, should vigorously repel the strokes of fortune, endeavouring to throw his fortitude on the ground; since he knows that such things are displeasing to a common nature, but that to such a nature as his own they are not really grievous, but are terrible only, as it were, to boys. Would he then, you will say, wish for things apparently afflictive? perhaps he may be unwilling to be connected with them; but when they happen, he op-

poses virtue to their attacks, by means of which the soul is not easily changed and affected.

But what shall we say when the worthy man is no longer himself, being overwhelmed either with disease or magical arts? We reply, that if in such a state they allow he may retain his proper virtue, like one in a deep sleep, what is there to prevent his being happy? Since they do not deprive him of felicity in sleep, nor esteem that interval of rest as any hindrance to the happiness of the whole of life: but if they deny such a one to be worthy, the same consequences will not ensue. But we supposing a man to be worthy, inquire whether, so far as worthy, he is always

happy. Again, if it is said how can he be happy, although endued with virtue, while he does not perceive himself virtuous, nor energizes according to virtue? We reply, although a man does not perceive himself to be healthy, he may, nevertheless, be healthy: and again, he will not be less beautiful in his body, although not sensible of his beauty; and will a man be less wise if he does not perceive himself to be wise? But, perhaps, some one may say, that wisdom should be accompanied with sense and animadversion, for felicity is present with wisdom in energy. We reply, if this energy of wisdom was any thing adventitious, there might be some weight in the assertion; but if the subsistence of wisdom is situated in a certain

essence, or rather in essence itself, this essence will neither perish in him who is asleep or delirious, or is denied to be any longer conscious of his felicity : and, indeed, the energy of this essence resides in the soul of such a one, and is an energy perpetually vigilant ; for then the worthy man, considered as worthy, energizes, whether in a dormant state, or overwhelmed with infirmity. But an energy of this kind is not concealed from the whole itself but rather from some particular part ; just as with respect to the vegetable energy in its most flourishing state, an animadversion of such an energy does not transmigrate into the external man by means of a sentient nature ; and if we were entirely the same with our vegetable power,

there is no doubt but we should energize, whenever such a virtue was in energy: but since the case is otherwise, and we are the energy of that which is intelligent, we energize in consequence of its energy. But perhaps such an energy is concealed from us because it does not reach any sentient power; for to this purpose it should energize through sense as a medium: but why should not intellect energize, and soul about intellect, preceding all sense and animadvertion? For it is requisite there should be some energy prior to animadvertion, since the energy of intellect is the same with its essence. But animadvertion appears to take place when the energy of intellect is reflected; and when that which energizes according to

the life of the soul rebounds, as it were, back again, like images in a mirror, quietly situated in a smooth and polished place, so as to reflect every form which its receptacle contains. For as in things of this kind, when the mirror is not present, or is not properly disposed, the energy from which the image was formed is indeed present, but the resemblance absent: so with respect to the soul, when it energizes in quiet, certain resemblances of thought and intellect beam on our imagination, like the images in the smooth and polished mirror; and in a sensible manner, as it were, we acknowledge that our intellect and thought energize together with the former knowledge. But when this medium is confounded, because the har-

mony of the body is disturbed, then thought and intellect understand without an image, and intellection is carried on without imagination. Hence intelligence may be considered as subsisting together with the phantasy, while, in the mean time, intelligence is something very different from the phantasy: besides it is easy to discover many speculations of men when vigilant and honest; actions, in the performance of which it is evident that we do not perceive ourselves to speculate and act; for it is not necessary that he who reads should be conscious he is reading, especially when he reads with the greatest attention; nor that he who acts vigorously should necessarily acknowledge his vigorous energy: and the same consequence ensues

in a variety of other operations ; so that animadversions appear to render more debile the actions which they attend ; but when they are *alone*, they are then pure, and seem to possess more of energy and life. And hence when worthy men live in such a state, it follows that they live in a more perfect manner ; since their life is not at that time diffused into sense, and by this means remitted in its energy, but is collected into itself in one uniform, intellectual tenor.

But if it be objected, that a man of this kind cannot be said to live ; we, on the contrary, affirm, that he truly lives, but that his felicity is concealed from him, as well as his life ; and if this is not consented to, we think it just that,

allowing him to live and to be a worthy man, they inquire only whether, in such a state, he is happy, lest by detracting from him life, they should ask whether he lives well: it is likewise proper that they should not, by entirely taking away the nature of man, deliberate concerning his felicity; and lastly, that they do not seek after the worthy man in external actions, after having granted that he is entirely conversant with that which lies deep in the soul. Nor ought they to think that his will is placed in external concerns; for felicity can have no subsistence if the worthy man is said to affect externals, and to place his desires in their possession. All men, indeed, desire to live well, and free from the incurfion of things evil; but if the wor-

thy man does not find these succeed according to his wish, he will nevertheless be happy. But if any one should say that he is deceived, and wanders from reason, by only wishing for such things, (since it is impossible for evil not to exist) he ought to assent to the propriety of our conduct in converting the will of such a one to that which is intimately his own.

But if pleasures are required in the life of such a man, they cannot be the pleasures of the intemperate, nor such as are corporeal; for it is impossible that these should be present without contaminating felicity. Nor, again, is the more abundant motion of gladness and mirth required; for why should things of this kind be requisite to true

felicity? But those pleasures alone are necessary which accompany the presence of good, and which are neither placed in motion nor recently possessed: for things truly good are already present, and the worthy man is present to himself, and his pleasure and serenity ever abides; for he is always serene, his state is ever quiet, and his affection sufficient, and he is never disturbed, if truly worthy, by any of those circumstances of being which are denominated evil. But he who seeks after any other species of pleasure in the life of a worthy man, ceases any longer to inquire after a worthy life.

Nor are the good man's energies entirely prevented by the changes of

fortune, but different energies will take place in different fortunes, yet all of them equally honest, and those perhaps more honest which rightly compose jarring externals. But the energies of his contemplation, if they respect things particular, will perhaps be such as he ought to produce from inquiry and consideration; but the greatest discipline always resides with him, and is perpetually at hand, and this more so, though he should be placed in the Bull of Phalaris, which is ridiculously called pleasant, when twice or frequently pronounced; for what is there pronounced in agony, is pronounced by that which is placed in torment, the external and shadowy man, which is far different from the true man, who, dwelling by

himself, so far as he necessarily resides with himself, never ceases from the contemplation of universal good.

But that the good man in particular is not a certain composite from soul and body, is evinced by a separation from body, and a contempt of all that is called corporeal good. But it would be ridiculous to assert that felicity pertains to our common life; since felicity is a good life resident in the soul, and is an energy not of the whole soul, nor of the animal or vegetable part, so as in any manner to border on corporeal sensations. For felicity is not placed in the magnitude, beauty, or proper habit of the body; nor again in the vigour and perfection of the senses; since too

much prosperity of body and the senses oppresses the soul with a dead weight, and draws her aside from herself. But it is proper, by a retrograde process, and by a departure from sense, converting the soul to that which is best, so to attenuate the body, that the true man may appear to be perfectly different from externals.

But supposing a man to be both beautiful, great, and rich, and to possess universal empire; such a one, deceived by such trifling concerns, is not to be envied. Circumstances indeed of this kind were perhaps never united in the person of one wise man; and if they were present, while he properly cultivates himself, he will break them in

pieces and diminish their power ; by negligence of his body, wearing away its luxuries, and resigning his sovereign command : besides, he will so care for the health of his body, that he will desire not to be entirely unskilled in the cure of disease and pain ; so that in his youth he will desire to learn arts of this kind, but in old age he will neither wish to be disturbed with such cares, nor with any corporeal pleasures or corporeal concern, whether pleasant or painful, lest he should be compelled to decline to the dark regions of body. But when situated in a painful condition, he opposes, as his guard, virtue, ever present with him, and ever sufficient ; and so prepares himself for every circumstance of life, that neither in plea-

fures, prosperous health, and vacation from labour, he may esteem himself more happy, nor less blessed, when their opposites succeed : for since the former cannot increase felicity, certainly it can never be diminished by the latter, their perfect contraries.

But it may be said, if there are two wise men, the one possessing all that is judged consonant, and the other all that is reckoned contrary, to nature, can both be equally happy? Certainly both, if they are equally wise; for if the one should be beautiful in his body, and possess every thing besides, which is neither subservient to the acquisition of virtue and wisdom, nor to the contemplation of that which is highest and best,

nor to the enjoyment of the most excellent life, of what consequence is their acquisition ? Since their possessor will be far from glorying, as if he was more happy than the wise man, who is deprived of their possession : besides, an abundance of such things does not even confer to the end of the piper's art. But we, considering the happy man according to the infirmity of our nature, judge such things to be grievous and horrible which the happy man considers as of the smallest importance ; for otherwise he will not yet be wise and blessed, unless he first banishes from himself all fallacies of imagination of this kind, and is able to confide in himself, as one who is no longer capable of enduring evil : for after this manner he will live

intrepid in every state, but if he fears anything, he is not yet perfect in virtue, but is virtuous only by halves. And with respect to fear arising from some unexpected circumstances of *being*, while the worthy man is intent upon other things, he will immediately endeavour to repel its attacks, and calm, either by threats or the assistance of reason, that conjoined sense, which is moved, as it were, with childish grief, by threatening, I say, without suffering perturbation; just like a boy who is restrained from doing wrong, by the awe excited from the presence of another greater than himself. Nor will such a man, on this account, be void of friendship and gratitude: for he is both friendly and grateful to himself, and to those with

whom he is connected. And since he gives to his friends, what he attributes to himself, he will be a peculiar friend, and will at the same time live in the enjoyment of intellect.

But he who does not place the worthy man in such an exalted intellect, but subjects him to the power of fortune and to the fear of evil, certainly adduces a different character from that which we think belongs to the worthy man, and presents us with a mixed character and life, composed from good and evil: such indeed as is not easy to be found, and when found, is not deserving of the name of felicity; possessing nothing great, either pertaining to the excellency of wisdom or the purity of good-

ness. Felicity, therefore, cannot consist in a common life ; and Plato rightly judges, that the chief good is to be sought from above, and must be beheld by him who is wise, and wishes to become happy in futurity ; and that he must study to approach to its similitude, and to live its exalted life : it is requisite therefore to possess this alone, in order to obtain the end of life. And the wise man will esteem all besides as certain mutations of place, which, in reality, confer nothing to felicity ; in every circumstance of being he will conjecture what is right, and act as necessity requires, as far as his abilities extend ; and though living a life superior to sense, he will not be hindered from taking a proper care of the body with which he is

connected, always acting similar to the musician, who cares for his lyre as long as he is able to use it, but when it becomes useless and ceases any longer to perform the office of a lyre, he either changes it for another, or abstains entirely from its exercise, having an employment independent of the lyre, and despising it lying near him, as no longer harmonious, he sings without its instrumental assistance. Yet this instrument was not bestowed on the musician from the first in vain, because it has often been used by him with advantage and delight.

PLOTINUS
ON THE
NATURE AND ORIGIN
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WHOEVER inquires from whence evils originate, and whether they happen about things themselves in general, or about some particular kind of things, will begin his inquiry in a proper manner, if he first establishes what evil is, and defines its nature; for thus it will appear, from whence evil arises, where it is situated, to what it belongs,

and if it has any real existence in the nature of things. But here a doubt arises, by which of our internal powers we may be best able to perceive the nature of evil; since our knowledge of every thing is produced by a certain similitude between the object and its percipient. Thus, because intellect and soul are certain species, or forms, they possess a knowledge of forms, which at the same time they naturally desire. But how can any one imagine a form of evil, since it is conceived as the total absence of good? But if because there is the same science of contraries, and evil is contrary to good, on this account we obtain a knowledge of good and evil, it is necessary that whoever understands evil should discern good; since things

more excellent justly precede such as are more base, and forms antecede such things as are not forms, but are rather accounted their privations. Again, therefore, a question worthy of solution presents itself, in what manner good is contrary to evil? Perhaps it may be said, because good is first in the order of things, but evil the last; or certainly good is as form and evil as privation: but the solution of this must be deferred to the latter part of our disquisition.

For the present, then, let us define the nature of good, as far as the present disputation requires. Good, then, is that sublime principle from which all things depend, or which all things desire, deriving from this their origin,

and being perfectly indigent of its presence to the continuance of their subsistence : but good itself is in want of nothing, but is perfectly sufficient to itself, independant of desire ; it is the measure and bound of all things, from itself producing intellect, essence, soul, life, and intellectual energy ; all which are beautiful ; but intellect, which is the beautiful itself, reigns over all that is best in the intelligible world : an intellect not such as we possess, conversant with propositions, and perceiving what reason collects ; inferring one thing from another, and beholding things through their consequences, as if void before its perception, although at the same time it subsisted as intellect. The supreme intellect of which we are now

speaking is not of this kind, but is itself all things, dwells ever with itself, is perfectly united to itself, and, without possession, possesses all things: for it does not possess these as different from itself, nor is one particular in itself separated from another, but every thing there is a whole, and every where all, yet in such a manner that nothing is confused, but particulars preserve a proper distinction, and as particulars are beheld. Hence that which immediately participates of this intellect, participates not all things together, but as much as its capacity admits: it is the first energy of intellect, and the first essence, intellect in the mean time abiding in itself; and it energizes, indeed, about intellect, as if living by an energy of this kind. But

soul, perpetually turning round intellect, which it constantly beholds, and viewing its most intimate recesses, contemplates through this also, as a mirror, the supreme divinity, the good itself; and in this delightful employment the tranquil and blessed life of the gods consists, secure from the power of chance and the incursions of evil. And if the processions of divinity had stopped here, evil would never have had a being; but since there are things primarily good, there are also such as are secondarily good, and all things are in regular subordination about the king of the universe, who is the cause of every thing good, and for whose sake all things subsist. Lastly, things second in gradation are round that which is second in the

order of causes, and such as are third in descent, subsist about that which is third in dignity and rank.

If such then is the condition of these true beings, and of that which is more exalted than being, certainly evil cannot be found in beings, and much less in that which is superior to being, for all these are good. It remains, therefore, that if evil any where subsists, it must be found among non-entities, must be itself a certain species of non-entity, and be solely found about such things as are mingled with non-entity, or are, in some respect, conversant with it. By non-entity in this place, I do not mean *nothing*, but that alone which is different from being; nor yet a non-

entity of such a kind of motion and station, which are said to subsist about being; but I understand that kind of non-entity which is no more than the mere image of being, or something even more remote than this from reality; and this is no other than our visible universe, and the passions with which every sensible object is surrounded; or it is something posterior to these, and, as it were, accidental to them; or it is the principle of such passions, or some of one of the particulars which replenish a sensible nature. It is lawful to conceive of a nature of this kind, as something destitute of measure with respect to measure, as infinite with reference to bound, and as something formless with respect to a forming power: besides this, it is al-

indeterminate, always in want with
 relation to sufficiency, never perfectly
 reposing, on every side enduring all
 things, insatiable, and extreme poverty
 and want. Nor are properties of this
 kind accidental to such a nature, but ap-
 pear to constitute its delusive essence.
 We may add farther, that in every por-
 tion of it which you behold, you will
 find these affections collected together ;
 but other things which participate of
 this, and are assimilated to it, become
 evil, without being evil itself. All these
 evil properties are therefore inherent in
 a certain general receptacle, and are in
 no respect different from the receptacle
 itself : and as good itself is prior to that
 good which happens to others, so evil
 itself is different from participated evil.

But it may be said, where is immoderation to be found but in that which is destitute of measure? And where can measure reside, unless in that which participates of measure? We reply, that as measure itself does not subsist in any thing measured, so immoderation itself abides external to the unmeasured subject; for if it subsisted in another, it must either subsist in that which is without measure, (but this cannot require immoderation, since it is already that which is without its measure) or it must exist in that which is measured; but it is impossible that the measured, considered as measured, should be subject to the power of immoderation: indeed, it is requisite there should be something according to itself, infinite, naturally

formless, and such throughout as we have already explained, in describing the nature of evil. Hence whatever besides is of this kind, either has this formless nature mixed with its own, or at least it becomes such, by beholding its dark infinity, or because it produces similar evils. Hence it is the common subject of figure, form, and measure, is adorned with a foreign ornament, and possesses nothing from itself, excellent and good; it is a mere image if compared with beings, and the very essence of evil, if essence can possibly belong to evil; and such as this reason convinces us is the first evil, and evil itself.

But the nature of bodies, so far as it participates of matter, is evil, al-

though not the first evil, for it is endued with a certain form, but not such a one as is true; it is, besides this, destitute of life; is the source of the mutual corruptions and inordinate concussions of bodies; is a hindrance to the proper energies of the soul; and, by its perpetual flowing, glides swiftly away from essence, and, on this account, obtains the second degree of evil. But the soul, considered in herself, and independant of her connection with body, is not evil, nor yet every soul while united with body. But from whence arises the depravity of the soul? From that irrational species which, as Plato says, is subservient to the soul, and becomes, on account of its irrationality, evil, and immoderate excess and defect; and from

which intemperance and timidity, and other vices of the soul, such as involuntary passions, arise, and from which also those false opinions proceed, by which the many are deluded in their pursuit of good, and declination of evil. But what produces an evil of this kind? And how can it be reduced into matter as its principle and cause? In the first place, a soul of this kind must be considered as not subsisting external to matter, and that it is not thus evil from itself; it is therefore mingled with the immoderate, and becomes destitute of moderating and ornamenting form, because it is merged in a body participating largely of matter. Besides, the rational power, if obstructed by sense, is incapable of discerning truth, being

clouded by perturbations, and buried in the darkness of matter; by its compliance, in this case, descending into matter, and not beholding the permanent nature of essence, but the flowing and unreal condition of generation; the origin of which is the nature of matter, so perfectly evil, as to fill with its defect of good, the nature which only beholds it without merging into its dark abode. For whether or not it is perfectly void of good, so as to be its privation and pure defect, it renders whatever touches it similar to itself. The perfect soul, therefore, verging to intellect, is always pure, casting far from itself the folds of matter, together with every thing boundless, immoderate, and evil; and on this account, neither approaching to,

nor beholding, natures of such a kind, it remains pure and perfectly bound in intellectual measure. But the soul which does not abide in this manner, but departs from itself, subsisting in a rank neither primary nor perfect, and being nothing more than the image of the former, is filled with an indefinite nature, so far as it is deficient, and beholds nothing but obscurity; it now participates deeply of matter, looking at that which it cannot perceive, and as it is said, surveying absolute darkness.

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If, then, the defect of good is the cause of the soul's beholding darkness, and being merged in obscurity, the evil of the soul will be situated in darkness and defect, and this will be the first evil.

But the evil which is second, will be that darkness itself, and nature of evil, not resident in, but antecedent to, matter; or certainly evil itself does not consist in a certain defect, but in universal privation of good. Hence, whatever is deficient of good in a small degree is not yet evil, since it is capable, from its nature, of becoming perfect; but whatever is perfectly destitute of good, and such is matter, is evil in reality, possessing no portion of good: for, indeed, matter does not (properly speaking) possess being, by means of which it might be invested with good, but being is only equivocally affirmed of matter. Whatever therefore is defective is not good, but that which is universally defective is evil itself; and an ability of that

which is already evil of falling into greater evil, is a defect of a middle condition : from whence it is requisite to consider evil itself, not as any particular evil, like injustice, or any other certain depravity, but as that universal something which is none of these, and o which all other evils are only species, distinguished by certain additions : as, for instance, a particular depravity in the soul ; and again the species of this depravity, either according to the matter about which it subsists, or according to certain parts of the soul ; so that its evil may partly consist in what it beholds, partly in the incentives of appetite, and partly in its passivity. But if any one places evils likewise external to the soul, it is proper to inquire how disease, de-

formity, and poverty, may be reduced to the nature of evil? Perhaps disease may be said to be a defect or excess in composite bodies, arising from matter, which cannot sustain order and measure: but that deformity is matter, resisting and not vanquished by the accession of form: and lastly, that poverty is the want and privation of what we naturally require on account of that matter with which we are united, and which is naturally indigent. And if this is the case, it must not be said that we are the principle of evils, as if from our peculiar nature we were evil, but that these things are prior to our nature, and that the vices which occupy the generality of mankind detain them against their will, and that to some souls, though not to

all, a power is given of flying beyond the reach of evil. But the matter of bodies is the evil of our present nature ; nor is the depravity of men evil itself ; since a few are to be found destitute of evil, which they subdue by that exalted principle contained in their nature, and which is entirely separate from matter.

But let us consider how we are to understand that assertion of Plato, that evil cannot be extirpated, but exists from necessity ; and again, that it does not dwell with the gods, but continually surrounds a mortal nature, and this inferior place. Is this said because the celestial region is always free from the incursions of evil ? Since it is moved in perpetual order and ornament, and is

free from all injustice and iniquity. To which we may add, that the stars are perpetually moved in a beautiful order, and in the same invariable rounds, without injuring each other in their course; but on earth injustice and iniquity, destitute of order, are found, for this is a mortal nature, and an inferior place. But when *he* says, we must fly from hence, he cannot mean with reference to our terrene situation; for, as he afterwards observes, to fly from hence is not to depart from earth, but this is to be accomplished only by the man who, while an inhabitant of earth, with respect to his corporeal part, lives in a just and holy manner, united with prudence: as if he had said we should fly from evil, which, with respect to man,

is depravity, as well as the consequences resulting from depravity. But when Theodorus in this dialogue observes, that evils might be entirely extirpated, if he (Socrates) could only persuade men that his doctrine was true, Socrates denies the possibility of this, and asserts, that evils have a necessary subsistence, and that it is necessary that there should be something contrary to good. And here you will inquire how it is possible that human evil, that is, depravity, should be contrary to good? We reply, because it is contrary to virtue; but virtue is not good itself, but a certain good which enables us to overcome the evil of matter. But, you will again ask, how can any thing be contrary to good itself, for it is not to be ranked among qualities: besides, what

necessity is there that contraries should always mutually attend each other, and nothing of a contrary nature be found without that to which it is contrary? For though in consequence of there being such a thing as health there may also be disease, yet it does not necessarily follow that there is. Perhaps Plato did not think that a necessity of this kind was true in every order of contraries, but always in that which is contrary to good. But if good itself is essence, or rather above essence, what can be found contrary to it? For that nothing is contrary to essence is sufficiently manifest in particular essences by induction; but whether or not there is something contrary to essence, simply considered, is not yet demonstrated. But what can

be contrary to universal essence itself, and to the first principles of the universe? Perhaps that which is not essence will be contrary to essence, but to the nature of good, the nature and principle of evil will be perfectly contrary, if it is any where to be found; for both are principles, the one of things evil, and the other of such as are good, and every thing in the nature of the one is contrary to every thing in the nature of the other. Hence the wholes themselves are contrary, and more contrary than other things; for other contraries are either placed in the same species or in the same genus, and agree in something common to each in which they subsist. But what should prevent things being especially contrary to each other which

subsist perfectly apart from each other, and in such a manner that every thing which fills the nature of the one, is contrary to every thing which accomplishes the nature of the other? especially if such things are contrary which are distant from each other by the greatest of all intervals. Indeed the contraries to bound and measure, and whatever else is the property of a divine nature, are infinitude and immoderation, and all that belongs to the nature of evil. Hence the whole of the one is contrary to the whole of the other; the being of the one is fallacious, primary and true fallacy, but the being of the other is true being, and the falsity of that is contrary to the truth of this; and all that respects the essence of the one

is contrary to all that respects the essence of the other. On which account it is sufficiently evident, that it is not every where true that nothing is contrary to essence, since we should confess fire and water as contrary to each other, although a common matter was not present, in which heat, cold, humor, and dryness reside as accidents. But if they should subsist in themselves alone, and without a common subject, sufficiently perfect, in this case they would be contrary to each other, essence to essence. Hence such things as are perfectly separated from each other, which possess nothing in common, and are distant from each other in the extreme, are contraries in their very nature ; since contrariety does

not take place according to a certain quality, nor entirely according to every genus of things; but because things are much distant among themselves, likewise so far as they are composed from opposites and produce such things as are contrary.

But why if there is good is it necessary there should be evil? Shall we say because matter is necessary to the universe? For the world is necessarily composed from contraries, and could not exist independent of matter. The nature of the world therefore is mixed from necessity together with intellect. Indeed whatever in this world proceeds from divinity is good, but evil, says Plato, originates from an antient nature,

signifying the subject matter of all things beheld, not yet invested with ornament. But how does he call this a mortal nature? For when he says that about this place evils revolve, he doubtless means the universe; perhaps his meaning is to be understood by what he says in the *Timæus*, where he represents the mundane architect thus speaking to the inferior divinities; “But because ye are generated ye are not immortal, nor yet shall your nature ever be dissolved, being preserved safe from destruction by my power.” And if this be the case, it is rightly said that things evil cannot be extirpated. By what means then may any one avoid evil? not by flying, says he, from place to place, but rather by acquiring virtue, and remo-

ving himself from body; for thus he will separate himself from matter; since while adhering to body he adheres also to matter. But Plato discovers the manner in which separation or non separation takes place: and besides, that to be with the gods signifies to reside in the intelligible world, for every thing there is immortal and divine. But it is lawful to consider the necessity of evil in this manner; that since good cannot remain alone without communicating its beneficence, but must, from the perfect plenitude of its nature, be perpetually exuberant, it is necessary that, by a certain far-distant degression from good, evil should at length arise; or that, by a certain perpetual subjection and distance, it is necessary that something last

in the order of things should take place, beyond which nothing farther can be produced, and that this should be evil itself: for since it is necessary there should be something after the first, it is also necessary there should be something last; and this is matter, the mere shade and privation of good, which unavoidably occasions the necessity of evil. But perhaps some one may object, that the evil of mankind does not originate from matter, neither our ignorance nor evil desires; and that if any one deviates from rectitude through the evil of body, matter is not to be accused as the artificer, but form; such as heat and cold, bitter and salt, and other species of humors, besides vacuities and repletions; repletions not simply considered,

but a particular kind ; and that there is altogether something which produces a difference of desire : to which may be added, the disagreement of fallacious opinions ; by all of which it appears, that form rather than matter is our present evil. But although this were admitted, yet still they must confess that matter is evil ; for whatever is produced by quality residing in matter, yet a quality of this kind, does not produce any thing separate and apart from matter ; as the figure of the axe cannot cut without the conjunction of the iron. Besides, the forms residing in matter are not the same as if they subsisted by themselves : but certain material reasons abide in matter, corrupted by their union, and full of a material nature. For nei-

ther would fire separated from a material connection burn, nor would any other natural form detached from matter operate in the same manner as at present. Matter, indeed, is the mistress of all her apparent forms, which she depraves and dissolves, every where mixing with every form, her own depraved and contrary nature. She does not, indeed, produce evil by opposing cold to heat, but she opposes to the species of heat her own privation of species, and to form her dark and formless nature : to whatever is of a measured nature she opposes deficiency and excess, and thus continues to debase whatever she approaches, till form perfectly yields to the dominion of matter : just as in animal nutrition, what is assumed with-

in, no longer remains the same as before its assumption, but in a dog it becomes blood, and entirely canine, and all the humors are correspondent to the nature of the recipient. Hence, if body is the cause of evils, matter is likewise the source, on the preceding account. But perhaps some one may say, that it is necessary to subdue these evils; but he who is able to vanquish them is not pure unless he flies beyond their reach. And more vehement desires proceed from a certain complexion of bodies, which are different in different bodies, so that it is no easy matter to be victorious in each; but some are of a duller genius and imbecil in judging, because they are of a frigid nature through the evil of body, and are moved with dif-

faculty and restraint; while others, on the contrary, are carried about with an unbridled levity. The truth of this is evinced by our corporeal habits, which are different at different times; for when we are full both our desires and thoughts vary from those which take place when we are empty. So that, in short, that which is altogether destitute of measure is primarily evil, and whatever is destitute of measure either by similitude or participation, is evil in the second place, because of its connection with the perfectly immeasurable. Again, darkness itself is evil in the first place, and that which is dark in the second degree. Depravity likewise, since it is in the foul immoderation and ignorance, obtains the second place of evil, yet is not evil

itself; since neither is virtue the first good, but is accounted good, so far as it is similar to or participates of good itself.

But how shall we know these and among the first depravity; for we may know virtue by intellect and prudence, for it knows itself. But how shall we know depravity? Shall we say, that as by a rule we discern the crooked from the straight, so we apprehend vice as something incongruous to virtue. But do we know vice by beholding it? Indeed, perfect vice we cannot perceive by beholding, for it is infinite. Hence, by a certain ablation while we assert that it possesses nothing of virtue, we consider how much that which is not perfect vice

is deficient from virtue; and on seeing a part, and suspecting from the part which is present, the rest which is absent, and is contained in the whole species, we form, by this means, our judgement of vice in the indefinite itself, dismissing that which was taken away, as no longer subservient to our design. But surveying matter as a deformed face, and a nakedness which the supervening ornaments of reason cannot conceal, we gain a glimpse of its deformity, by conceiving a certain defect of form. But after what manner can we know that which is totally destitute of form? Perhaps, by totally taking away form, the whole which remains, and is destitute of species, we assert to be matter; in the meantime, admitting within ourselves a cer-

tain boundless nature, while beholding matter, we divest it of universal form. Hence, in a survey of this kind, intellect is in a manner different from itself, and almost not intellect, while it dares to behold what is not its own: just like the eye when turning from the light that it may view darkness, which at the same time, it cannot perceive, because it relinquishes the light; neither can it see darkness together with light; nor again is it possible to behold any thing without the presence of light. As much therefore as is possible, it views the obscurity of darkness, by excluding the presence of light. In like manner, intellect, concealing in its inmost penetralia its divine and proper light, and leaving, as it were, its own nature, pro-

ceeds into the dark receptacle of matter, where all is deformity and shadow; and becoming destitute of its own light, assumes a condition contrary to its nature, that it may behold what is contrary to itself. And thus much may suffice concerning inquiries of this nature. But it may be asked, since matter is entirely destitute of quality, how can it be said to be evil? Perhaps it is said to be void of quality, because of itself it possesses none of the qualities which afterwards reside in it as their subject: nor yet is it said to be void of quality, in such a manner as if it had no peculiar nature. And if it has any nature, what should hinder our calling this nature evil? I do not mean evil, as if it was indued with a certain quality, since a thing is

then *παιδς*, or *such*, when, by its presence, something else receives the same denomination. *Such*, therefore, is an accident, and consequently is inherent in a subject; but matter is not inherent in another, but is that general subject about which all accidents exist. Since, then, whatever is denominated *such*, possesses the nature of an accident; matter, which is of a different nature, requires a different appellation. Besides if quality itself is different from that which is called *such*, how can matter, to which quality does not belong, be denominated *such*? It is therefore properly called evil, and, at the same time, destitute of quality: so that it is not to be accounted evil, because it possesses quality, but rather because deprived of

it: for, indeed, if it was form, it might perhaps be evil, but would not be of a nature contrary to form.

But a nature contrary to universal form is privation; but privation is always in another, and has no subsistence in itself. If evil, therefore, is situated in privation, its evil will consist in its privation of form; and so it cannot subsist by itself. Hence evil and depravity in the soul will be privation, and it will be no longer requisite to receive any thing external as the cause of its evil, because other reasons utterly destroy the subsistence of matter; but the present reasons, though they admit its subsistence, yet deny that it is evil. Nothing, therefore, external is to be sought after

as evil ; but the evil of the soul must be considered as the absence of good.

But if privation of form respects being, and in the soul there is privation of good, which produces its depravity; it follows that the soul is totally destitute of good, considering, in this case, privation in the extreme. Besides, if this is the case, neither can it possess life, while it is yet soul ; and if soul is destitute of life, it must be inanimate, and so be both soul and not soul. The soul, therefore, possesses life according to the *reason* of her nature, but she does not possess a privation of good from herself: Hence she is boniform, as endued with a good which is the vestige of intellect; and is neither evil from herself, nor the

first evil. Nor, again, is the first evil accidental to the soul, since all good is not absent from her essence.

But what if any one should affirm that evil in the soul is not a universal, but only a particular, privation of good? Indeed, if this is the case, the soul, partly possessing, and partly destitute of good, will have a mixed sense, and will not possess pure evil; and so we shall not have discovered primary and pure evil, and the good of the soul will be seated in her essence, but evil will be only accidental; unless, perhaps, it may be said, that evil is an impediment to the soul, in the same manner as that which obstructs the sight of the eye is a hindrance to its vision. But if this is

the case, evil will be the cause of the soul's evil, and the cause in such a manner as if evil itself was something different from the impediment. If, then, vice is the impediment of the soul, certainly vice will not be evil itself, but the cause of evil; since virtue is not good itself but that which confers to its acquisition. Hence, if virtue is neither the beautiful nor good itself, vice will be neither the base nor evil itself. But we have said that virtue is neither the beautiful nor good itself, because prior to virtue, and above it, the beautiful and the good itself abides; hence virtue is to be accounted beautiful and good by a certain participation; and as the soul, ascending on high by the assistance of virtue, meets with the beautiful and the good

itself, so in its descent from depravity, it at length arrives at evil itself, which it beholds as far as it is possible to view its base and deformed nature. Lastly, when it has accomplished its descent, it becomes invested with evil, and profoundly rushes into the region of dissimilitude, in which, being totally merged, it is said to have fallen into dark mire and filth. Hence, when the soul sinks into universal depravity she is no longer depraved, but acquires a different nature and a worse condition; for depravity is as yet something human mingled with some portion of a contrary nature. The vicious man, therefore, dies, so far as the soul can die, and the death of the soul is both while merged in body, to descend into matter and be

filled with its darkness and deformity, and after it lays aside body, to return into it again, till after proper purgation it rises to things superior, and elevates its eye from the sordid mass: for, indeed, to descend into Hades, and fall asleep in its dreary regions, means nothing more than to be profoundly merged in the filth and obscurity of body. But it may be said that depravity is the debility of the soul; since an evil soul is easily affected by every impulse, and readily inclines to every vice; that it is prone to lust, subject to anger, and inconsiderately yields to the lightest impressions of imagination, just in the same manner as the most debilitated productions of nature or art, which are easily destroyed by whirlpools and winds.

But it is requisite to inquire of the authors of this hypothesis what the imbecility of the soul is, and from whence it originates? For imbecility in the soul is not entirely like that in bodies; but as corporeal debility is an incapacity of pursuing the proper employment of the body, and a disposition to become passive in the easiest manner, so almost with respect to the soul a certain similitude of proportion produces the appellation of debility, unless perhaps matter is assigned as the cause of the debility of each. But let us endeavour more accurately to investigate what is the cause of this infirmity of the soul; since neither a nature that is dense nor rare, exuberant or deficient, or any disease, such as a fever, renders the soul infirm: besides it is ne-

cessary that a debility of this kind should either entirely reside in souls perfectly separated from matter, or in such as are united with matter, or in each of these. But in separate souls there is no debility, for these are all pure, and, as it is said, winged and perfect, ever performing their proper employment: it remains therefore that debility must belong to souls fallen into body; since such as these are neither pure nor have atoned for the evil contracted by corporeal involution. But the debility of these is not an ablation of any thing, but the presence of something foreign to their nature, as of the pituita, or the bile, or the like disorders to which the body is subject. If then we rightly apprehend the cause of the soul's lapse into body, we shall have

found what is the debility of the soul. There is, indeed, in the order of things matter, there is likewise soul, and one place is, as it were, assigned to both; for the place of matter is not separate from the place of soul, as if the place of matter was in the earth, but of the soul in air: but the place of the soul, which is said to be separated from matter, signifies only that the soul is not in matter; and this indicates that it is not united with matter, and that a certain *one* is not produced at the same time from matter and soul. Lastly, this signifies that the soul is not, as it were, in a material subject, and this is the meaning of the soul's separation from matter. But the powers of the soul are many, for she possesses in herself that which is first, middle, and

last. Matter, indeed, being present, with wanton importunity affects, and desires, as it were, to penetrate into the recesses of the soul ; but the whole place is sacred, and nothing there is destitute of soul. Matter, therefore, opposing herself to soul, is illustrated by its divine light, yet is incapable of receiving that by which it is illustrated ; for it cannot sustain the irradiations of soul though present, because, through its depravity, it is incapable of beholding a nature so pure and divine. But matter obscures by fordid mixture, and renders debile the light which emanates from soul : by opposing the waters of generation she occasions the soul's entrance into the rapid stream, and by this means renders her light, in itself vigorous and pure,

polluted and feeble, like the faint glimmerings from a watch tower beheld in a storm; for if matter was never present the soul would never approach to generation; and this is the lapse of the soul, thus to descend into matter and become debilitated and impure; since matter prohibits many of the soul's powers from energizing, comprehending, and, as it were, contracting the place which the soul contains in her dark embrace; hence what she seizes from the soul by stealth she renders evil till it is properly winged for flight. Matter therefore is the cause of the soul's debility and depravity, and is, on this account, the first evil: for if soul, becoming passive, has generated and communicated with matter, and has thus become evil, certainly matter,

through her presence, is the cause; since without this she would have for ever remained permanent and pure.

But we refer him who denies the existence of matter to our disputations on that subject, in which he will see the necessity of its subsistence. And if any one denies that there is such a thing as evil in the nature of things, he must inevitably deny the subsistence of good, together with every appetite and declination, and all prudence and intelligence; for appetite always desires good and declination avoids evil. And, lastly, intelligence and prudence respect good and evil, and are themselves placed in the number of goods. It is requisite then there should be good, perfect and

pure; also that which is mixed from good and evil; and that whatever participates more of evil should decline to that which is totally evil, and whatever participates of evil in a less degree should incline to good. How then can evil happen to the soul unless from its connection with an inferior nature? For, independent of this, neither desire nor grief, neither anger nor fear, would ever arise; for fear results from the composite, lest it should be destroyed: and again, torments and griefs are produced from the dissolution of the compound, and desires increase when any thing disturbs the composition, or when they eagerly arise, consulting, as it were, for remedies, lest any disturbance should be produced. But the phantasy is a

certain impulse of the irrational part externally produced, and which, from its passive nature, is susceptible of impulse. Lastly, false opinions happen to the soul situated in the shade of truth, abiding there because not perfectly pure: but its instinct verging to intellect is of an opposite nature; for it is proper to adhere only to intellect, and that the soul seated in this bright region should perpetually remain there, without ever declining to that which is subordinate and evil. But evil is never permitted to remain by itself alone, on account of the superior power and nature of good; because it appears from necessity every where comprehended and bound, in beautiful bands, like men fettered with golden chains, lest it should be produced openly to the

view of divinity, or lest mankind should always behold its horrid shape when perfectly naked : and such is the supervening power of good, that whenever a glimpse of perfect evil is obtained we are immediately recalled to the memory of good, by the images of the beautiful with which evil is invested.

PLOTINUS
ON
PROVIDENCE.

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THAT to commit the essence and composition of the world to chance and fortune is irrational, and alone the province of men destitute of intellect and sense, is evident previous to the exercise of reason, although many sufficient arguments have been urged for its refutation. But it is necessary that, deducing our disputation from the beginning, we should consider the manner in which all things are and have been produced,

especially since in some particulars, as if not rightly administered, a doubt arises concerning the providence of the whole; the consequence of which is, that some entirely deny a providence, while others affirm that the world was constituted by an evil artificer. But for the present we shall neglect the consideration of that providence, which, in producing particular effects, is a certain reason prior to the productions, describing the manner in which it is fit they should be constituted, or the impropriety of any thing existing which it is not necessary should exist; and likewise pointing out the manner in which any thing is present or not present with us. Considering therefore, in the present case, the providence of the universe, we shall unite with this

every subsequent particular in amicable conjunction.

If, therefore, we suppose the world to be generated in a certain time, beyond which it had no existence, we must allow the same providence which we substitute in the production of particular effects; I mean a certain foresight, and discursive consideration of divinity deliberating, in what condition the world should be especially formed, and by what means it may be constituted, as far as possible, the best. But since we believe that the world always had a being, we ought in consequence to assign a perpetual providence to the world; on this account, that it is formed according to intellect, an intellect not preceding

in time, but prior, because the world is its offspring, and because intellect is the cause, and, as it were, the principal form and exemplar of the world, and the world its image, perpetually subsisting in the same manner, and flowing from thence as its source. But the manner of its production is as follows: the nature of intellect, and of being, is the true and primary world, not distant from itself, neither debile by any divisible condition, nor indigent through any defect in its parts, since no part is there separate from the whole, but the whole of its life, and the whole of its intellect, ever living in *one*, and at the same time ever intelligent, renders a part as the whole, and the whole amicable to itself; where one thing is not

separated from another, nor any thing solitary or destitute of the rest; and on this account one thing is not detrimental nor contrary to another. But since intellect is every where, it abides every where perfect, neither admitting mutation nor the operation of one thing in another; for on what account should it act in another when it is destitute of nothing? And why should reason there produce reason, or intellect another intellect; shall we say because it can of itself produce something? But if this is the case, its being could not be altogether previously perfect, but it would so far endeavour to produce, and be moved, as it possessed something in itself of a subordinate and imperfect nature. But to beings perfectly blessed, it is sufficient

to abide in themselves, and ever to remain in the same uniform mode of existence; but to be engaged in a multiplicity of affairs is not sufficiently safe, since it compels those who are employed in this manner to wander from themselves. But so far alone is the exemplar of this world blessed, as by not operating he produces the greatest effects, and abiding in himself, in life ever vigilant and perfect, performs that which is neither contemptible nor small.

From this true intelligible world therefore, completely one, this intellect itself, our world depends, which is not truly one; it is diversified therefore and distributed into multitude, in which one thing becomes foreign and distant from

another; so that friendship alone no longer flourishes here, but discord arises by distance from its source, and through its defect some things are necessarily in a state of opposition to others: for here no part is sufficient to itself, but while it externally seeks after safety, it brings war upon that by which it is preserved. But this world was produced, not from any certain reasoning power concluding that it should be made, but from a necessity that a secondary nature should inseparably attend that which is primary and the exemplar; for this intelligible world is not of that kind that it could possibly be the last of things: it is indeed the first of beings, possessing an abundant power, a power universal, capable of producing every thing, without the neces-

fity of inquiring in order to fabricate ; since if we suppose it to operate by inquiry, its energy could not be spontaneous and truly its own ; but its essence would be similar to that of an artificer, who does not derive from himself that which he produces, but provides it as something adventitious by learning and inquiry. Intellect, therefore, diffusing something of itself into matter, residing in itself ever quiet and immoveable, fabricates all things ; but that which flows from intellect is reason, which will always continue to flow while intellect itself remains in the order of things. And as in the reason which is inserted into *seed*, all things exist together in the same, and one thing neither opposes, disagrees with, nor hinders another,

while, in the mean time, from the evolution of the seed, something is produced in the subject mass, in which one part is distant from another, and mutual opposition and discord arises; so from one intellect, and reason flowing from it, this universe distant from itself arose. Hence, by a necessity of nature, some things are born amicable and salutary to each other, while others are pernicious and unfriendly; and partly with consent, and partly averse, they alternately destroy and are destroyed, so as by their decay to produce mutual generation without end. At the same time reason, the mighty builder, forms one harmony from these active and passive natures, and while every one produces a sound peculiar to itself, binds the uni-

verse in perfect union and consent. For this universe is not self-sufficient, like intellect and reason in the intelligible world, but participating of these; hence it requires the band of sympathy and consent, from the concurrence of necessity and intellect: necessity drawing it down to an inferior nature, and causing it to incline into the privation, and, as it were, shade of reason, since it is itself destitute of reason; in the mean time intellect ruling over necessity. For the intelligible world is reason alone, nor is it possible that any other production can be equally perfect and divine; so that whatever is produced posterior to intellect, necessarily passes into something inferior and is no longer reason, nor yet a certain matter alone, because

it is endued with order, and is therefore of a mixed and composite nature. What the world ends in therefore is matter and reason, but that from which it arose, and by which it is governed, is soul, urging that which is mixed, and which, without labour and fatigue, by its presence alone easily rules the whole; nor can any one with propriety detract from the beauty of this corporeal world, or accuse it, as if it was not the best of all things constituted with body; nor again blame the cause from which the world arose. In the first place, because the world was formed by the same kind of necessity as the shadow by any substance obstructing the light, and was not constructed by the counsel of reason, but from a more excellent essence, naturally gene-

rating an offspring similar to itself; and neither, in the next place, supposing the world caused by discursive consideration, is it a disgrace to its author; for he formed it a certain whole, entirely beautiful, sufficient, and friendly to itself, equally according and correspondent, as well in its lesser as in its greater parts. He, therefore, who by a survey of the parts blames the whole, blames foolishly and without a cause; since it is necessary, as well by comparing the parts with the whole, to consider whether they accord, and are accommodated to the whole; as in surveying the whole to neglect a minute examination of its smallest parts; otherwise we can no longer be said to blame the universe, but only some of its parts, considered as

detached from the whole : just as if a man should solely confine himself to a survey of the hair, or some particular limb, neglecting in the mean time to contemplate the divine spectacle of the whole man ; or, by Jove, as if some one omitting every other animated being, should bring the most abject as an instance of want of beauty in the whole, and neglecting all the human kind, should adduce for the purpose *Thersites* alone. But since the generated world is a collective whole, if we apply the ears of our intellect to the world we shall, perhaps, hear it thus addressing us :
 “ There is no doubt but I was produced
 “ by divinity, from whence I am formed
 “ perfect, composed from all animals,
 “ entirely sufficient to myself, and desti-

“ tute of nothing; because all things are
 “ contained in my ample bosom, the
 “ nature of all generated beings, gods
 “ visible and invisible, the illustrious
 “ race of dæmons, the noble army of
 “ virtuous souls, and men rendered hap-
 “ py by wisdom and virtue: nor is
 “ earth alone adorned with an endless
 “ variety of plants and animals, nor
 “ does the power of universal soul alone
 “ diffuse itself to the sea, and become
 “ bounded by its circumfluent waters,
 “ while the wide expanse of air and
 “ æther is destitute of life and soul; but
 “ the celestial spaces are filled with illuf-
 “ trious souls, supplying life to the stars,
 “ and directing their revolutions in ever-
 “ lasting order. Add too, that the ce-
 “ lestial orbs, in imitation of intellect,

“ which seeks after nothing external,
 “ are wisely agitated in a perpetual cir-
 “ cuit round the central sun. Besides,
 “ whatever I contain desires good, all
 “ things collectively considered, and par-
 “ ticulars according to their peculiar
 “ ability; for that general soul by which
 “ I am enlivened, and the heavens, the
 “ most illustrious of my parts, continu-
 “ ally depend on *good* for support; to-
 “ gether with the gods which reign in
 “ my parts, every animal and plant,
 “ and whatever I contain which appears
 “ destitute of life : while some things
 “ are seen participating of being alone,
 “ others of life, and others besides this
 “ are indeed with sentient powers; some
 “ possess the still higher faculty of rea-
 “ son, and lastly, others are all life and

“ intelligence; for it is not proper to re-
 “ quire every where equal things among
 “ such as are unequal, nor to expect
 “ that the finger should see, but to as-
 “ sign this as the province of the eye,
 “ while another purpose is desired in the
 “ finger, which can, I think, be no
 “ other than that it remains as a finger
 “ and performs its peculiar office.”

No one then ought to wonder that
 fire is extinguished by water while it
 often consumes other things, since some-
 thing different from water was the cause
 of its existence; nor is it improper that
 fire should be destroyed by something
 not produced from itself; besides its
 very being proceeds from the corruption
 of another, and it brings no impropriety

or disorder from its corruption, and in the place of fire which is extinct, another fire flourishes and abides in the incorporeal heaven, where every thing abides in immaterial and immutable perfection: but in this intelligible heaven the universe ever lives, together with its most honourable and principal parts. But souls alternately changing their bodies pass into other forms, and as often as a soul is able to rise beyond the bounds of generation it lives with universal soul. But bodies are changed according to form, and particulars according to the whole, since animals are produced and nourished by their interposition; for life is here moveable, but there immoveable.

For it is indeed requisite that motion should arise from an immoveable nature, and that from life, ever vigilant and flourishing in itself, another life should emanate, as it were, a vital and unstable blast, and nothing more than the breathing of a quiet and permanent life. Besides, the mutual opposition and destruction of animals among themselves happens from a necessity of nature, since they were not born with an eternal permanency of being, but are produced because reason occupies the whole of matter, possessing all things in itself which abide in the supernal heaven; or from whence could they arise unless they existed there? Hence we may affirm, that the mutual injuries of men among themselves proceed from the general appetite

of good, when incapable of obtaining good they deviate from the right way, and offensively invade whatever they meet: like men wandering in the dark, who are liable every moment to molest and be molested by each other. But those who act unjustly suffer punishment as well by the possession of a depraved soul from actions that are evil, as because in conformity to a certain order they pass into an inferior place; for nothing can ever fly from the order of universal law. But order is not, as some think, instituted on account of the prevarication of order, nor law on account of the transgression of law, as if these were produced through more debased natures, but rather because order here is adventitious; so that because order is, a trans-

gression of order takes place, and because perfect law and perfect reason exist, a transgression of law and reason ensues; but yet not in such a manner as that things better become worse, but because beings indigent, and which ought to receive a better nature, often, either spontaneously or from fortune, or external impediment, cannot receive the good which they require: for whatever uses adventitious order, cannot perhaps follow that order, either from the impediment of interior vice, or from some foreign circumstance of being. Many things besides suffer from others, which are unwilling at the same time to molest them, and pursue a different course; but animals, which possess of themselves a spontaneous motion, as well tend to

things better as glide to inferior natures. But it is not perhaps proper to inquire from the very inclination or lapse itself to a worse condition; for the force of deviation, though small at the beginning, by perseverance of progression in the same way, becomes more and more assiduously perplexed and erroneous: indeed, wherever body is present, desire, by a necessity of nature attends; besides, whatever primarily and suddenly occurs, and is not immediately perceived and apprehended, produces at length an election to that nature to which some individual was first inclined. But punishments follow under the administration of divine justice; nor is it unjust that the base soul should suffer consonant to its affection, nor is it requisite that

those should be happy who perform nothing worthy of felicity; but the good alone are happy, because it is on this very account that the gods are blessed. If, then, souls in this world are capable of felicity, it is not lawful to complain that in this region of sense some are unhappy, but we ought rather to accuse their imbecility, because they are not able strenuously to contend where the honours of virtue are proposed as the reward. For who can justly complain that those who are not yet become divine do not possess a divine life? Hence it is that poverty and disease are things of no moment to the good, and are useful to the evil: besides, it is necessary sometimes to be sick, since we are invested with body. Nor are things of this

kind entirely ufelefs to the common order and plenitude of the universe; for as reason, the great artificer of the world, makes the corruption of some things fubfervient to the generation of others, (fince nothing can efcape its univerfal comprehension,) fo a depraved body, and a foul languid by corporeal paffions, are fhortly comprehended under another feries and order, fome of which confer to the good of the patient, as poverty and difeafe; but depravity brings fomething ufeful to the universe, by becoming an example of its juftice, and the fource of abundant utility; for it renders fouls vigilant, and caufes them to inquire diligently what path they muft purfue moft powerfully to decline the precipice of evil. It is likewise fubfer-

vient to our becoming acquainted with the superlative worth of virtue, by a comparison of those evils which afflict the vicious soul; not that evils originate on this account, but, as it was previously observed, reason, the artificer of the world, applied them to the best advantage; but to be able to make evil things subservient to good purposes is a proof of the greatest possible ability. Reason is likewise able to use things which are produced formless to the generation of other forms; and we ought to reckon evil the perfect defect of good.

But it is necessary that a defect of good should take place in this region of sense, because the good which it participates subsists in something different from

itself, and that something which is different brings a defect of good, since that in which it resides is not good.

On this account, as Plato says, it is impossible that evils can be entirely extirpated, because some things possess a capacity of receiving good inferior to others; and others again are different from good, deriving the cause of their subsistence from thence, and becoming such on account of their extreme distance from good; but to those circumstances which appear frequently to happen contrary to order and right, as when evil is the portion of the good, or good the lot of the evil, we may properly reply, that nothing evil can happen to the good, nor any thing good to the

evil. For if it should be said that many things contrary to nature happen to the good man, and many things consonant to nature to the wicked, and how in this case can a right distribution of things subsist? we answer, that if what is according to nature neither adds any thing of felicity to the good, nor takes away any thing of depravity from the evil, and what is against nature takes away nothing from the good, of what consequence is it whether the one subsists in preference to the other? For though an evil man should be beautiful in his body, but a good man deformed, yet, as far as possible, study the beautiful and fit in all his actions, we ought not to blame the order of things, but esteem such a dispensation as the work of the most bene-

ficent providence. But if it is said that it is by no means proper that the evil should be the lords and rulers of cities, but the good in a state of servitude; for though circumstances of this kind add nothing to the evil or the good, yet an evil ruler must commit the greatest wickedness and injustice; and that, besides this, the evil conquer in battle, and commit the most base and barbarous actions on their unhappy captives; for all these circumstances compel us to doubt how they can subsist under the dominion of an all-wise providence; for though he who operates ought in the execution of his work to look to the whole, yet it is necessary that the parts also should pursue that which is most expedient to their natures, especially

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where they are animated and endued with rational powers. Lastly it is probable that providence extends itself through all things, and that its peculiar employment is to leave nothing forsaken and neglected; in consequence of which, if we allow that the whole world depends on intellect, and that its power is diffused through the universe, we should endeavour to demonstrate after what manner particulars are rightly administered.

In the first place then, we ought not to be ignorant that when we inquire after beauty in things which are mixed, we should not minutely seek after the beauty of the parts from which they are composed, nor expect to find pri-

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mary natures in such as are subsequent and secondary; but since the world is endued with a body, we must allow something accidental to the world from the nature of body; we must likewise respect its participation of reason, as far as its mixed condition can admit, and reckon it constituted sufficiently good, if nothing is wanting which it is able to receive. Just as if any one should contemplate the most beautiful man upon earth, yet it is not proper he should think that he is the same with man in the intelligible world, but he should esteem the work of the artificer sufficiently complete if this man, though invested with flesh, nerves, and bones, is yet comprehended by reason, and so far rendered beautiful as reason, diffusing

itself over matter, is able to effect. This being granted, let us now reply to the preceding inquiries; for, perhaps, by a solution of these doubts, we shall be able to discover the admirable gift of providence, and the wonderful power which is the artificer of this world.

Concerning the inherent actions of souls, which are to be placed in the souls themselves when they act basely, as when such as are unjust hurt others that are just; or as when the unjust molest the unjust, (unless perhaps some one should assign providence as the cause of their depravity) is it proper to require of providence the reason of the deed? or ought we not rather to refer the cause into the election of the souls themselves?

For it is said that souls ought to have their peculiar motions, and in the present world no longer exist as souls alone, but as animals: besides it is not wonderful, since this is the case, that they should possess a life aptly correspondent to their condition; for we must not suppose that because the world *was* they came hither, but prior to the world, considered as an effect, they reckoned they should shortly, as it were, take care of mundane concerns, become the causes of their support, and govern the fluctuating empire of bodies: in whatever manner these operations take place, whether by presiding they attribute something of themselves to the subjects they command, or by immersion into matter, or in some other way, become

thus connected with body, however this may happen, providence is not to be blamed. But when any one considers the dominion of providence by drawing a comparison between the evil and the good, and reflects that the good are poor but the evil rich, and that for the most part the basest of mankind possess more than the necessities of human nature require, and besides this rule over kingdoms and empires with arbitrary sway, what will such a one say? Perhaps he will doubt whether providence extends as far as to the earth. But since all things else are constituted according to reason, we have a sufficient testimony that providence descends to the earth; for animals and plants participates of reason, soul, and life. But it may be

said, providence extends thus far, but does not exercise dominion: however, since the universe is one animal, an assertion of this kind is just as if any one should say, that the head and face of a man are constituted by nature, that is, by a supervening seminal reason, but that the other parts of the body arose from fortuitous or necessary causes, and on this account become secondary and inferior; or else proceed from the imbecility of nature. But surely it is neither holy nor pious, to allow that even these are not beautifully disposed, and by this means to accuse both the artificer and his work.

It remains therefore that we inquire after what manner all these are rightly

administered and preserve an invariable order; or if this is denied, it is proper to explain the mode of their constitution, or rather to shew that they are not badly disposed. The supreme parts of every animal, I mean the head and face, are more beautiful than the parts situated in the middle and extreme. With respect to the universal distribution of things men are in the middle and inferior ranks: but in an order more sublime, the celestial regions, with the gods they contain, and these gods contain the greatest part of the world, and the heavens themselves confined in circular bounds: but earth is, as it were, the centre of the universe, and ranks among the number of stars. Many are apt to wonder that man should live unjustly, because

they confider him as a being highly venerable in the univerfe, as if there was nothing more completely wife; but in reality man is only the medium between gods and brutes, and verges in fuch a manner to each, that fome men become more fimilar to the divinities, and others to brutes, while the many preferve an equal condition between both. Thofe therefore, who by their depravity approach to the condition of brutes, feize thofe who exift in the middle ranks, and overpower them with fuperior force, but the vanquifhed are in this cafe better than the conquerors; they are, however, overcome by fubordinate natures, fo far as they are themfelves fubordinate, deftitute of good, and incapable of refiftance. If, therefore, we fuppoſe that a

number of boys well exercised and skilled in corporeal accomplishments, but endued with souls base and uninformed, should in the art of wrestling vanquish those who are equally unexercised in their bodies and souls, should seize their food and strip them of their soft effeminate garments, is there any thing in this case which appears hard, or ridiculous? Can it be shewn why it is not right that the Legislator should permit such to suffer the just punishments of an ignorant and luxurious life? Since, though previously acquainted with the nature of the Gymnasium, through uncultivation and effeminacy, they have neglected the cultivation of themselves, as to become like delicate lambs the prey of voracious wolves. To such,

therefore, who perpetrate evil of this kind, the first punishment which impends is, that they become wolves and unhappy men; and afterwards a punishment is prescribed proportionate to the nature of their offences. For those who become evil are not suffered to die, but always follow a former state of being, such as is agreeable to reason and nature; things inferior, such as are inferior, and things superior such as are superior: but not after the manner of the Gymnasium, or wrestling place; where nothing but sport is to be found. For it is necessary after the youth increase in years and stature, and have unskilfully grappled with each other, that they should both be armed and assume more excellent manners than they possessed in the

school of wrestling. And now some of these are unarmed, and are consequently conquered by the armed; where indeed it is not necessary that a god himself should contend for the imbecile, incapable of war. For the law says, that safety is to be expected not from impotent wishes, but by fortitude in battle. Nor is it fit that those who simply desire support, but that such as cultivate the earth should collect its fruits, nor that those should be well who neglect the care of health; nor ought it to be matter of grievous complaint, if the evil gather a multiplicity of fruit, through a sedulous attention to agriculture. Besides, it is ridiculous to perform every other thing pertaining to life according to our own peculiar determination,

though not in such a manner as may be pleasing to the divinities ; but to require safety alone from the gods, at the same time neglecting the means by which the gods order mankind to be preserved. We may likewise add, that death to these is far better than a life of such a kind as the laws of the universe are unwilling should be endured. If, therefore, while things contrary to order and rectitude take place through the perseverance of folly and vice, divinity should remain silent, and vengeance perpetually sleep, providence might be accused of negligence, as if it permitted the dominion of depraved natures. But the wicked alone rule with arbitrary sway, through the cowardice and indolence of the natures subject to their command ;

for this is more just than to accuse providence of neglect,

But it is by no means necessary that providence should operate in such a manner as to leave us entirely passive, for if providence is all things, and alone the efficient, it will no longer be providence; for who can it any longer reward or punish? since divinity alone would be every where, and all things. But the truth is, that divinity is indeed present, and inclines itself to every one, yet not so as to destroy the essence of any thing: but, for example, when it approaches to man, preserves that in him which constitutes his essence; but this is no other than defending vital beings by the immutable laws of provi-

dence, and this preservation consists in acting agreeably to the injunctions of law. But this law ordains that a good life shall be the portion of the good after death, but to the evil the contrary; but it is impious to suppose that the evil, who alone confide in indolent wishes, should be constantly guarded by the presence of divinity: nor is it proper that the gods, by an intermission of their own peculiar happy life, should dispense particular employments to the wicked corresponding to their base desires; since it is even improper that good men, leading a life superior to the common condition of humanity, should be employed in the government of subordinate affairs. The human genus, therefore, is indeed an animal, yet not the most excellent of

all things, but obtaining and chusing a middle order, at the same time, by the care of a beneficent providence, is not sent to be destroyed in this inferior station, but is assiduously recalled to a more exalted state of being, by every machine which divinity employs, for the purpose of giving strength to its virtue and goodness. Hence it is, that the human kind never loses the rational faculty, but participates, though not in the highest degree, of wisdom and intellect, and art and justice, each of which men mutually exercise among themselves; so that those who treat others injuriously, think they act justly; for they judge every one worthy of punishment whom they intentionally injure. In short, man is as beautiful a work as pos-

sible in his present condition, and is so constituted in the universal series of existence, as to enjoy a better portion than every other terrene animal; since no wise and prudent being would blame other animals inferior to man, when he considers how much they confer to the ornament of the earth: for it would surely be ridiculous to detract any thing from the nature of animals because they sometimes devour men; as if it was proper that men should live, in perfect security, a life of soft ease and inglorious sloth. But it is necessary, to the order of the whole, that even savage animals should exist, whose utility is partly self-evident, and is partly brought to light by the future circulations of time; so that nothing either relative to themselves

or to man appears to be in vain. But he who blames the disposition of things because many animals are of a rustic nature, is alone worthy of laughter; because this is even the province of men; and though many are not obedient to the will of man, but reluctantly obey, we ought not to wonder at their resistance.

But if men are unwillingly evil, neither those who injure others, nor those who are injured, can be justly accused; indeed if there is a necessity that men should be evil, whether from the celestial motion, or from a certain principle producing in an orderly series all that is consequent, evil must be naturally produced: but if reason is the artificer of

all things, how can it be excused from acting unjustly? Perhaps it may be said that the evil are not spontaneously guilty, because the crime itself is not voluntary; but this does not prohibit their acting from themselves, for guilt is the result of their operations, or they could not be guilty if they were not the authors of such actions. If it be said they are evil from necessity, this is not solely to be admitted externally, but because they are guilty from a certain common condition. And with respect to what is said of the celestial motion, we must not allow so much to its influence as if nothing remained in our power; for if all things are produced externally, they must certainly be produced in such a manner as their authors please; on which account,

mankind can have no ability of acting contrary to their determinations, and will be no longer impious, if the gods are the perpetrators of all that is evil and base, though in reality this proceeds from the conduct of mankind themselves. But a principle being once given, consequences will every where be connected with their causes: and mankind are the principles of their actions, and are therefore spontaneously moved to whatever is honest and good, which principle is itself spontaneous and free.

But it may be asked, whether particulars are not produced from certain physical necessities and consequences, and are, as far as possible, the best? Perhaps not in this manner, but ruling reason

itself, produced all things, and willed them in that order in which they now exist, so as rationally to produce whatever is called evil, being unwilling that all things should be equally good : for as the artificer in the formation of an animal does not make every part an eye, so neither does reason fashion every thing a god ; but some things it appoints in the order of gods, and others of a following nature in the rank of dæmons, and after these men and subordinate animals : nor is it on this account to be accused of envy, since it operates as reason possessing an intellectual variety. But we who repine at the order of things, are affected in a manner similar to those who, unskilled in the art of painting, condemn the painter, because

the colours of his piece are not every where equally beautiful and bright; while the painter, in the mean time, has assigned to every part that which is proper and the best. Cities too, that are well instituted, are not equally disposed in all things: besides, who that is not destitute of understanding, would blame a comedy or a tragedy because all its characters are not heroes; but sometimes a servant, or a clown, with a ruder voice, is introduced, performing his part? But the poem would not be beautiful if the subordinate characters were taken away, since it is complete alone from the result of the parts.

If, then, reason, entirely accommodating itself to matter, produced all things,

consisting, as they appear, of dissimilar parts, from the omniform nature of reason, the artificer, certainly that which is generated can have nothing so formed more beautiful than itself: and since it is not fit that reason should be composed from all things perfectly conformable and similar, it cannot be blamed, because, though all things, it is in every part different. But if it is said, after what manner can reason act rightly if it introduces other souls external to itself into the world, and compels them, contrary to their nature, to co-operate with the mundane fabrication, and many of them to pass into an inferior condition? We reply, it is proper to believe that souls themselves are, as it were, parts of this universal reason, and that reason

does not harmonize things subordinate to the world by previous production, but when it is convenient and proper, disposes them, already produced, according to the dignity of their nature. Besides, that argument in favour of providence is not to be despised which teaches us not always to regard the present appearance of things, but to respect their past and future circulations; for by this means a just retribution subsists, while an exchange is made from unjust and tyrannical masters in a former life to servants in a following existence; and from the abuse of riches at present to the want of them hereafter; in which case poverty will not be useless to the good. In like manner, he who has unjustly destroyed any one, shall be in a

similar manner unjustly slain—Unjustly with respect to him who is the cause of his destruction, but justly as far as pertains to him who is destroyed. Indeed it is not right to believe that any one is a servant by a blind distribution of things, nor that any one is taken captive by chance, or without reason is violently assaulted, but that in a former life he perpetrated what he suffers for in the present : so that he who formerly destroyed his mother, shall afterwards be born a woman and be slain by her son ; and he who has ravished a woman, shall afterwards be changed into a woman and be ravished. And this is the meaning of the oracle of Adrastria, or the inevitable power of divine law ; for an institution of this kind is doubtless

Adraſtria, true judgement and juſtice, and admirable wiſdom. Indeed it is lawful to conjecture, from the daily appearances in the world, that ſuch an order always ſubſiſts, where doubtleſs a certain order of this kind runs through all things, even ſuch as are leaſt and moſt inconfiderable, and a wonderful art is every where evinced, not alone in things divine, but even in ſuch as from their diminutive nature may be judged unworthy the notice of providence. For in the moſt abject of animals there is an artificial and ſtupendous variety, and the ſkill of divinity propagates itſelf even to the very leaves and fruit of plants; where the beauty of the forms, and the aptneſs and facility with which they flouriſh, may properly excite our

admiration; since, without any labour of nature, they germinate in such variety in an unceasing circle of generation and decay, while things superior are not conducted in an order entirely similar to these. Whatever therefore exists by alternate changes of condition is not rashly transmuted, nor assumes a variety of forms from the arbitrary power of chance, but in such a manner as it is proper for the power of divinity to act; for every thing divine energizes in such a manner as the peculiar nature of divinity requires, which is ever according to its own exalted essence. But its essence unfolds in its operations the beautiful and just, for unless these abide in a divine essence they cannot any where subsist.

Order therefore is so instituted according to intellect, as to abide without the discursive power of reason, and so abides, that if any one was able to exercise his reason in the most perfect manner, he would be beyond measure astonished to find the whole so constituted that his reason cannot conceive any other disposition of things more orderly than what particular natures continually evince; which always possess more of an intellectual form than the order of our reason can either conceive or produce. In every kind of things therefore which exist, it is not lawful to accuse reason, the great efficient cause, unless some one should think it necessary that every thing should be produced eternal, like intelligible natures, requiring an abun-

dant accumulation of good, and not thinking the form attributed to every thing of itself sufficient: just as if he should blame nature in the formation of man because she did not give him horns for his defence, not considering that reason is necessarily diffused through all things, but in such a manner that lesser things are contained in such as are greater, and parts in the whole, which consequently must be unequal to the whole, or they would no longer be parts. Every thing indeed supreme is all things, which is not the case with particulars inferior and subordinate; so that man, considered as a part, cannot be all that is perfect and fair. And if at any time something is found in certain parts which is not itself a part,

through this it likewise becomes an *all*. Nor is it requisite that every particular considered as an individual should possess the highest degree of virtue, or it could no longer be called with propriety a part. Nor must it be said that a part adorned with a high degree of dignity and excellence detracts, as it were, through envy from the whole, for it produces a more beautiful whole in proportion to its superior dignity of excellence; since it becomes beautiful so far as it is similar to the whole, and is at the same time so ordained, that in man, considered according to his present situation, something beams forth to view, like stars which glitter in the divine heaven. So that we must conceive that dæmons and men resemble large and

beautiful statues, whether we suppose them animated or fashioned by Vulcanian art, decorated in the face and breast with splendid stars, and so disposed as properly to produce the gracefulness of the whole.

Particulars, therefore, considered in themselves, appear to be rightly administered, but the mutual connection of these, as well of things which are produced as of those in perpetual generation, is the source of doubt and objection; at one time respecting the mutual voracity of brute animals, and at another time the opposition of men against each other: likewise from that perpetual war which can neither be suppressed nor be easily borne, especially if reason, the

artificer of the world, designed all this should take place, and it is said every thing is thus beautifully disposed. For to those who urge such objections the reason will no longer be sufficient which affirms that as much as possible all things are in a good condition of being, and that matter is the cause of every subordinate nature, and of the impossibility that evil should be radically destroyed; since it is necessary things should be thus constituted for the best: nor does matter by its approach (it may be said) possess dominion, but rather, reason will be, according to this hypothesis, the cause of matter. Reason, therefore, is the principle of all things, and whatever is produced is the result of its energy,

whether rising to perfection or tending to decay.

What necessity then is there, you will say, of that perpetual and natural war which subsists among animals and men? We may reply, that perhaps the mutual destructions of animals are necessary because they are certain vicissitudes requisite to the permanency of the species, which could not continue if no one was destroyed. And if they perish in a proper time, so that utility to others may arise from their dissolution, what reason is there for complaint? But what if those which are devoured in this life revive again in another? Just as in the scene of a play, where one of the actors apparently dies, but shortly after changes

his dress, and assuming the appearance of a different person, returns to the scene? But perhaps some one may say, that the death in this instance is only fictitious; but if to die is only to change body, no otherwise than shifting a garment in a scene, or if death is an entire desertion of body, like the final exit in a comedy from the play, where nevertheless he who departs will hereafter return to the play, what evil can this mutual commutation of animals produce? which is indeed much better than if they had never been born; for then there would be nothing but a total blindness and impotence of life; but now, since there is abundant life in the universe, it produces and varies all things in life; nor can it restrain it-

self from continually producing beautiful animals, like ludicrous phantoms particularly grateful to the view.— But the arms which men mutually employ against each other, since they are mortal, and contend in a becoming order, like those who sport by dancing in armour, plainly declare that all the studies of men are mere sports, and that dissolution is by no means to be accounted dreadful and hard. So that those who are suddenly slain in battle only anticipate future death in old age, by passing away more swiftly and returning again. And those who are deprived of their fortunes by the hand of violence, may easily perceive that they were not formerly their own, and that the unjust detainers of them are to be

derided for the possession, since they in their turn will be stripped of them by others : and even though they might remain secure from rapine, yet the possession will be worse than the loss of him from whom they were violently seized. We ought therefore to contemplate the slaughter and destruction of cities, the rapine and prey, like the scenes in a theatre, as nothing more than certain transmutations and alternate changes of figures ; and weeping and distress every where as delusive and fictitious. For in the particular acts of human life, it is not the interior soul and the true man, but the exterior shadow of the man alone, which laments and weeps, performing his part on the earth as in a more ample and extended scene, in

which many shadows of souls and phantom scenes appear.

Such then are the works of a man solely conversant with a life inferior and external, and who does not perceive that he only trifles, as it were, in his most serious laments; for the worthy man alone seriously applies himself to concerns worthy of study, but every other man is nothing more than a phantom and a trifle; though such as these act seriously in ludicrous concerns, being ignorant at the same time what things are truly worthy of study, and in what manner they are to be studied, and are on this account highly ridiculous and absurd. But if any one trifling with these should similarly suffer, he

would acknowledge himself engaged among the plays of children, laying aside the proper person with which he is invested : as if Socrates was to play, he would certainly only play in his external, and not in his inward and true self. And besides this it is proper to remember, that we must not conclude the present appearances evil because of the multiplicity of lamentations and complaints, since boys in things which are not evil weep and lament.

If these things then are really so, it may be asked, how evil can any longer exist? and where injustice and error are to be found? For after what manner, if all things are administered according to perfect rectitude and order, can those

who act, act unjustly and deviate from what is right? And how can those be unhappy who neither act unjustly nor wander from truth? Besides, why are some things called according to nature and others contrary to nature? Since whatever is produced or operates passes through existence in a certain natural order. Again, is it possible on this supposition there can be any impiety against Divinity? since in this case the artificer and his work may be compared to a poet inserting among his fables a mimic reviling and mocking the poet himself? In order to a solution of these doubts, we shall endeavour to explain what reason is in a more explicit manner, and to prove the perfect rectitude of its nature. Reason, therefore, is as follows;

for we should dare to declare its nature, since we may, perhaps, by this means, obtain the end of our investigation.— Reason, then, I say, is neither sincere intellect, nor intellect itself, nor the genus of pure soul; but depending from this, and, as it were, a splendour beaming from intellect and soul; from a soul affected according to intellect: so that reason is generated from these two as a life, as it were, ever possessing in itself thought perfectly tranquil. But all life is energy, even such as is the most abject and vile; an energy not like that of fire, but an energy of such a nature, that where no sense is present, the motion is far from being rash and fortuitous. But whatever participates of reason ever present, is on a sudden rationally affected,

that is, becomes formed, as far as energy according to life is able to form, and moves in a manner correspondent to its participation of form. Hence its energy is artificial, like one who is moved in a dance; for the dance is thus similar to artificial life; and he is moved by art, and thus moves in the dance because life itself is in a manner art of such a kind. And these things we have advanced, that we may more plainly understand the nature of every kind of life. This reason, therefore, proceeding from one intellect and one life, and possessing plenitude from both, is neither one life nor one certain intellect, nor is it every where full, nor does it impart itself to its participants wholly and universally: but since it possesses in itself parts mu-

tually opposed, and on this account indigent, it certainly unfolds the origin of war and sedition, and so is *one all* if it is not one; for being made an enemy to itself through its parts, it is one and a friend, in the same manner as in a tragic or a comic play, there is one reason of the whole, in itself containing many battles; the fable in the mean time, reducing all the dissonant parts into one consent, and forming a regular disposition of all the battles. So with respect to the world, from one universal reason the strife of things distant and disagreeing is deduced. Hence whoever affimulates the world to harmony resulting from opposing sounds, should inquire why in the proportions themselves things repugnant are contained: if then in

musical modulation the harmonic reasons or proportions produce sounds acute and grave and conspire into one; since the reasons of harmony are contained in harmony itself, as parts in a greater reason; in a similar manner we may behold contraries amicably blended in the universe; the white and the black; the hot and the cold; likewise animals winged, and without wings; wanting or endowed with feet; rational and irrational; while, in the mean time, all are parts of one universal animal; and the universe is homologous to itself, and is composed from parts at strife with each other, but according to reason, forming an harmonious whole. It is therefore necessary that this one reason should be one from the conjunction of reasons contrary and not

similar ; so that such an opposition conduces to its constitution of every essence ; for unless it was many and various it could not be all things, and it could not be reason : but reason is different considered in respect to itself, and the greatest difference appears to be contrariety. If reason then is something different, and that which is different is productive of something, that which it produces must certainly be more different than itself ; and consequently whatever is the extremity of its productions must necessarily be of a contrary nature : and reason will be perfect if it causes itself to be not only a certain difference, but a multitude of contrary natures.

Since reason therefore is primarily

what its effect is fecondarily, its productions will be more or lefs contrary to each other in proportion to their diftance from their fource. Indeed this fenfible world is lefs one than reafon, its artificer, and is, on this account, endued with a nature more various, and replete with contraries. Befides, the defire of life is more vehement, and the love more ardent, by which particulars are wrapped into one. But lovers often deftroy the objects of love through the avidity of peculiar good, when fuch fubjects are obnoxious to corruption; befides, the natural love of a part to the whole draws every thing within the fphere of its attraction to the whole. Hence both good and evil are led through contraries in a beautiful order,

by an art, as it were, similar to that of one leaping in a dance, of which we affirm the one part to be good and the other to be evil, and so the whole to be beautifully disposed. But they will no longer appear to any one to be evil; and perhaps nothing hinders; on this hypothesis, that some particulars may be evil; though it will follow from hence that they are not evil from themselves. Perhaps also, pardon is to be granted to the evil, unless reason itself determines to whom pardon is to be granted, and to whom not. But reason so operates that she is not ignorant of such as are evil, and consequently determines that the wicked, as such, are not to be pardoned. And if one part of reason is a good man, and another an

evil one, the evil forms the greater part. So that the constitution of the universe resembles that of a play, where the poet appoints some parts for the actors, but uses others according to their peculiar nature: for the poet is not the cause that one is first in ability in the play, another second, and again that another ranks as the third; but distributing the reasons pertaining to each, he afterwards assigns an order perfectly accommodated to every one. Hence a place is destined to each, as well good as evil, in a manner most becoming and fit. Each therefore proceeds according to nature and reason in the part destined to each, in a becoming manner, obtaining the place which he chose; afterwards he pronounces and acts, at one time, works

and words which are profane, and at another such as are contrary; for the players were affected in some particular mode previous to the drama into which they insert their peculiar manners. In the dramatic scenes of men the poet distributes his reasons to every act, while the power of performing well or ill entirely depends on the actors; for this province belongs to them independent of the words of the poet. But in that true poem the world, that which men repeat according to their part, is adorned with soul possessing a forming nature: and as the players are decorated by the poet with peculiar characters, and are clothed either with saffron-coloured, or ragged garments, so, under the direction of reason, the great mundane poet,

personated soul is not left to the blind guidance of chance; for souls are introduced on the stage of the world according to reason, and are allotted characters accommodated to each, in such a manner, that the mundane tragedy or comedy may be beautifully performed. It likewise introduces itself into the drama in such a manner as accords with universal reason, and afterwards pronounces certain actions, and whatever else the soul performs from its natural disposition, after the manner of some particular song. And as the voice or figure of the actors is of itself beautiful or base, and is either the source of gracefulness to the poem, or mingles with it some defect of voice, and yet does not make the play different from what it was be-

fore, though it appears by this means defective; but the poet, who is the author of the drama, performing the office of a good judge, rejects one of the performers, blaming him according to his demerit, but promotes another to greater honours, and, if he has it in his power, to a more excellent act, but another if possible to one that is inferior;— in the same manner soul, entering into this universal poem the world, becomes a part of its playful scenes, and brings with itself the ability of performing its part properly or amiss. In its entrance too it is annexed to the order of the rest, and since every other nature is allotted a part distinct from soul and its peculiar duties, it is deservedly rewarded with honour, or punished with disgrace.

Besides, to the actors in this mundane play there is allotted a much greater scope for exertion, as constituted in a place more ample than the measure of a scene; especially since the author of the universe gave them authority, and a greater power, for the purpose of procuring many species of manners, gestures, and places. Souls therefore define the measure of ignominy and honour from the variety of manners which they exhibit; where the habitations of each are accommodated to their particular manners, so as to harmonize with the reason of the universe, accommodating to every one his station according to the decisions of justice: just as every chord in a harp is stretched in a proper and convenient place, and in an order

best adapted for the reason of founding, and in such a manner as the power of each supplies. For thus the beautiful and becoming flourishes in the whole when every part is disposed where it is proper, founding indeed dissonant in darkness, and in Tartarus: since among these it is beautiful thus to found. Hence the whole is at last beautiful, not if every thing is as a stone, but if every part conferring a proper tone rightly conduces to one entire harmony; that which is but a part indeed founding life, yet more debile, inferior, and remote from perfection; as in a pipe one voice alone is not sufficient, but besides this a lesser and more debile one is required, to the perfect consonance of the pipe; because the melody is divided into un-

equal parts, and the single tones are unequal amongst themselves, but one perfect harmony results from the union of all: for universal reason is one, but is distributed into things not equal; from whence arises the diversity of situations, some better and others worse, and the agreement of souls unequal with places that are unequal; corresponding to the dissimilitude of a pipe, or some other musical instrument. Souls likewise reside in places corresponding to their variety, framing indeed peculiar notes in every situation, but harmonizing as well with particular places as the universe; so that even the tune which a soul sings discordant to herself is melodious to the whole; and what happens to particular souls contrary to nature, happens according

to nature to the universe : nor does the lesser tone harmonize less with the whole than the greater ; nor does he who sings more unaptly by himself render the whole on this account more dissonant ; as a vicious plebeian (if we may use another example) does not render a city worse which is instituted by laws equitable and just ; for a man of this kind is often necessary in the city, and is rightly placed with respect to the order of the whole.

But souls are better or worse, partly because unequal from the beginning, and partly from other causes ; for these in a competent proportion correspond with the reason of the universe, since both in reason and in the genus of souls

a distribution is made into unequal parts. But it is necessary to consider second and third orders of souls; and again that the same soul does not always act according to the same parts of itself. But we must again consider the subject as follows; for the present disputation requires many things for the sake of explication. Let us consider, therefore, whether in this mundane play it is not necessary to introduce actors who pronounce something of themselves independent of the words of the poet; as if the writing of the poet was of itself imperfect, which the actors supply by filling those places which perhaps the poet left vacant; or are they not rather parts of the poet, the author, who foresaw what the actors would supply, that so he might be able

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to connect the subsequent parts in a regular succession? For all things which proceed successively in the universe, and even pursue works that are evil, rightly consist from reasons, and are every where distributed according to reason; as when, in consequence of adultery or a rape, children are produced in a natural order, and sometimes, perhaps, men of the greatest abilities and virtues; and when cities are subverted by the works of the evil, more excellent cities rise out of the former ruins. If then this introduction of souls supplying the vacant parts is absurd, and the works of these are both good and evil, does it not follow that we deprive reason of the authority of producing good, by taking entirely from it all communion with evil? What

likewise should prevent our asserting that as the manners of the players make a part of the drama, so the actors in this mundane play make a part of that reason which flourishes every where in the universe, in which all that is honest or base is included; so that a progression from reason takes place in the same manner as in the several actors of a play, by which this mundane system becomes more perfect, and all things are comprehended in its embrace, and in reason, its great artificer? But, you will say, on what account do the effects of evil subsist? Besides, on this supposition, nothing but more divine souls will be seen in the universe, but all will be parts of reason; and either all reasons will be souls, or if this is denied, what cause can be as-

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IF, previous to a serious inquiry into nature, we should jocosely, as it were, affirm, that all things desire contemplation, and verge to this as their end, not only rational animals, but those destitute of reason, the nature of plants, and earth, the mother of them all; likewise that all things pursue contemplation, as far as the natural capacity of

each permits, but that some things contemplate and pursue contemplation differently from others, some in reality and some by imitation beholding only the image; if we should affirm all this, shall we not appear to advance a doctrine entirely new? Perhaps, if this were the case, we shall incur no danger while we trifle in our own concerns; or may we not say that we who trifle and joke in the present case contemplate? and that we and all others who joke and trifle perform this through a desire of contemplation? So that it will appear, whether it is a boy or a man who trifles, or seriously studies, the one studies, and the other trifles and jokes, for the sake of contemplation; as also that every action earnestly tends to contemplation, such as

are necessary protracting for a longer time speculation to externals, but more liberal actions leading to it in a shorter time; and that both together operate through a desire of speculation—But this more opportunely afterwards. Let us now consider what is the speculation of earth, and trees, and plants, and after what manner we may be able to reduce that which is produced in these into the energy of speculation; and lastly, how nature, which is said to be void of imagination and reason, possesses contemplation in herself, and yet operates from contemplation which she does not possess.

That nature then is not endued with hands and feet, nor any instrument either

adventitious or allied to herself, but that matter is necessary, in which she operates, and which she reduces into form, is almost obvious to every one: nor is it to be thought that nature produces her work, as it were, by impelling and pressing; for what impulsion or pressure could effect various and omniform colours and figures? Since those who form images out of wax, and by beholding a pattern are supposed to operate similar to nature, could not produce colours, unless they procured these external to their work. It is therefore worth while to consider whether, as among operators of such arts, it is necessary something should remain within the soul, according to whose permanency they fabricate with their hands; in like manner there should

be something of this kind in nature, which is a certain permanent power, fabricating without the ministry of hands, the whole of which is permanent and fixed; for it does not require some parts of itself to abide and others to be moved, for matter is that which is there moved, but of nature nothing is in motion, or that which moves will not be the first mover, and consequently will not be nature, but that which abides immovable in the whole. But some one may object, that reason indeed remains immovable, but that nature is different from reason and is moved; but if they speak of the whole of nature, this also will be reason, but if a part of it is immovable this also shall be reason; for it is necessary that nature should be

form, and not a composite from matter and form; for what need has nature of a cold or a hot matter? since matter, which is the subject of fabrication, brings these in its capacity, whether its nature is of this kind, or rather, previous to its assumption of quality, it is affected by reason: for it is not requisite that fire should approach, but reason, in order that matter may become fire, which is an evident argument that in animals and plants the seminal reasons are effective of all things, and that nature is reason, which generates another reason as its offspring, while it transmits something to its subject, abiding in the mean time permanent in itself. Reason, therefore, extrinsically produced according to visible form, is the last reason, generated,

as it were, in the shade of the first, deftitute of life, and incapable of forming another reason ; but reason endued with life, and which is, as it were, the sister of that which fabricates form, and possessing the same power, generates that reason which is last in the effect. But after what manner does nature operate, and how by operating can she be said to contemplate ? Indeed if she operates as abiding, and abiding in herself, and is on this account reason, she is also contemplation ; for action is accustomed to be produced according to reason, at the same time being different from reason ; but reason assisting and presiding over action is not action. If then it is not action, but reason, it is a certain contemplation. Now in all reasons, that

which is the last proceeds from contemplation, and is called contemplation, because by this it is generated and received; but all reasons superior to this differ one from another; and the one is not as nature but as soul, but the other is in nature, and is nature herself. But does nature operate from contemplation? From contemplation entirely. But what if after a certain manner she contemplates herself? for she is the effect of contemplation, and contemplative of something. But in what manner does her contemplation take place? Indeed she does not possess a speculation proceeding from a discursive reason, or a consideration of her inherent forms: but why does she never consider these, since she is a certain life, and reason, and

efficient capacity? Is it because to consider is not yet to possess? But if she possesses these, because possessing she operates, so that to be what she is, is the same as to operate, and such as she is, such she fabricates; but she is a certain contemplation, and, as it were, spectacle or theorem, for she is reason. As far therefore as she is speculation, and a spectacle, and reason, so far she operates. Operation therefore appears to be a certain contemplation, *i. e.* it is the effect of contemplation; speculation at the same time abiding and not operating by different modes, but because contemplation being effective of different forms.

But if any one should ask nature for whose sake she operates, if he wishes

to hear her speak, she would answer as follows: it is not fit you should interrogate me, but it becomes you to understand in silence, even as I am silent, and not accustomed to speak: but what is it you should understand? this, in the first place, that whatever is produced is my spectacle, produced while I am silent, a spectacle naturally produced; and that I, who spring from a certain contemplation of this kind, possess a nature desirous of beholding: hence that which retains in me the office of a speculative power, produces a spectacle or theorem, in the same manner as the geometrician, from speculating on his science, describes a variety of figures, yet the lines of bodies emanate from hence, not by my engraving them in matter, but drop, as

it were, from the energy of my contemplation: indeed an affection is constantly preserved in me for my mother, and the sources of my being, for they derive their origin from contemplation, and my generation is also deduced from speculation, since while my parents, destitute of action and being reasons greater and more exalted than myself, speculate themselves, I am produced. But what are we to understand by this speech of nature? that nature herself is soul, produced from a soul more powerful and vivid, and which ever possesses in herself tranquil speculation, neither verging to things superior nor inferior to herself; so that ever abiding in her state, as far as her nature permits, through knowledge and consent, she knows what is pos-

terior to herself, and without any farther inquiry, produces an agreeable and splendid spectacle. And if any one is desirous of assigning to nature a certain apprehension or sensation, he ought not to attribute to her a knowledge of the same kind as that of other beings, but in the same manner as if the knowledge of a man dreaming should be compared with the perceptions of the vigilant: for contemplating her spectacle she reposes; a spectacle produced in herself, because she abides in and with herself, and becomes her own spectacle and a quiet contemplation, though more debile and obscure; for the soul from which she is produced is endued with a more efficacious perception, and nature is only the image of another's contem-

plation. On this account, what is generated by her is debile in the extreme, because a debilitated speculation produces a debile spectacle; and hence it is that men, who are by nature more debile for the purposes of contemplation, rush into action, which is nothing more than the shadow of speculation and reason; for when the power of contemplation is wanting, and through the debility of the soul they are incapable of sufficiently beholding a mental spectacle, feeling a void within of something which they desire to perceive, they fly to action, that by this means they may at least discern the shade of a substance they could not behold with the eye of the mind. Indeed, we every where find that operation and action are either the

debility or the consequence of contemplation; the debility indeed where nothing is possessed besides operation, but the consequence where an object of speculation is possessed superior to the produced work; for who blessed with a sound understanding when capable of beholding truth itself would make it his principal study to pursue the image of truth? And the truth of this is evinced in boys naturally stupid and dull, who, from their incapacity for learning and contemplation, rush into mechanical actions and arts. Since then we have considered in what manner the fabrication of nature is a certain contemplation, let us next proceed to that soul which is superior to nature; for the contemplation of this soul, its ingenuity, its desire

of learning and inquiry, and besides all this, a certain stimulus arising from its knowledge, produces a parturient and abundant fecundity, so that becoming a spectacle throughout it generates another spectacle, in the same manner as art operates, when full of speculative forms it produces, as it were, a small art in a child, who possesses an image of all things, but in a different manner from his preceptor art; since he retains only obscure and debile spectacles incapable from the beginning of assisting themselves. The rational and supreme part therefore of this soul abides on high, ever filled and illustrated with supernatural good; but its other part participates of that which it participated from the first in the first participation; for life

always proceeds from life, since energy runs through all things, and is not absent from any part of the universe, but in its progress it permits its prior part to abide in its pristine state; for if it entirely lost its principal part, energy would no longer be every where, but only in that in which it ends: nor is energy in progression equal to energy in a permanent state. If then it is necessary energy should be generated through all things, it is also necessary that no place should be found where energy is not present: but prior energy is always different from that which is posterior. Energy too proceeds either from contemplation or action, but first from contemplation before action had a being, for action could not be prior to contemplation. If this

be the case, it is necessary that one energy should be more debile than another, but that each should be a contemplation; so that every action subsisting according to contemplation, appears to be nothing else than a certain debile speculation; for it is always necessary that whatever is generated should be homogeneous, yet so as to become gradually more infirm and debile by its descent. Indeed all things proceed in a beautiful and quiet order, because they do not require either contemplation or action extrinsically appearing. The intellectual soul of the world contemplates indeed a sublime spectacle, and that which she thus contemplates, because it rises higher than soul, generates that which is posterior to itself, and thus contemplation begets

contemplation, so that neither has speculation or spectacle any bound, and on this account they proceed through all things. For what should hinder their diffusion through all things? since in every soul there is the same spectacle; for it is not circumscribed by magnitude, nor yet abides after the same manner in all, and consequently does not subsist after the same manner in every part of the soul. Hence, according to Plato, the charioteer of the soul imparts to the horses that which he sees, which the horses receive as desirous of the things they perceive, for they do not receive the whole; because if they operate according to desire they operate for the sake of what they desire, and this is itself a spectacle and speculation.

Action therefore takes place for the sake of speculation and the consequent spectacle, on which account the end of all who act is contemplation; so that what they are not able to obtain by the right way of proceeding, they attempt to gain by a winding pursuit. The same takes place when following what they desire, and which they wish to be present; not indeed present in such a manner that they cannot recognize it, but that they may acknowledge the thing acquired and view it present in the soul, as situated there for the sake of beholding; because they ever act for the sake of good, of a good not existing externally but in themselves, thus constantly tend to the possession of that good which arises from action. But where can this

good abide? certainly in the soul; so that action again returns into contemplation: for that which is received in the soul, which is a certain reason, what is it else but silent reason? and by how much the more it becomes reason by so much the more silent and the contrary; for then it acts quietly, and being full requires nothing farther: and contemplation constituted in a habit of this kind, intrinsically reposes, from a perfect assurance of possessing. And by how much the more certain the assurance, by so much quieter the contemplation; which indeed rather reduces the soul into one, and on this account that which knows, as far as it knows, (for we are now treating the subject seriously) passes into one with the thing known; for if

they are two, this will be one thing and that another; and on this account it will appear to be something adjacent, and this, which is twofold, will not as yet have contracted a true familiarity; as when reasons residing in the soul are unprolific. And hence it is necessary that reason should not be any thing external but united to the soul of the learner, till it finds that which is peculiar and allied to itself. The soul therefore, when she becomes familiar to reason, produces and unfolds her latent reasons into energy; for she perceives what she previously possessed, and promulgates it as if different from herself, and full of thought beholds that which is different as if she herself was different, although she is reason, and subsists as a subordi-

nate beholding a superior intellect : for she is not full, but deficient of that which is superior, yet dwelling in quiet, she beholds the things she produces ; for she does not yet produce what she has not received, but what she produces she transmits from a certain defect in consideration, perceiving what she possesses : but in actions she accommodates her internal possessions to externals, and from her possessing more abundantly than nature she possesses more quietly, and is on this account more speculative. Again, because she does not perfectly possess she is more desirous of a perception of the thing beheld, and of a speculation arising from discursive consideration ; but when she leaves her first habit and passes into another, by a subsequent

regrets, she again contemplates, having so far relinquished a part of herself; but while the other habit abides she has but little power to effect this in herself. Hence the worthy soul becomes reason itself, and what it is in itself it demonstrates to others; but with respect to itself it is fight; for it is now collected into one, and perfectly quiet, not only so far as pertains to externals, but with reference to itself, and is all things within itself.

Hence then it truly appears that all things derive their being from contemplation, and are contemplations, as well the things which truly exist as the things produced from them, viz. spectacles formed from the speculations of true

beings, and every where presenting themselves either to the energies of sense, of knowledge, or of opinion. Actions too are directed to knowledge as their end, and desire affects knowledge. Generations likewise, originating from speculation into form, and there ending, cease to fabricate any other contemplative specimen, and every where particular imitations of efficient causes, produce spectacles and species. Generated substances likewise, imitations as it were of beings, declare that efficient causes behold as their end, neither productions nor actions, but the effect itself, for this only purpose, that it may be a spectacle to beholders.

But even our very thoughts desire to

behold, and prior to these the senses, whose end is knowledge : and again before these nature herself, possessing in herself reason and a spectacle, generates besides another reason. So that from hence it appears, that since those natures which are the first of all abide in contemplation, all the rest must necessarily desire contemplation as their end, since that which is the principle of all things is proposed as their end. Hence when animals generate, the seminal reasons within stimulate to production, the whole of which is the energy of contemplation, and a stimulous desiring to fabricate many species and various spectacles, and to fill all things with reasons, and, as it were, to be fixed in perpetual intuition; for to produce any particular nature, is

to produce a certain form, and this is no other than entirely to fill all things with contemplation; besides, deviations from rectitude, which arise as well in generated natures as in actions themselves, appear to be nothing else than certain wanderings of the eyes of contemplative natures from the objects of their perception: and a bad artificer appears similar to him who produces deformed forms. Lastly, lovers themselves are particularly conversant in beholding, and eagerly rush to the contemplation of form: and thus much concerning nature, and the mode of her operation.

But when contemplation raises itself from nature to soul, and from this to intellect, the contemplations always becoming more domestic and familiar, and

united with the contemplating individuals, (and the objects of knowledge in the worthy soul subsist in the same subject, as hastening to intellect itself) certainly in intellect, they are now both one, not by a certain acquired familiarity, as in the most excellent soul, but they become one through essence, and because in intellect essence is the same with intellection. For there it cannot be any longer said that *this* is one thing and *that* another; for if this was admitted, there must be some other nature in which essence and intellection are one. It is requisite therefore that in intellect both should be truly one; and this is no other ~~than~~ a vital contemplation, and not as a theorem subsisting in another; for that which is vital in

another is not vital from itself. If therefore any theorem and intellectual conception lives, it is requisite that it should be a life neither vegetable nor sensitive, nor of any other animastic nature; for intellections are in a certain respect different, but one is a vegetable, another a sensitive, and lastly, another an animastic intellection. But, you will ask, why they are intellections? I answer, because they are reasons: and every life is a certain intellection; but one is more obscure than another, in the same manner as one life is more debile than another. But that which is more illustrious and strong is the first life, and an intellect one, and the first. The first intellection therefore is the first life, and the second life is the second intellection, and the

last life is the last intellection; all life therefore of this kind is also intellection. Some however may perhaps say, that there are differences of life, but will not acknowledge that these are nothing more than diversities of intellections, but will assert that some lives are indeed intellections, but others not, because they by no means inquire in what the nature of life consists. And here we may observe how our discourse again evinces that all things are contemplations; for since every thing lives in a more perfect or imperfect degree, and all life is intellection, it necessarily follows that every thing is a certain contemplation; for contemplation and intellection are one. If therefore the most true life is a life according to intelli-

gence, and this is the same with the most true intelligence, hence the most true intelligence lives; and a theory and theorem of this kind are vital, and life, and these two are together one. After what manner then is this one many? Perhaps because it does not contemplate that which is one; for when it speculates *the one*, it does not behold it as one; for if this was the case it would not become intellect: but beginning indeed as one, it does not abide as it began, but latently becomes many, as if heavy with the multitude with which it is pregnant, and evolves itself as willing to possess all things, though it would be much better for it to be destitute of such a wish; for thus it becomes the second, in the same manner as a circle

unfolding itself from its impartible subsistence becomes both a figure and a plane, and a circumference, center, and lines, some of which are situated upwards, and others downwards; its principal indeed being of a superior, but the rest of an inferior nature. It is requisite therefore that intellect, which is as well all things as of all, should consist of parts, each of which is every and all; for unless this is admitted, it will possess some part which is not intellect, and thus it will be composed from non-intellectuals, and will be a certain fortuitous heap, requiring assistance from all things in order that it may become intellect. But because every part of intellect is all things, it is on this account infinite; and hence when any thing in-

trinfically emanates from its nature, that which emanates suffers no diminution, because this also is all things: nor yet is that diminished which is the source of the emanation, because it is not a composition from a multitude of parts.

And such is the substance of intellect, on which account it is not the first of all things; but it is requisite that there should be something superior to intellect, (for the speculation of which we have undertaken the preceding discourse) and this because multitude is always posterior to the one: but intellect is number, and the principle of number is unity. Intellect likewise is both intellect and intelligible, and is therefore at the same time two; but it is requisite to

receive something prior to these two. What then shall we call this something? Shall we call it intellect only? But to every intellect that which is intelligible is conjoined; and unless it is conjoined it cannot be intellect. If therefore that which is first is not intellect, but flies both from intellect and intelligible, it follows that the nature which is prior to these two is superior to intellect. But, you will say, what hinders it from being intelligible only? I answer, this, that the intelligible always subsists in conjunction with intellect. If then it is neither intellect nor intelligible, what can it be? Certainly that from which intellect, and, together with intellect, intelligible proceeds. What then is this principle, and what resemblance can we form of him

in the phantasy? for he will either be something intelligent or non-intelligent; but if intelligent he will be intellect; and if non-intelligent he will be ignorant of himself, and will appear to be nothing venerable and divine. For though we should say that he is *the good itself*, and the most simple of all things, we shall not assert any thing perspicuous concerning his nature; since we shall not by this means possess an object which can be perceived by the eye of cogitation. Besides, since it is *through* and *with* intellect that intelligent natures derive their knowledge of other things, by what collected intuition can we perceive a nature exalted above intellect itself? We answer, that this can only be accomplished by something resident in

our souls as much as possible similar to the first; for we possess in our inmost recesses something of this exalted nature; or rather, there is not any thing endowed with a power of participating this first god in which he does not abide. Indeed wherever any thing subsists capable of receiving this divine principle it participates something from thence: just as if a voice should occupy a solitary place, and together with this solitude a number of men; for then in whatever part the ear is placed the whole voice is received, and yet again not the whole. What is it then which, by applying our intellect, we receive? But perhaps it is requisite for this purpose that intellect should turn itself behind, and since it has a countenance on both

sides, that it should leave itself behind, and, in order to survey *the good*, be careful lest it become intellect, comprehending all things; for intellect is the first life, and an energy consisting in a discursive procession through all things: in a discursive energy I say, not consisting in an extended transition, but in a transit already finished and full. If therefore intellect is life, and a transition, and possesses all things, not confusedly but in the most exact manner, (for if it possessed them indistinctly, it would likewise possess them imperfectly) it is necessary that intellect should depend on another nature, which is no longer conversant with a discursive energy, but is the principle of transition, the source of life, and the origin of in-

telleet, and of all things. For the principle is not all things, but rather all things flow from the principle; while the principle itself is neither all things, nor any one particular of all things, that it may generate all things; nor is it multitude, but the principle of multitude; for that which generates is every where more simple than that which is generated. If therefore the principle of all things generates intellect, it is necessary that this principle should be more simple than intellect. But if any one thinks that *the good itself* is both one and all things, he will either be all things, according to every one of all things separately, or he will be all things collectively. But if he is all things accumulated together, he will be posterior to

all things; for if he was prior to all things he must be something different from all things. But if all things subsist together with him he will not be the principle: it is, however, requisite that he should be the principle, and prior to all things, that all things may subsist posterior to his nature. But if he subsists according to each particular of all things, in the first place, one thing will be the same with one another throughout the universe; and in the next place, all things will subsist together, and all diversity and distinction will be destroyed: and hence it appears, that he is not any one of all things, but subsists prior to all things.

What then shall we say he is? The

power of all things, without whose subsistence the universality of things would never have had a being; nor would intellect have been, which is the first and universal life; for that which subsists above life is the cause of life; since the energy of life, which is all things, is not the first, but emanates from this principle as its ineffable fountain. Conceive then a fountain possessing no other principle, but imparting itself to all rivers, without being exhausted by any one of them, and abiding quietly in itself; but the streams which emanate from this fountain, before they flow in different directions, as yet abiding together, and, as it were, already knowing what rivulets will proceed from their defluxions: or conceive the life of a mighty tree,

propagating itself through the whole tree, the principle at the same time remaining without being divided through the whole, but, as it were, established in the root: this then will afford an universal and abundant life to the tree, but will abide itself, without multiplication, and subsisting as the principle of multitude. Nor is it wonderful that this should be the case, though at the same time it is wonderful how the multitude of life should originate from non-multiplicity; and how it is impossible that multitude should exist, unless prior to multiplicity, something which is not multiplicity subsisted; for the principle cannot be divided into the whole of things, since if it was divided the universe would immediately be destroyed: nor would it

ever have been generated, if the principle had not abided in himself, and was not different from the universality of things. Hence reduction every where takes place into that which is one, and in every thing there is a certain one, to which that thing is reduced; and this universe is reduced into a *one* prior to itself, but which is not simply *the one*, and this is the case till we arrive at that which is perfectly and simply one; and this is no longer referred to another. Indeed, by receiving *the one* of a tree, *the one* of soul, and *the one* of the universe, we shall every where receive that which is most powerful and venerable; but if we receive *the one* of true beings, that is, the principle, fountain, and power of reality, shall we be diffident

and suspect that it is nothing? Indeed it is no one of the natures of which it is the principle; and it is such that nothing can be predicated of its nature, neither being, nor essence, nor life; for it is incomprehensibly raised above these. But if by taking away being you are able to apprehend this ineffable nature, you will immediately be filled with astonishment, and directing yourself towards him, and pursuing his latent retreats till you repose in his solitary deity, you will now behold him by a vision perfectly simple and one; and having beheld him, you may conceive his magnitude from the beings which subsist posterior to his nature, and through its all-producing power. Besides, consider after this manner, since intellect is a certain sight, and

is fight perceiving, hence it is a power which has already proceeded into energy; it contains therefore something corresponding to matter, and something analogous to form, as likewise vision according to energy. But by the matter of intellect, I mean that which subsists among intelligibles; since vision according to energy possesses a twofold property: it was one therefore prior to its vision; and hence one is made two, and two one. To sensible vision, indeed, plenitude, from a sensible object, and its own perfection, as it were, arrives; but it is *the good* which fills the vision of intellect; for if intellect were *the one itself*, what occasion would there be for it either to see or energize in any respect? For other natures indeed possess an energy

about, and for the sake of, *the good*, but *the good itself* is not indigent of any thing; and on this account nothing is present with it besides itself. When therefore you pronounce *the good*, you should be careful to add nothing else in your intellectual conceptions; for if you add any thing, you immediately declare that the nature to which you have added something is destitute; and on this account you ought not to conjoin intelligence, lest you should by this means add something foreign, and produce two things, *intellect* and *the good*. Intellect indeed requires the subsistence of *the good*, but the good is by no means indigent of intellect; and on this account intellect, pursuing *the good*, possesses the form of good, and is perfected by *the good*; while

the form resident in intellect proceeds from *the good*, and is endued with a boniform nature. But from the vestigie of *the good*, which is beheld in intellect, we ought to estimate the dignity of its exemplar, considering its reality from the impressed vestigie of its nature, which intellect contains. It is from this impression therefore that intellect sees and possesses; and on this account there is always a desire in intellect, and intellect is perpetually desiring and pursuing. But *the good itself* is without desire; for what should it desire? Nor does it pursue any thing; for it has never desired: it is not therefore intellect, for in this there is desire, and an intimate conjunction with its own all-various form. Intellect indeed is beautiful, and the most

beautiful of all things, being situated in a pure light and in a pure splendor, and comprehending in itself the nature of beings, of which indeed this our beautiful material world is but the shadow and image; but intellect, that true intelligible world, is situated in universal splendor, living in itself a blessed life, and containing nothing unintelligible, nothing dark, nothing without measure; which divine world whoever perceives, will be immediately astonished, if, as is requisite, he profoundly and intimately merges himself into its inmost recesses, and becomes one, with its all-beauteous nature. And as he who diligently surveys the heavens, and contemplates the splendor of the stars, should immediately think upon and

search after their artificer, so it is requisite that he who beholds and admires the intelligible world, should diligently inquire after its author, investigating who he is, where he resides, and how he produced such an offspring as intellect, a son beautiful and pure, and full of his ineffable fire. But his father is neither intellect nor a son, but superior to both; for intellect has a posterior subsistence, and is indigent of nourishment and intelligence, being situated the next in order to that nature which is superior to every kind of want. Intellect, however, possesses true plenitude and intelligence, because it possesses the first of all things; but that which is prior to intellect, is neither indigent nor possesses; for if this were the case, it would not be *the good itself*.

PLOTINUS

ON THE

DESCENT OF THE SOUL.

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OFTEN when by an intellectual energy I am roused from body, and converted to myself, and being separated from externals, retire into the depths of my essence, I then perceive an admirable beauty, and am then vehemently confident that I am of a more excellent condition than that of a life merely animal and terrene. For then especially I energize according to the best life, and

become the same with a nature truly divine : being established in this nature, I arrive at that transcendent energy by which I am elevated beyond every other intelligible, and fix myself in this sublime eminence, as in a divinely ineffable harbour of repose. But after this blessed abiding in a divine nature, falling from intellect into the discursive energy of reason, I am led to doubt how formerly and at present my soul became intimately connected with a corporeal nature ; since in this deific state she appears such as she is in herself, although invested with the dark and ever-flowing nature of body. Heraclius therefore exhorts us to inquire into the cause of this descent, and places certain necessary vicissitudes from contraries into contra-

ries; he likewise speaks of a path upwards and downwards, and rests in this progressive mutation; obscurely intimating, that to labour perpetually in the same pursuit, produces intolerable weariness and fatigue. But in the course of this inquiry, he seems to speak from similitudes, and by these means neglects to unfold his meaning clearly to our view; so that it is perhaps requisite to inquire of him again, in the same manner as he by inquiry obtained the object of his pursuit. Besides, Empedocles, when he asserts that there is a law appointing offending souls to fall into these inferior regions, and when he says of himself,

I fled from deity and heav'nly light,
To serve mad discord in the realms of night.

he delivers as much on this subject in ænigmas, as is usual with Pythagoras and his followers, as well in this, as in other inquiries of difficult investigation : to which we may add, that Empedocles becomes more obscure through his poetical composition. But the divine Plato next presents himself to our view, who has spoken many and beautiful things concerning the soul, and its descent into body, so that we may reasonably hope to receive from him some clear information in this arduous affair. What then does this philosopher assert ? Indeed he does not appear to be every where uniform in his assertions, and on this account his meaning is not obvious to all. But in the first place he every where despises the whole of a sensible nature,

and condemns the commerce of the soul with body; asserting that it is confined in bonds, and buried in body as in a sepulchre. He likewise venerates the saying which is delivered in the arcana of sacred mysteries, that the soul is placed here as in a prison, secured by a guard. And again, a den with Plato, as a cavern according to Empedocles, signifies, as it appears to me, this visible universe; where a solution from these bonds, and an ascent from this den, is, says he, in the soul a progression to an intelligible nature. Besides in the Phædrus he considers the defluxion of the wings to be the cause of the soul's descent to this terrestrial abode; where certain periods bring the soul again to earth, after it has ascended to its pristine

and proper abode. Likewise divine judgements, lots, fortunes, and necessities, cause other souls to descend; and in all these he appears to blame the connection of the soul with body, as derogating from the true perfection of its nature. But in the *Timæus*, discoursing concerning the universe, he both praises the world and calls it a blessed god, and asserts that soul was given to the universe by its beneficent artificer, that it might possess an intellectual condition; since it is requisite that the world should be intellectual, which cannot take place without the intervention of soul. Hence soul was infused into the universe by the demiurgus on this account; and each of our souls was in a similar manner inserted into body, as necessary to the perfection

of the whole. For it is requisite that as many and similar genera of animals should be contained in the sensible, as abide in the intelligible world.

So that while we inquire of Plato concerning our soul, we are necessarily led to investigate how soul itself became connected with body, and what we ought to assert concerning the nature of the world, in which soul is placed for the sake of dispensing corporeal affairs, whether spontaneously, or by compulsion, or according to some other peculiar mode of subsistence. It is likewise necessary to inquire concerning the fabricator of these, whether he acts in a manner perfectly right, or after the manner of our souls, which perhaps are

neceffarily obliged, while governing inferior bodies, to penetrate profoundly into their effence, in order to vanquish their refifting and ever-flowing condition. For every particular body is of a diffipated nature, and tends to a certain place as its appointed habitation : but in the univerfe all things are naturally eftablifhed in their proper receptacle, as in an immutable bound. Befides, our bodies require an abundant and anxious attention, as fubject to a variety of foreign events, as expofed to a multitude of wants, and as requiring perpetual defence from the extreme difficulty and danger to which they are neceffarily expofed. But the body of the world as perfect and felf-fufficient, and fuffering nothing contrary to its nature, is go-

vernal by the most easy attention and command, and perpetually abides in a condition agreeable to the will of its informing soul; so that it is neither excited by desire, nor agitated by any perturbations; for nothing departs from its nature, nor again accedes to it, as if indigent of necessary good. Hence Plato asserts, that our souls, when they are perfectly established with the soul of the world, will be likewise perfect, reign on high, and govern the universe itself: for when they are neither absent from the world, nor yet profoundly merge themselves in body, nor are any longer of a partial condition, then becoming, as it were, the intimate associates of the mundane soul, they govern the universe without labour and fatigue. So that it is not

evil for the soul to confer, in a certain respect, being, and a blessed state of existence on the body; for all providential attention to inferior natures, does not prevent the provident inspector from persevering in the best condition of being; since the providence of the universe is twofold, viz. universal and particular; and the universal indeed adorns all things with an authority free from anxiety, and with a government truly royal and supreme; but the particular providence operating as it were with a manual artifice, fills the artificer with the condition of his work, and contaminates him with its peculiar imbecility and dissipated subsistence. But the divine soul always governing the universe in such a manner as to transcend an in-

ferior nature, and at the same time transmit an ultimate progression of power into the recesses of that which is subordinate, prevents any one from accusing divinity, as if it had placed the universal soul in that which is abject and base. Add too, that soul will never be deprived of this natural enjoyment, since it possessed it from eternity, and will continue to possess it through all the following periods of existence; and this not as an employment contrary to its nature, since it is ever present to the world, without any temporal origin of its providential exertions. Plato likewise asserts that the souls of the stars are affected in the same manner to their subject bodies as the soul of the world; for he considers the motions of their bodies

as subsisting according to the circulations of soul, and at the same time he preserves to them a felicity accommodated to their natures : for there are two particulars through which he condemns the commerce of the soul with body ; one, because it becomes a hindrance to its intellectual energies, and the other because it fills the soul with a destructive rout of pleasures, desires, and griefs ; neither of which inconveniences can happen to the soul which has not yet merged herself in the dark penetralia of body, nor passed into a private and limited condition. But, on the contrary, a soul of this exalted kind becomes connected with a body which is neither exposed to indigence nor suffers any defect ; on which account it neither irritates the

soul with desire, nor disturbs it with fear; for nothing dreadful relative to such a body can ever become the object of anxiety to the soul; nor can any employment verging to inferior concerns draw it down from a more exalted and blessed contemplation; but it is perpetually elevated to divine natures, and at the same time governs the universe with a power free from all anxiety and fatigue.

But our business at present is to speak of the human soul, which is reported to suffer every evil through its connection with body, and to lead a miserable life, oppressed with sorrows and desires, with fears and other maladies; to which the body is a bond and a sepulchre, and the

world a cavern and a den. And these different opinions of the soul are not discordant, since descent is not the same in each; for, in the first place, since every intellect abides in the region of intelligence, total and universal, which we denominate the intelligible world; and since intellectual powers, and particular intellects reside there comprehended in divine union, (for there is not one intellect alone, but one and many) it is likewise requisite that there should be one general, and many particular souls; and that from one there should be many, distinguished by peculiar diversities, like species from a certain genus, some of which are more excellent, and others of an inferior nature; and some of which are more intellectual,

and others subsisting with a diminution of intellectual energy: for there in intellect one intellect subsists as comprehending all others in capacity, like a mighty animal, while at the same time other intellects have each a distinct subsistence in energy; each comprehending the other in capacity. Just as if a city should be animated, comprehending in itself other animated beings; for in this case the soul of the city would be more perfect and powerful than the rest, and yet nothing would hinder other souls from being of the same nature with this general soul: or as if from universal fire one should be a vast and another a diminutive fire; while in the mean time all the various gradations would proceed from universal fire, or rather from that

which is the source of this general fire. But the employment of the more rational soul is certainly intelligence, nor yet intelligence alone, for how in this case would it differ from pure intellect? But exclusive of an intellectual energy assuming something according to which it possesses its peculiar hypostasis, it does not remain intellect alone. It possesses, however, a destined employment accommodated to its nature; and when it surveys things prior to itself it understands, but when it contemplates itself, it preserves its peculiar essence; and when it verges to that which is posterior to itself, it adorns, administers, and rules over its fluctuating nature: for it is impossible that all things in the intelligible world should abide in perfect inactivity;

an ability at the same time subsisting of producing beings in continued succession, which must indeed be consequently diminished in perfection, and yet at the same time necessarily exist, as long as that which is superior to these continues to subsist.

It is necessary therefore, that particular souls employing an intellectual appetite in a conversion to their origin, and possessing besides this a power of governing subsequent natures, similar to light suspended on high from the sun, and at the same time communicating its illuminations without envy to things posterior to itself; it is requisite, I say, that such souls should be preserved from injury and molestation, while they abide

in the intelligible world, together with universal soul. And that, besides this, in the celestial regions they should govern the world, in conjunction with the mundane soul, like so many kings associating with the governor of all things, and becoming his colleagues in the general administration of the world; and this without descending from the royal abodes, as being then in the same establishment with the sovereign king. But when they pass from their situation with universal soul, so as to become a part, and to subsist by themselves, as if weary of abiding with another, then each recalls itself to the partial concerns of its own peculiar nature. When, therefore, any particular soul acts in this manner for an extended period of time, flying

from the whole, and apostatizing from thence by a certain distinction and disagreement, no longer beholding an intelligible nature, from its partial subsistence, in this case it becomes deserted and solitary, impotent and distracted with cares : for it now directs its mental eye to a part, and by a separation from that which is universal, attaches itself as a slave to one particular nature, flying from every thing else as if desirous to be lost. Hence by an intimate conversion to this partial essence, and being shaken off, as it were, from total and universal natures, it thus degenerates from the whole, and governs particulars with anxiety and fatigue ; assiduously cultivating externals, and becoming not only present with body, but

profoundly entering into its dark abodes. Hence too, by such a conduct the wings of the soul are said to suffer a defluxion, and she becomes fettered with the bonds of body, after deserting the safe and innoxious habit of governing a better nature, which flourishes with universal soul. The soul therefore, falling from on high, suffers captivity, is loaded with fetters, and employs the energies of sense; because in this case her intellectual energy is impeded from the first. She is reported also to be buried, and to be concealed in a cave; but when she converts herself to intelligence, she then breaks her fetters and ascends on high, receiving first of all from reminiscence the ability of contemplating real beings; at the same time possessing something

supereminent and ever abiding in the intelligible world. Souls therefore are necessarily of an amphibious nature, and alternately experience a superior and inferior condition of being; such as are able to enjoy a more intimate converse with intellect abiding for a longer period in the higher world, and such to whom the contrary happens, either through nature or fortune, continuing longer connected with these inferior concerns. And this is what Plato occultly signifies when he distributes souls from the second Crater, and causes them to become parts; for then also, he says, it is necessary that they should fall into generation, after they have thus obtained a partial subsistence. But when he says that souls were sown by the demiurgus, we must

understand his meaning in the same manner as when he introduces the mundane artificer speaking, and, as it were, delivering an oration to the junior gods: for whatever subsists in the common nature of the whole, this the hypothesis generates and produces, for the purpose of unfolding, in successive order, things which were thus eternally generated and had a perpetual subsistence.

The assertions therefore are by no means discordant with each other, which declare that souls are sown in generation, and that they descend for the sake of causing the perfection of the universe; likewise that they are condemned to suffer punishment, and are confined in a cave: and again that they possess a ne-

cessary and spontaneous motion; since necessity has that which is voluntary united with its nature. Nor again is the saying discordant which asserts that the soul is situated in evil while it is invested with body; nor is the flight and wanderings of Empedocles from deity, nor guilt and consequent punishment, nor the rest of Heraclitus in his flight, nor the voluntary and yet involuntary condition of descent, by any means repugnant to the truth; for whatever passes into an inferior condition does not spontaneously descend; at the same time proceeding according to its own proper motion, and becoming passive to inferior circumstances of being, it is said to suffer just punishment for its conduct; since thus to suffer and act is necessary from

the law of an eternal nature. But if any one should assert that descending from on high becomes useful for some other purpose, and that on this account the descent is produced by divinity, such a one will neither dissent from truth, nor from himself; for the extremes are necessarily referred to the principle from which the intervening particulars proceed, however numerous the mediums may be by which they are connected. But since guilt is twofold, and one part subsists in the cause of descent, but the other in the commission of evil in the present life, the soul suffers on both these accounts through its descent. But it is the mark of a less punishment to enter other bodies, and this more swiftly from the decisions of a judgement deter-

mining according to the merits of the offence; and this taking place by a divine appointment is signified by the name of judgement. But an immoderate form of evil is considered as worthy of a greater punishment; I mean a subsistence under the government of avenging dæmons, and experiencing by this means the extremity of affliction and pain. And thus the soul, though of divine origin, and proceeding from the regions on high, becomes merged in the dark receptacle of body; and being naturally a posterior god, it descends hither through a certain voluntary inclination, for the sake of power, and of adorning inferior concerns. Hence, if it swiftly flies from hence it will suffer no injury from its revolt, since by this

means it receives a knowledge of evil, unfolds its latent powers, and exhibits a variety of operations peculiar to its nature, which by perpetually abiding in an incorporeal habit, and never proceeding into energy, would have been bestowed in vain. Besides, the soul would have been ignorant of what she possessed, her powers always remaining dormant and concealed; since energy every where exhibits capacity, which would otherwise be entirely occult and obscure, and without existence, because not endued with one substantial and true. But now indeed every one admires the internal powers of the soul through the variety of her external effects, conjecturing the dignity and excellence of the former,

from the beauty and multitude of the latter.

If therefore it is necessary that there should not be *the one* alone, for if this was the case all things would be concealed in his ineffable nature, and would no longer possess any proper and distinguishing form, being swallowed up, as it were, in his solitary deity; nor would there be any multitude of beings generated from one first cause, unless among the number of things which receive a progression from thence some were found established in the order of souls. In like manner it is requisite that there should not only be souls, but that their effects also should have a perspicuous subsistence, (since every nature possesses an

essential ability of producing something posterior to itself, and of unfolding it into light from its occult subsistence in dormant power) and this as if from a certain indivisible principle and seed, proceeding to a sensible extremity, while that which has a priority of subsistence always abides in its proper seat, but that which is consequent is generated from an ineffable power, such as belongs to superior beings, and is the proper characteristic of their natures. But barrenness is perfectly remote from such a power; for if it was barren, its prolific energies must be restrained through envy, which, on the contrary, ought always to be exerted in the most liberal progression, till all things have proceeded as much as possible to their ultimate extre-

mity: for it is proper that a cause of inexhaustible power should diffuse its beneficence through all things, and not endure to behold any thing deprived of the unenvying exuberance of its nature; for there is nothing which can prevent any being from receiving the communications of good, as far as the capacity of its nature will permit. Whether therefore the nature of matter is eternal, it is impossible, since it always subsisted, that it should not participate of that cause, which abundantly supplies every thing with all the good it is capable of receiving: or whether the generation of matter necessarily followed causes prior to its nature, neither in this case is it proper that matter, through its imbecility, should be deprived of the benefits prior

to its nature; as if a perfectly beneficent cause withheld the liberal communication of good. That which is most beautiful, therefore, in the sensible world, is a representation of that which is best in intelligibles, viz. the power and goodness essential to their natures. Indeed all things, as well intelligibles as sensibles, are connected in the most becoming order; the former of these subsisting by themselves, and the latter perpetually receiving being from the participation of intelligibles, which they endeavour to imitate as far as their flowing and unreal natures will permit.

But since there is a twofold nature, one intelligible and the other sensible, it is better indeed for the soul to abide in

the intelligible world, but necessary from its condition that it should participate of a sensible nature : nor ought it to suffer any molestation from a consciousness that it is not the best of beings, since it obtains a middle order in the universality of things, and possesses indeed a divine condition, but is placed in the last gradation of an intelligible essence, bordering, as it were, on the regions of sense. Hence it confers something of itself on a sensible nature, from which likewise it receives something in return, unless, preserving its own proper integrity, it rules over the defiling nature of sense ; since through an abundance of sensible desire, it becomes profoundly merged in matter, and no longer totally abides with universal soul. Yet our

souls are able alternately to rise from hence, carrying back with them an experience of what they have known and suffered in their fallen state; from whence they will learn how blessed it is to abide in the intelligible world, and, by a comparison, as it were, of contraries, will more plainly perceive the excellence of a superior state. For the experience of evil produces a clearer knowledge of good, especially where the power of judgement is so imbecil, that it cannot without such experience obtain the science of that which is best. As, therefore, an intellectual discursive energy is a certain descent to that which is last, and of a worse condition, for it is not lawful that such an energy should proceed to a superior nature, hence it is necessary that ener-

gizing from itself, without being able to abide in itself, it should proceed by an unavoidable law of nature, as far as to soul: for this is its proper bound; and that which is consequent to soul, becomes also a limit to the progressive energies of soul. So that it is natural to soul to deliver itself to inferior, and again return to superior beings; and to govern corporeal natures posterior to itself, and contemplate the prior and more exalted essences of the intelligible world. And all this is accomplished in our souls according to the circulations of time, in which a conversion takes place from subordinate to more exalted natures. But to the soul of the world it is doubtless proper that it should never be occupied in an inferior employment; and that

without becoming passive to evil, it should behold subsequent natures with the eye of divine contemplation, and, at the same time, always depend, as it were from beings prior to itself: and this twofold employment it is able to accomplish at once, receiving from higher beings, and supplying such as are inferior; for it is impossible, from its nature as soul, that it should not touch on both these opposite extremes.

Indeed if it is proper to speak clearly what appears to me to be the truth, contrary to the opinions of others, the whole of our soul also does not enter into body, but something belonging to it always abides in the intelligible, and something different from this in the sensible world:

and that which abides in the sensible world, if it conquers, or rather if it is vanquished and disturbed, does not permit us to perceive that which the supreme part of the soul contemplates; for that which is understood, then arrives at our nature, when it descends within the limits of sensible inspection. For we do not know every thing which takes place about any particular part of the soul till it arrives at the whole of the soul; just as desire, abiding in the desiderative part of the soul, is then at length known by us, when, either by a certain intimate sensitive or cogitative power, or from the conjunction of both, we recognize its existence. For every soul possesses something which inclines downwards to body, and something which tends up-

wards towards intellect : and the soul indeed, which is universal and of the universe, by its part which is inclined towards body, governs the whole without labour and fatigue, transcending that which it governs ; because its operations do not subsist like ours, through the discursive energies of reason, but through intellect alone, in the same manner as art operates without deliberation and inquiry. Hence by her ultimate part she supervenes and adorns the whole. But souls which are particular and of a part, have also something supereminent ; but they are too much occupied by sense, and by a perception of many things happening contrary to nature, and on every side producing anxiety and grief : and this because the object of their at-

tention and care is a part indigent and defective, and surrounded with a multitude of foreign concerns. It is likewise subject to a variety of affections, and is ensnared by the allurements of pleasure ; but the superior part of the soul is never influenced by fraudulent delights, and lives a life always uniform and divine.

TO APOLLO.

THEE, mighty ruler of the world, I sing!
 Of life the splendor, and of light the king.
 Sprang from a fire ineffably divine,
 The world's bright eye, and leader of the Nine.
 Whose unmixt rays prophetic truth inspire,
 And leap exulting from an unknown fire:
 Whose liberated power thro' matter's night
 Widely pervades with purifying light:
 Whose piercing darts malignant powers annoy,
 And all immoderate lawless forms destroy;
 And whose revolving motion is the sign
 Of symphony collective and divine.
 But not in matter's flowing realms alone
 Thy matchless power and sacred light is known:
 The supermundane realms confess thy might,
 And intellectual gods from thee derive their light.
 Thee, great Apollo, as their king they own,
 And move in mental circles round thy throne.
 Thee, too, each ruler of the world reveres,
 Those shining eyes that deck th' æthereal spheres;
 And as they roll with energy divine,
 Declare that dignity supreme is thine.

Hence when thy beams, deep merg'd in mental night,
 First shone thro' æther with unhop'd-for light,
 The mundane gods, with Bacchic joy entranc'd,
 Around thy orb in mystic measures danc'd ;
 And, lost in wonder, saw thy vivid ray
 Strike darkness back, and give unbounded day.
 Dæmons and heroes venerate thy nod,
 Oh fairest image of the highest god!
 With souls impassive, whom thy mental fire
 Preserves from plunging into Hyle's mire,
 Which at the bottom of life's stormy deep,
 Polluted souls detains in deadly sleep.
 Hail! sov'reign king, by mighty gods ador'd,
 Parent of concord, universal lord.
 Hear! and propitious to thy suppliant's prayer,
 Disperse the seeds of life-consuming care ;
 Display the light of wisdom unconfin'd,
 And pour its radiance on my dark'ned mind.
 The stores of intellectual wealth be mine,
 Peace ever tranquil, and a life divine :
 And soon permit me, from the guileful ties
 Of matter freed, from life's dark sea to rise,
 And leave, expanding wide the wings of mind,
 Its dreadful sounding billows far behind.
 Here, from thy bosom torn, I sorrowing stay,
 And meditate my flight from day to day ;

Indignant in the realms of night I roam,
 And oft look up and gain a glimpse of home.
 As some poor exile on a distant shore,
 With mournful eye surveys the country o'er,
 And oft looks back, and oft recalls to mind
 The pleasing coast and friends he left behind,
 Unwilling views the cheerful light of day,
 And in ideal prospects pines away ;
 So grieves my soul while absent and distressed,
 She roams an exile from her place of rest.
 Oh ! haste the period, when from bondage free,
 This wretched captive shall return to thee ;
 Shall once more recognize her kindred soil,
 And prove the blessing of her former toil ;
 Plac'd where no change impairs, no griefs corrode,
 And shining 'midst th' immortal gods a god.

THE END.

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C.1

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