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# Statesman

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# Contents

**Statesman** 1

# Statesman

Soc. Really I am greatly indebted to you, Theodorus, for my acquaintance with Theaetetus and with the Stranger, too.

Theo. Presently, Socrates, you will be three times as much indebted, when they have worked out the statesman and the philosopher for you.

Soc. Indeed! My dear Theodorus, can I believe my ears? Were those really the words of the great calculator and geometrician?

Theo. Why, what do you mean, Socrates?

Soc. When you rated sophist, statesman, and philosopher at the same value, though they are farther apart in worth than your mathematical proportion can express.

Theo. By Ammon, our special divinity, [1] that is a good hit, Socrates; evidently you haven't forgotten your mathematics, and you are quite right in, finding fault with my bad arithmetic. I will get even with you at some other time; but now, Stranger, I turn to you. Do not grow tired of being kind to us, but go on and tell us about the statesman or the philosopher, whichever you prefer to take first.

Str. That is the thing to do, Theodorus, since we have once begun, and we must not stop until we have finished with them. But what shall I do about Theaetetus here?

Theo. In what respect?

Str. Shall we give him a rest and take his schoolmate here, the young Socrates, in his place? What is your advice?

Theo. Make the change as you suggest. They are young, and if they have a chance to rest by turns, they will bear any labor better.

[1] Theodorus was from Cyrene, not far from the oasis of Ammon.

Soc. And besides, Stranger, it seems to me that they are both related to me after a fashion;
Soc. one of them anyhow, as you say, looks like me in his cast of countenance, and the other has the same name and appellation, which implies some sort of kinship. Of course we ought always to be eager to get acquainted with our relatives by debating with them. Now I myself had an argument with Theaetetus yesterday and have been listening to his answers just now, but I do not know Socrates in either way and must examine him, too. But let him reply to you now; my turn will come by and by.

Str. Very well; Socrates, do you hear what Socrates says?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And do you agree?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. There seems to be no objection on your part, and I suppose there should be still less on mine. Well, then, after the sophist, I think it is our next duty to seek for the statesman; so please tell me: should we rank him also among those who have a science, or not?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Must the sciences, then, be divided as when we were examining the sophist?

Y. Soc. Perhaps.

Str. In that case, Socrates, I think the division will not be along the same lines.

Y. Soc. How will it be?

Str. Along other lines.

Y. Soc. Very likely.

Str. Where, then, shall we find the statesman's path? For we must find it, separate it from the rest, and imprint upon it the seal of a single class; then we must set the mark of another single class upon all the other paths that lead away from this, and make our soul conceive of all sciences as of two classes. [2]

Y. Soc. This, Stranger, is now your affair, I think, not mine.

[2] i.e. one class is to be separated and then all the rest are to be marked as one other class—the familiar division into two parts.

Str. And yet, Socrates, it must be your affair, too, when we have found the path.

Y. Soc. Quite true.

Str. Are not arithmetic and certain other kindred arts pure sciences, without regard to practical application, which merely furnish knowledge?

Y. Soc. Yes, they are.

Str. But the science possessed by the arts relating to carpentering and to handicraft in general is inherent in their application, and with its aid they create objects which did not previously exist.

Y. Soc. To be sure.

Str. In this way, then, divide all science into two arts, calling the one practical, and the other purely intellectual.

Y. Soc. Let us assume that all science is one and that these are its two forms.

Str. Shall we then assume that the statesman, king, master, and householder too, for that matter, are all one, to be grouped under one title, or shall we say that there are as many arts as names? But let me rather help you to understand in this way.

Y. Soc. In what way?

---

Str. By this example: If anyone, though himself in private station, is able to advise one of the public physicians, must not his art be called by the same name as that of the man whom he advises?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Well, then, if a man who is himself in private station is wise enough to advise him who is king of a country, shall we not say that he has the science which the ruler himself ought to possess?

Y. Soc. We shall.

---

Str. But certainly the science of a true king is kingly science?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And will not he who possesses this science, whether he happen to be a ruler or a private citizen, rightly be called "kingly," when considered purely with reference to his art?

Y. Soc. At least he has a right to be.

Str. And surely the householder and the master of a family are the same.

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

Str. Well, so far as government is concerned, is there any difference

between the grandeur of a large house and the majesty of a small state?

Y. Soc. No.

---

Str. Then as for the point we were just discussing, it is clear that all these are the objects of one science, and whether a man calls this the art of kingship or statesmanship or householding, let us not quarrel with him.

Y. Soc. By no means.

Str. But this is plain, that any king can do little with his hands or his whole body toward holding his position, compared with what he can do with the sagacity and strength of his soul.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is plain.

---

Str. Shall we say, then, that the king is more akin to the intellectual than to the manual or the practical in general?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Shall we, therefore, put all these together as one—the political art and the statesman, the royal art and the king?

Y. Soc. Obviously.

Str. Then we should be proceeding in due order if we should next divide intellectual science?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Now pay attention to see if we can perceive any natural line of cleavage in it.

Y. Soc. Tell us of what sort it is.

---

Str. Of this sort. We recognized a sort of art of calculation.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. It is, I suppose, most certainly one of the intellectual arts.

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. And shall we grant to the art of calculation, when it has found out the difference between numbers, any further function than that of passing judgement on them when found out?

Y. Soc. No, certainly not.

Str. Every architect, too, is a ruler of workmen, not a workman himself.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. As supplying knowledge, not manual labor.

Y. Soc. True.

---

Str. So he may fairly be said to participate in intellectual science.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. But it is his business, I suppose, not to pass judgement and be done with it and go away, as the calculator did, but to give each of the workmen the proper orders, until they have finished their appointed task.

Y. Soc. You are right.

Str. Then all such sciences, and all those that are in the class with calculating, are alike intellectual sciences, but these two classes differ from one another in the matter of judging and commanding. Am I right?

Y. Soc. I think so.

Str. Then if we bisected intellectual science as a whole and called one part the commanding and the other the judging part, might we say we had made fitting division?

Y. Soc. Yes, in my opinion.

Str. And surely when men are doing anything in common it is pleasant for them to agree.

Y. Soc. Of course it is.

Str. On this point, then, so long as we ourselves are in agreement, we need not bother about the opinions of others.

Y. Soc. Of course not.

---

Str. Now to which of these two classes is the kingly man to be assigned? Shall we assign him to the art of judging, as a kind of spectator, or rather to the art of commanding, inasmuch as he is a ruler?

Y. Soc. Rather to the latter, of course.

Str. Then once more we must see whether the art of command falls into two divisions. It seems to me that it does, and I think there is much the same distinction between the kingly class and the class of heralds as between the art of men who sell what they themselves produce and that of retail dealers.

Y. Soc. How so?

Str. Retail dealers receive and sell over again the productions of others, which have generally been sold before.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. And in like manner heralds receive the purposes of others in the form of orders, and then give the orders a second time to others.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. Shall we, then, join the art of the king in the same class with the art of the interpreter, the boatswain, the prophet, the herald, and many other kindred arts, all of which involve giving orders? Or, as we just now made a comparison of functions, shall we now by comparison make a name also—since the class of those who issue orders of their own is virtually nameless—and assign kings to the science of giving orders of one's own, disregarding all the rest and leaving to someone else the task of naming them? For the object of our present quest is the ruler, not his opposite.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. Then since a reasonable distinction between this class and the rest has been made, by distinguishing the commands given as one's own or another's, shall we again divide this class, if there is in it any further line of section?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. I think there is one; please help me in making the section.

Y. Soc. On what line?

Str. Take the case of all those whom we conceive of as rulers who give commands: shall we not find that they all issue commands for the sake of producing something?

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. Furthermore it is not at all difficult to divide all that is produced into two classes.

Y. Soc. How?

Str. Of the whole class, some have life and others have no life.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And on these same lines we may, if we like, make a division of the part of intellectual science which commands.

Y. Soc. In what way?

Str. By assigning one part of it to the production of lifeless, the other to that of living objects; and in this way the whole will be divided into two parts.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Let us then leave one half and take up the other, and then let us divide that entire half into two parts.

Y. Soc. Which half shall we take up?

Str. That which issues commands relating to living objects, assuredly. For certainly the science of the king is not, like that of the architect, one which supervises lifeless objects; it is a nobler science, since it exercises its power among living beings and in relation to them alone.

Y. Soc. True.

Str. Now you may notice that the breeding and nurture of living beings is sometimes the nurture of a single animal and sometimes the common care of creatures in droves.

Y. Soc. True.

Str. But we shall find that the statesman is not one who tends a single creature, like the driver of a single ox or the groom who tends a horse; he has more resemblance to a man who tends a herd of cattle or a drove of horses.

Y. Soc. That seems to be true, now that you mention it.

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Str. Shall we call the art of caring for many living creatures the art of tending a herd or something like community management?

Y. Soc. Whichever we happen to say.

Str. Good, Socrates! If you preserve this attitude of indifference to mere names, you will turn out richer in wisdom when you are old. But now we will, as you suggest, not trouble ourselves about the name; but do you see a way in which a man may show that the art of herding is twofold, and may thereby cause that which is now sought among a double number of things to be sought among half as many?

Y. Soc. I am quite willing to try. I think one kind is the care of men, the other that of beasts.

Str. You made the division with perfect willingness and courage. However, let us do our best not to fall again into your error.

Y. Soc. What error?

Str. We must not take a single small part, and set it off against many large ones, nor disregard species in making our division. On the contrary, the part must be also a species. It is a very fine thing to separate the object of our search at once from everything else, if the separation can be made correctly, and so, just now, you thought you had the right division and you hurried our discussion along, because you saw that it was leading towards man. But, my friend, it is not safe to whittle off shavings; it is safer to proceed by cutting through the middle, and in that way one is more likely to find classes. This makes all the difference in the conduct of research.

Y. Soc. What do you mean by that, Stranger?

Str. I must try to speak still more clearly, Socrates, out of regard for your capacity. Just at present it is impossible to make the matter entirely plain, but I will try to lay it before you a little more fully for the sake of clearness.

Y. Soc. What is it, then, that you say we did wrongly in making our division just now?

Str. It was very much as if, in undertaking to divide the human race into two parts, one should make the division as most people in this country do; they separate the Hellenic race from all the rest as one, and to all the other races, which are countless in number and have no relation in blood or language to one another, they give the single name "barbarian"; then, because of this single name, they think it is a single species. Or it was as if a man should think he was dividing number into two classes by cutting off a myriad from all the other numbers, with the notion that he was making one separate class, and then should give one name to all the rest, and because of that name should think that this also formed one class distinct from the other. A better division, more truly classified and more equal, would be made by dividing number into odd and even, and the human race into male and female; as for the Lydians and Phrygians and various others they could be opposed to the rest and split off from them when it was impossible to find and separate two parts, each of which formed a class.

Y. Soc. Very true; but that's just the trouble, Stranger: how can we get a clearer knowledge of class and part, and see that they are not the same thing, but different?

Str. Socrates, you most excellent young man, it is no small task you impose upon me. We have already strayed away from our subject more than we ought, and you wish us to wander still farther afield. So for the present let us return to our subject, as is proper; then we will go on the trail of this other matter by and by, when we have time. Only take very good care not to imagine that you ever heard me declare flatly—

Y. Soc. What?

Str. That class and part are separate from one another.

Y. Soc. But what did you say?

Str. That when there is a class of anything, it must necessarily be a part of the thing of which it is said to be a class; but there is no necessity that a part be also a class. Please always give this, rather than the other, as my doctrine.

Y. Soc. I will do so.

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Str. Then please go on to the next point.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. That from which our present digression started. For I think it

started when you were asked how the art of herding should be divided and said with great readiness that there were two kinds of living beings, the human race and a second one, a single class, comprising all the beasts.

Y. Soc. True.

Str. And it was clear to me at the time that you removed a part and then thought that the remainder was one class because you were able to call them all by the same name of beasts.

Y. Soc. That is true, too.

Str. But indeed, my most courageous young friend, perhaps, if there is any other animal capable of thought, such as the crane appears to be, or any other like creature, and it perchance gives names, just as you do, it might in its pride of self oppose cranes to all other animals, and group the rest, men included, under one head, calling them by one name, which might very well be that of beasts. Now let us try to be on our guard against all that sort of thing.

---

Y. Soc. How can we guard against it?

Str. By not dividing the whole class of living beings, that so we may avoid such errors.

Y. Soc. Well, there is no need of dividing the whole.

Str. No, certainly not, for it was in that way that we fell into our former error.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. That part of intellectual science which involves giving commands was a part of our animal-tending class, with especial reference to animals in herds, was it not?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Well, even at that stage of our discussion all animals had already been divided into tame and wild. For if their nature admits of domestication they are called tame; if it does not, they are called wild.

Y. Soc. Excellent.

Str. But the science we are hunting for was, and is, to be sought among tame creatures, more specifically creatures in herds.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Let us, then, not make our division as we did before, with a view to all, nor in a hurry, with the idea that we may thus reach political science quickly, for that has already brought upon us the proverbial penalty.

Y. Soc. What penalty?

Str. The penalty of having made less speed, because we made too much haste and did not make our division right.

Y. Soc. And it was a good thing for us, Stranger

Str. I do not deny it. So let us begin again and try to divide the art of tending animals in common; for perhaps the information you desire so much will come to you in the ordinary course of our conversation better than by other means. Tell me—

Y. Soc. What?

Str. Whether, as I suppose, you have often heard people speak of this,— for I know you never actually saw the preserves of fish in the Nile and in the ponds of the Persian king. But perhaps you have noticed the like in fountain-pools.

Y. Soc. Yes, I have often seen the fish in fountain-pools and have heard many tales of those foreign preserves.

Str. And surely, even if you have not wandered over the plains of Thessaly, you have heard of goose-farms and crane-farms there and you believe that they exist.

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

---

Str. The reason why I asked you all these questions is that the rearing of flocks is in part aquatic and in part an affair of the dry land.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is true.

Str. Then do you agree that we ought to divide the art of tending animals in common into corresponding parts, assigning one part of it to each of these two, and calling one the art of aquatic-herding and the other the art of land-herding?

Y. Soc. Yes, I agree.

Str. And surely we shall not have to ask to which of these two arts kingship belongs, for that is clear to everyone.

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. Anybody could doubtless make a division of the art of tending herds on land.

Y. Soc. What would the division be?

Str. Into the tending of flying and walking animals.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. And statesmanship is to be sought in connection with walking animals, is it not? Any fool, so to speak, would believe that, don't you think?

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. And the art of tending animals that walk must, like an even

number, be divided in half.

Y. Soc. Evidently.

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Str. And now I think I see two paths leading in that direction in which our argument has started: the quicker way, by separating a relatively small part and a larger, and the other way, which is more in accord with what we said a while ago about the need of making the division as nearly in the middle as we can, but is longer. So we can proceed by whichever of the two we wish.

Y. Soc. Can we not go by both?

Str. Not by both at once, silly boy; but obviously we can take them in turn.

---

Y. Soc. Then I choose both in turn.

Str. That is easy enough, since we have but a short distance to go. At the beginning, certainly, or middle of our journey it would have been hard to comply with your demand. But now, since this is your wish, let us go first by the longer way, for we are fresher now and shall get along on it more easily. So attend to the division.

Y. Soc. Go on.

Str. The tame walking animals which live in herds are divided by nature into two classes.

Y. Soc. How by nature?

Str. Because one class is naturally without horns, and the other has horns.

---

Y. Soc. That is obvious.

Str. Now divide the art of tending herds of walking animals into two parts, assigning one to each class of animals; and define the parts, for if you try to give them names, the matter will become needlessly complicated.

Y. Soc. How shall I speak of them then?

Str. In this way: say that the science which tends herds of walking animals is divided into two parts, one of which is assigned to the horned portion of the herd, the other to the hornless portion.

Y. Soc. Assume that I have said that; for you have made it perfectly clear.

Str. And furthermore our “king” is very clearly the herdsman of a herd devoid of horns.

Y. Soc. Of course; that is evident.

Str. Let us then try to break up this herd and give the king the part that belongs to him.

Y. Soc. Very well.

Str. Shall we make our division on the basis of having or not having cloven hoofs, or on that of mixing or not mixing the breed? You know what I mean.

Y. Soc. No. What is it?

---

Str. Why, I mean that horses and asses can breed from each other.

Y. Soc. Oh yes.

Str. But the rest of the herd of hornless tame animals cannot cross the breed.

Y. Soc. That is true, of course.

Str. Well then, does the statesman appear to have charge of a kind that mixes or of one that does not mix the breed?

Y. Soc. Evidently of one that is unmixed.

Str. So I suppose we must proceed as we have done heretofore and divide this into two parts.

Y. Soc. Yes, we must.

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Str. And yet tame gregarious animals have all, with the exception of about two species, been already divided; for dogs are not properly to be counted among gregarious creatures.

Y. Soc. No, they are not. But how shall we divide the two species?

Str. As you and Theaetetus ought by rights to divide them, since you are interested in geometry.

Y. Soc. How do you mean?

Str. By the diameter, of course, and again by the diameter of the square of the diameter. [3]

Y. Soc. What do you mean by that?

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[3]The word "diameter" here denotes the diagonal of a square. The early Greek mathematicians worked out their arithmetical problems largely by geometrical methods (cf. *Plat. Theaet. 147 D ff*). The diagonal of the unit square ($\sqrt{2}$) was naturally of especial interest. It was called sometimes, as here simply *ἡ διάμετρος*, sometimes, as just below,*ἡ διάμετρος ἡ δυνάμει δίπους*, or, more briefly,*ἡ διάμετρος δίπους*. Given a square the side of which is the unit (i.e. one square foot), the length of the diagonal will be $\sqrt{2}$ and the square constructed with that diagonal as its side will contain two square feet. The length of the diagonal of this square will be $\sqrt{4}$=2 feet, and its area will be four square feet.

Str. Is the nature which our human race possesses related to walking in any other way than as the diameter which is the square root of two feet? [4]

Y. Soc. No.

Str. And the nature of the remaining species, again, considered from the point of view of the square root, is the diameter of the square of our root, if it is the nature of twice two feet. [5]

Y. Soc. Of course; and now I think I almost understand what you wish to make plain.

Str. Socrates, do we see that besides this something else has turned up in these divisions of ours which would be a famous joke?

Y. Soc. No. What is it?

Str. Our human race shares the same lot and runs in the same heat as the most excellent and at the same time most easy-going race of creatures. [6]

Y. Soc. Yes, I see that; it is a very queer result.

Str. Indeed? But is it not reasonable that they arrive last, who are the slowest?

Y. Soc. Yes, that is true.

Str. And do we fail to notice this further point, that the king appears in a still more ridiculous light, running along with the herd and paired in the race with the man of all others who is most in training for a life of careless ease? [7]

Y. Soc. Certainly he does.

Str. For now, Socrates, we have shown more clearly the truth of that which we said yesterday in our search for the sophist. [8]

Y. Soc. What was it?

Str. That this method of argument pays no more heed to the noble than to the ignoble, and no less honor to the small than to the great, but always goes on its own way to the most perfect truth.

Y. Soc. So it seems.

Str. Then shall I now, without waiting for you to ask me, guide you of my own accord along that shorter way referred to a moment

[4]There is here a play upon words. Man, being a two-footed (*δίπους*) animal, is compared to the diagonal of the unit square ($\sqrt{2}$,*διάμετρος δίπους*).

[5]i.e. the remaining species is four-footed. Our diameter is $\sqrt{2}$, and four is the area of the square constructed on the diagonal of the square which has $\sqrt{2}$ as its side. All this satirizes the tendency of contemporary thinkers to play with numbers.

[6]The animal referred to is the pig. See P. Shorey, *Classical Philology,*1917, July, p. 308.

[7]i.e. the swineherd, the pig belonging to *γένει εὐχερεστάτῳ.*

[8]See *Plat. Soph. 227B.*

ago that leads to the definition of the king?

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. I say, then, that we ought at that time to have divided walking animals immediately into biped and quadruped, then seeing that the human race falls into the same division with the feathered creatures and no others, we must again divide the biped class into featherless and feathered, and when that division is made and the art of herding human beings is made plain, we ought to take the statesmanlike and kingly man and place him as a sort of charioteer therein, handing over to him the reins of the state, because that is his own proper science.

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Y. Soc. You have cleared up the argument finely, and as if it were a debt you were paying, you threw in the digression as interest and for good measure.

Str. Now let us go back to the beginning and join together the definition of the name of the statesman's art link by link to the end.

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. In the first place we said that intellectual science had a part that gives commands; and a portion of this was called by a comparison the part that gives its own commands; and again the art of rearing living beings was singled out, which is by no means the smallest part of the art which gives its own commands; and a class of rearing living beings was herd-tending, and a part of this again the herding of walking animals; and from the herding of walking animals the art of rearing those without horns was divided. And of this in turn one part will have to be treated as no less than threefold, if it is to be called by one comprehensive name, and it will be called (1) the science (2) of tending herds (3) which do not cross breeds. But the only possible further subdivision of this is the art of herding human beings, and this is at last what we are looking for, the single art called both kingly and statesmanlike.

Y. Soc. That is perfectly true.

Str. And yet, Socrates, have we truly accomplished this, exactly as you have said?

Y. Soc. Accomplished what?

Str. The perfectly satisfactory discussion of our subject. Or is our investigation incomplete in just this detail, that we have given a definition after a fashion, but have not perfectly completed it?

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. I will try to make still plainer to us both the thought which I

now have in mind.

Y. Soc. Please do so.

Str. We found just now that there were many arts of herding, and one of them was the art of statesmanship, which was the care of one particular kind of herd, did we not?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And our argument defined this, not as the tending of horses or other beasts, but as the science of tending men in common.

Y. Soc. Yes, it did.

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Str. Let us, then, observe the point of difference between kings and all other herdsmen.

Y. Soc. What point of difference?

Str. Let us see whether anyone who is designated by the name of another art says and claims that he is fellow manager of the herd in common with any of the other kinds of herdsmen.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. For instance, merchants, husbandmen, and all who prepare grain for use, and also gymnastic trainers and physicians would certainly all dispute with the herdsmen of humanity, whom we have called statesmen, and would assert that they themselves take care of the tending of humanity, and not the tending of the common herd only, but even that of the rulers themselves, would they not?

Y. Soc. And would they be right?

Str. Perhaps. We will examine that matter; but this we know, that no one will ever raise such a contention against any neatherd, but the herdsman himself tends the herd, he is their physician, he is their matchmaker, and he alone knows the midwife's science of aiding at the birth of their offspring. Moreover, so far as the nature of the creatures allows them to enjoy sport or music, no one can enliven or soothe them better than he; whether with instruments or merely with his voice he performs the music best suited to his own herd; and the same applies to the other herdsmen. Is not that the case?

Y. Soc. You are quite right.

Str. Then how can our discourse about the king be right and free from error, when we pick him out alone as herdsman and tender of the human herd, while countless others dispute his claim?

Y. Soc. It cannot possibly be right.

Str. We suspected a little while ago that although we might be outlining a sort of kingly shape we had not yet perfected an accurate

portrait of the statesman, and could not do so until, by removing those who crowd about him and contend with him for a share in his herdsmanship, we separated him from them and made him stand forth alone and uncontaminated. Was our fear justified?

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Y. Soc. It certainly was.

Str. Then we must attend to that, Socrates, if we are not to end our argument in disgrace.

Y. Soc. But we certainly must not do that.

Str. Then we must begin again from a new sarting-point and travel by a different road.

Y. Soc. By what road?

Str. By one which offers us some amusement; for there is a famous story a great part of which it is really our duty to insert into our discussion; and then after that we can proceed as before, by eliminating part after part, and in that way reach the ultimate object of our search. Shall we do that?

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. Then please pay careful attention to my story, just as if you were a child; and anyway you are not much too old for children's tales.

Y. Soc. Please tell the story.

Str. Of the portents recorded in ancient tales many did happen and will happen again. Such an one is the portent connected with the tale of the quarrel between Atreus and Thyestes. You have doubtless heard of it and remember what is said to have taken place.

Y. Soc. You refer, I suppose, to the token of the golden lamb. [9]

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Str. Oh no; I mean the change in the rising and setting of the sun and the other heavenly bodies, how in those times they used to set in the quarter where they now rise, and used to rise where they now set, but

[9]Hermes revenged upon the Pelopidae the death of his son Myrtilus by causing a lamb with golden fleece to be born among the flocks of Atreus. When his claim to the succession was disputed, Atreus promised to show this prodigy to prove that the gods were on his side. Thyestes persuaded Aerope, the wife of Atreus, to give him the lamb, and Atreus was in danger of losing his kingdom, had not Zeus, who favored his claim, made the sun and the Pleiades return from their setting towards their rising. This is the form of the story given in a scholium on *Eur. Orest. 988*, and Plato seems to have this form in mind, though variants existed. The lamb was a token (*σημεῖον*) of the favor of the gods, and the changed course of the sun and stars was a testimony (*μαρτυρήσας*) to the right of Atreus.

the god at the time of the quarrel, you recall, changed all that to the present system as a testimony in favor of Atreus.

Y. Soc. Yes, I've heard that, too.

Str. And again we have often heard the tale of the reign of Cronus.

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Y. Soc. Yes, very often.

Str. And how about the story that the ancient folk were earthborn and not begotten of one another?

Y. Soc. That is one of the old tales, too.

Str. Well, all these stories and others still more remarkable have their source in one and the same event, but in the lapse of ages some of them have been lost and others are told in fragmentary and disconnected fashion. But no one has told the event which is the cause of them all, and so I must tell it now; for that will help us to make clear the nature of the king.

Y. Soc. Very good; just tell your tale and omit nothing.

Str. Listen then. During a certain period God himself goes with the universe as guide in its revolving course, but at another epoch, when the cycles have at length reached the measure of his allotted time, he lets it go, and of its own accord it turns backward in the opposite direction, since it is a living creature and is endowed with intelligence by him who fashioned it in the beginning. Now this reversal of its motion is an inevitable part of its nature for the following reason.

Y. Soc. What reason?

Str. Absolute and perpetual immutability is a property of only the most divine things of all, and body does not belong to this class. Now that which we call heaven and the universe has received from its creator many blessed qualities, but then, too, it partakes also of a bodily nature; therefore it is impossible for it to be entirely free from change; it moves, however, so far as it is able to do so, with a single motion in the same place and the same manner, and therefore it has acquired the reverse motion in a circle, because that involves the least deviation from its own motion. But to turn itself for ever is hardly possible except for the power that guides all moving things; and that this should turn now in one direction and now in the opposite direction is contrary to divine law.

Str. As the result of all this, we must not say either that the universe turns itself always, or that it is always turned by God in two opposite courses, or again that two divinities opposed to one another turn it. The only remaining alternative is what I suggested a little while ago,

that the universe is guided at one time by an extrinsic divine cause, acquiring the power of living again and receiving renewed immortality from the Creator, and at another time it is left to itself and then moves by its own motion, being left to itself at such a moment that it moves backwards through countless ages, because it is immensely large and most evenly balanced, and turns upon the smallest pivot.

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Y. Soc. All that account of yours appears, at any rate, very reasonable.

Str. Then, in the light of what has been said, let us consider and gain understanding of the event which we said was the cause of all those wonderful portents; for it is really just this.

Y. Soc. Just what?

Str. The fact that at certain periods the universe has its present circular motion, and at other periods it revolves in the reverse direction.

Y. Soc. How was this the cause?

Str. We cannot help believing that of all the changes which take place in the heavens this reversal is the greatest and most complete.

Y. Soc. It certainly seems to be so.

Str. Therefore we must also believe that at the same time the greatest changes come upon us who dwell within the heavens.

Y. Soc. That is likely too.

Str. And animals cannot well endure many great and various changes at once. That is a familiar fact, is it not?

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. Inevitably, then, there is at that time great destruction of animals in general, and only a small part of the human race survives; and the survivors have many experiences wonderful and strange, the greatest of which, a consequence of the reversal of everything at the time when the world begins to turn in the direction opposed to that of its present revolution, is this. [10]

Y. Soc. What is that experience?

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[10] The tale of Atreus introduces the fanciful theory of the reversal of the revolution of the heavenly bodies, and this, especially in an age when the stars were believed to exercise a direct influence upon mankind and other creatures, naturally brings with it the reversal of all processes of growth. This leads to a new birth of mankind, and the Stranger then briefly describes the age of innocence, the fall of man and the barbarism that follows, and the partial restoration of man through divine interposition and the gift of the various arts of civilization. Plato does not offer this as a real explanation of the existing condition of the world, but it serves, like the myths introduced in other dialogues to present, in connection with accepted mythology, a theory which may account for some of the facts of life.

Str. First the age of all animals, whatever it was at the moment, stood still, and every mortal creature stopped growing older in appearance and then reversed its growth and became, as it were, younger and more tender; the hoary locks of the old men grew dark, and bearded cheeks grew smooth again as their possessors reverted to their earlier ages, and the bodies of young men grew smoother and smaller day by day and night by night, until they became as new-born babes, to which they were likened in mind and body; and then at last they wasted away entirely and wholly disappeared. And the bodies of those who died by violence in those times quickly underwent the same changes, were destroyed, and disappeared in a few days.

Y. Soc. But then, Stranger, how did animals come into existence in those days? How were they begotten of one another?

Str. It is clear, Socrates, that being begotten of one another was no part of the natural order of that time, but the earth-born race which, according to tradition, once existed, was the race which returned at that time out of the earth; and the memory of it was preserved by our earliest ancestors, who were born in the beginning of our period and therefore were next neighbors to the end of the previous period of the world's revolution, with no interval between. For they were to us the heralds of these stories which are nowadays unduly disbelieved by many people. For you must, I think, consider what would result. It is a natural consequence of the return of the old to childhood that those who are dead and lying in the earth take shape and come to life again, since the process of birth is reversed along with the reversal of the world's revolution; for this reason they are inevitably earth-born, and hence arises their name and the tradition about them, except those of them whom God removed to some other fate. [11]

Y. Soc. Certainly that follows from what preceded. But was the life in the reign of Cronus, which you mentioned, in that previous period of revolution or in ours? For evidently the change in the course of the stars and the sun takes place in both periods.

Str. You have followed my account very well. No, the life about which you ask, when all the fruits of the earth sprang up of their own accord for men, did not belong at all to the present period of revolution, but this also belonged to the previous one. For then, in the beginning, God ruled and supervised the whole revolution, and so again, in the

[11] This may refer to philosophers (cf. *Plat. Phaedo 82c*) or, more probably, to those who, like Menelaus, were transferred to the abode of the blessed, or, like Heracles, became gods. Such individuals would be exempt from the consequences of any subsequent reversal of the World's revolution.

same way, all the parts of the universe were divided by regions among gods who ruled them, and, moreover, the animals were distributed by species and flocks among inferior deities as divine shepherds, each of whom was in all respects the independent guardian of the creatures under his own care, so that no creature was wild, nor did they eat one another, and there was no war among them, nor any strife whatsoever. To tell all the other consequences of such an order of the world would be an endless task. But the reason for the story of the spontaneous life of mankind is as follows:

Str. God himself was their shepherd, watching over them, just as man, being an animal of different and more divine nature than the rest, now tends the lower species of animals. And under his care there were no states, nor did men possess wives or children; for they all came to life again out of the earth, with no recollection of their former lives. So there were no states or families, but they had fruits in plenty from the trees and other plants, which the earth furnished them of its own accord, without help from agriculture. And they lived for the most part in the open air, without clothing or bedding; for the climate was tempered for their comfort, and the abundant grass that grew up out of the earth furnished them soft couches. That, Socrates, was the life of men in the reign of Cronus; but the life of the present age, which is said to be the age of Zeus, you know by your own experience. Would you be able and willing to decide which of them is the more blessed?

Y. Soc. Certainly not.

Str. Shall I, then, make some sort of a judgement for you?

Y. Soc. Do so, by all means.

Str. Well, then, if the foster children of Cronus, having all this leisure and the ability to converse not only with human beings but also with beasts, made full use of all these opportunities with a view to philosophy, talking with the animals and with one another and learning from every creature that, through possession of some peculiar power he may have had in any respect beyond his fellows perceptions tending towards an increase of wisdom, it would be easy to decide that the people of those old times were immeasurably happier than those of our epoch. Or if they merely ate and drank till they were full and gossiped with each other and the animals, telling such stories as are even now told about them, in that case, too, it would, in my opinion, be very easy to reach a decision. However, let us pass those matters by, so long as there is no one capable of reporting to us what the desires of the people in those days were in regard to knowledge and the employment of speech. The reason why we revived this legend

must be told, in order that we may get ahead afterwards. For when the time of all those conditions was accomplished and the change was to take place and all the earth-born race had at length been used up, since every soul had fulfilled all its births by falling into the earth as seed its prescribed number of times, then the helmsman of the universe dropped the tiller and withdrew to his place of outlook, and fate and innate desire made the earth turn backwards.

Str. So, too, all the gods who share, each in his own sphere, the rule of the Supreme Spirit, promptly perceiving what was taking place, let go the parts of the world which were under their care. And as the universe was turned back and there came the shock of collision, as the beginning and the end rushed in opposite directions, it produced a great earthquake within itself and caused a new destruction of all sorts of living creatures. But after that, when a sufficient time had elapsed, there was rest now from disturbance and confusion, calm followed the earthquakes, and the world went on its own accustomed course in orderly fashion, exercising care and rule over itself and all within itself, and remembering and practising the teachings of the Creator and Father to the extent of its power, at first more accurately and at last more carelessly; and the reason for this was the material element in its composition, because this element, which was inherent in the primeval nature, was infected with great disorder before the attainment of the existing orderly universe. For from its Composer the universe has received only good things; but from its previous condition it retains in itself and creates in the animals all the elements of harshness and injustice which have their origin in the heavens. Now as long as the world was nurturing the animals within itself under the guidance of the Pilot, it produced little evil and great good; but in becoming separated from him it always got on most excellently during the time immediately after it was let go, but as time went on and it grew forgetful, the ancient condition of disorder prevailed more and more and towards the end of the time reached its height, and the universe, mingling but little good with much of the opposite sort, was in danger of destruction for itself and those within it. Therefore at that moment God, who made the order of the universe, perceived that it was in dire trouble, and fearing that it might founder in the tempest of confusion and sink in the boundless sea of diversity, he took again his place as its helmsman, reversed whatever had become unsound and unsettled in the previous period when the world was left to itself, set the world in order, restored it and made it immortal and ageless. So now the whole tale is told; but for our purpose of exhibiting the nature of the king it will be enough

to revert to the earlier part of the story. For when the universe was turned again into the present path of generation, the age of individuals came again to a stop, and that led to new processes, the reverse of those which had gone before. For the animals which had grown so small as almost to disappear grew larger, and those newly born from the earth with hoary hair died and passed below the earth again.

Str. And all other things changed, imitating the condition of the universe and conforming to it, and so too pregnancy and birth and nurture necessarily imitated and conformed to the rest; for no living creature could any longer come into being by the union of other elements, but just as the universe was ordered to be the ruler of its own course, so in the same way the parts were ordered, so far as they could, to grow and beget and give nourishment of themselves under the same guidance. And now we have come at last to the point for the sake of which this whole discourse was begun. For much might be said, and at great length, about the other animals, their previous forms and the causes of their several changes; but about mankind there is less to say and it is more to our purpose. For men, deprived of the care of the deity who had possessed and tended us, since most of the beasts who were by nature unfriendly had grown fierce, and they themselves were feeble and unprotected, were ravaged by the beasts and were in the first ages still without resources or skill; the food which had formerly offered itself freely had failed them, and they did not yet know how to provide for themselves, because no necessity had hitherto compelled them. On all these accounts they were in great straits; and that is the reason why the gifts of the gods that are told of in the old traditions were given us with the needful information and instruction,—fire by Prometheus, the arts by Hephaestus and the goddess who is his fellow-artisan, seeds and plants by other deities. [12] And from these has arisen all that constitutes human life, since, as I said a moment ago, the care of the gods had failed men and they had to direct their own lives and take care of themselves, like the whole universe, which we imitate and follow through all time, being born and living now in our present manner and in that other epoch in the other manner. So, then, let our tale be finished; but we will turn it to account for opening our eyes to the great error we made in the exposition of the king and the statesman in our earlier discussion.

Y. Soc. How, then, did we err, and what is the great error you say

[12] The fellow-artisan of Hephaestus is Athena; seeds and plants are the gifts of Demeter and Dionysus.

we have committed?

Str. In one way we made a comparatively slight error, in another a very important one, much greater and more far-reaching than the first.

Y. Soc. How did we do that?

Str. When we were asked about the king and the statesman of the present movement of the world and mode of generation, we told of the shepherd of the human flock in the time of the reverse movement, and he was a god, not a man, besides. That was a very great error. Then when we declared that he was ruler of the whole state, but did not fully tell in what manner he ruled, what we said was true, though it was not complete nor clear, and therefore our error was less in this case than in the other.

Y. Soc. True.

Str. Apparently, then, we must expect a complete description of the statesman only when we have defined the manner of his rule over the state.

Y. Soc. Very good.

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Str. And this is why I introduced the myth, not only in order to show that all men compete for the care of the flock with him whom we are now seeking, but also that we may more clearly see him who alone ought to have the care of human beings as shepherds and neatherds care for their flocks and herds, and therefore alone deserves to be honored with that appellation.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. I think, Socrates, that the form of the divine shepherd is greater than that of the king, whereas the statesmen who now exist here are by nature much more like their subjects, with whom they share much more nearly the same breeding and education.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. And yet they would have to be investigated with precisely the same care, whether their nature be like that of their subjects or like that of the divine shepherd.

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. Then let us go back to this point: the art which we said gave its own orders and had to do with living beings, but had charge of them not singly but in common, and which we at once called the art of the herdsman,—do you remember?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Well, it was in connection with that, somewhere, that we made

our mistake; for we never included or named the statesman; unobserved by us he slipped out of our nomenclature.

Y. Soc. How so?

Str. All the other herdsmen have this in common that they feed their respective herds; but the statesman does not, yet we gave him the name of herdsman, when we ought to have given him one which is common to them all.

Y. Soc. True, if there were such a name.

Str. Is not caring for herds common to them all, with no especial mention of feeding or any other activity? If we called it an art of tending herds or caring for them or managing them, as all herdsmen do, we could wrap up the statesman with the rest, since the argument showed that we ought to do so.

Y. Soc. Quite right; but how would the next division be made?

Str. Just as we divided the art of feeding herds before by distinguishing between those that go on foot and the winged, and the unmixed breeds and the hornless, we might divide the art of tending herds by these same distinctions, embracing in the word both the kingship of the present time and that of the time of Cronus.

Y. Soc. Evidently; but again I wonder what the next step is.

Str. It Is clear that if we had used the word "tending" herds, we should never have met with the contention that there is no caring for them at all in statesmanship, though the earlier contention was justified that there is no art in the case of human beings that deserves the name of feeding, and if there be such an art, it belongs much more to many others than to the king.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. But no other art would advance a stronger claim than that of kingship to be the art of caring for the whole human community and ruling all mankind.

Y. Soc. You are right.

Str. And after all this, Socrates, do we see that another great error was committed at the very end?

Y. Soc. What was it?

Str. Why, it was this: No matter how strong our belief that there was an art of feeding the biped herd, we ought not to have called it kingship and statecraft on the spot, as if it were all quite settled.

Y. Soc. What ought we to have done, then?

Str. In the first place, as we said, we ought to have remodelled the name, making it denote care, rather than feeding, and then we ought to have divided the art, for it may still admit of not unimportant

divisions.

Y. Soc. What are they?

Str. There is one by which we might have divided the divine shepherd from the human caretaker.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. And again it was essential that the art of caretaking thus isolated and assigned to man be divided into two parts.

Y. Soc. On what line of division?

Str. On that of compulsory and voluntary.

Y. Soc. Why is that?

Str. Because this was about the point at which we made our mistake before; we were more simple-minded than we should have been, and we put the king and the tyrant together, whereas they and their respective modes of ruling are quite unlike.

Y. Soc. True.

Str. But now shall we, as I said, correct ourselves and divide the care of humanity into two parts, by the criterion of the compulsory and the voluntary?

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. And if we call the art of those who use compulsion tyrannical or something of the sort and the voluntary care of voluntary bipeds political, may we not declare that he who possesses this latter art of caretaking is really the true king and statesman?

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Y. Soc. Well, Stranger, it looks as though our account of the statesman were complete now.

Str. That would be a fine thing for us, Socrates. But not you alone must think so; I must think so, too, in agreement with you. As a matter of fact, however, in my opinion our figure of the king is not yet perfect, but like statue-makers who sometimes in their misapplied enthusiasm make too numerous and too large additions and thus delay the completion of their several works, we too, at this time, wishing to make quick progress, and also to make clear in a grand style the error of our previous course, and, moreover, fancying that the use of great illustrations was proper in the case of a king, have taken up a marvellous mass of myth and have consequently been obliged to use a greater part of it than we should. So we have made our discourse too long and after all have never made an end of the tale, but our talk, just like a picture of a living creature, seems to have a good enough outline, but not yet to have received the clearness that comes from

pigments and the blending of colors. And yet it is more fitting to portray any living being by speech and argument than by painting or any handicraft whatsoever to persons who are able to follow argument; but to others it is better to do it by means of works of craftsmanship.

Y. Soc. That is true; but explain wherein you think our exposition is still deficient.

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Str. It is difficult, my dear fellow, to set forth any of the greater ideas, except by the use of examples; for it would seem that each of us knows everything that he knows as if in a dream and then again, when he is as it were awake, knows nothing of it all.

Y. Soc. What do you mean by that?

Str. I seem at present in absurd fashion to have touched upon our experience in regard to knowledge.

Y. Soc. In what respect?

Str. Why, my friend, the very example I employ requires another example. [13]

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Y. Soc. Indeed? What is it? Don't hesitate to tell on my account.

Str. I will tell, since you on your part are prepared to listen. We know that children, when they are just getting some knowledge of letters—

Y. Soc. Well?

Str. Recognize the several letters well enough in the short and easy syllables, and can make correct statements about them.

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

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Str. And then again in other syllables they are in doubt about those same letters, and err in opinion and speech about them.

Y. Soc. Yes, certainly.

Str. Would not the easiest and best way to lead them to the letters which they do not yet know be this?

Y. Soc. What?

Str. To lead them first to those cases in which they had correct opinions about these same letters and then to lead them and set them beside the groups which they did not yet recognize and by comparing

[13] i.e. the nature of example is to be explained below by means of an example. The example of the letters of the alphabet is employed also in the *Plat. Theaet. 202 ff*, but the Stranger cannot properly refer to that, as he was not present at the time. Or is this a dramatic slip on Plato's part?

them to show that their nature is the same in both combinations alike, and to continue until the letters about which their opinions are correct have been shown in juxtaposition with all those of which they are ignorant. Being shown in this way they become examples [14] and bring it about that every letter is in all syllables always called by the same name, either by differentiation from the other letters, in case it is different, or because it is the same.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Is this, then, a satisfactory definition, that an example is formed when that which is the same in some second unconnected thing is rightly conceived and compared with the first, so that the two together form one true idea?

Y. Soc. Evidently.

Str. Can we wonder, then, that our soul, whose nature involves it in the same uncertainty about the letters or elements of all things, is sometimes in some cases firmly grounded in the truth about every detail, and again in other cases is all at sea about everything, and somehow or other has correct opinions about some combinations, and then again is ignorant of the same things when they are transferred to the long and difficult syllables of life?

Y. Soc. Surely we need not wonder at that.

Str. No; for could anyone, my friend, who begins with false opinion, ever attain to even a small part of truth and acquire wisdom?

Y. Soc. No; it is hardly possible.

Str. Then if this is the case, would it be a bad thing if you and I first tried to see in another small and partial example the nature of example in general, with the intention of transferring afterwards the same figurative method from lesser things to the most exalted eminence of the king, and trying by means of an example to become acquainted in a scientific way with the management of states, in order that this may be waking knowledge for us, not dream knowledge?

Y. Soc. That is a very good idea.

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Str. Then we must take up our former argument again, and since there are countless others who contend that they, rather than the royal class, have the care of states, we must accordingly remove all these and isolate the king; and, as we said, to accomplish this we need an example.

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[14] There is here a play on the words *παρα-τιθέμενα δειχθῇ, δειχθέντα δέ, παρα-δείγματα* Placed beside, they are shown and being shown, they become paradigms, i.e. objects of comparison, i.e. examples.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. What example could we apply which is very small, but has the same kind of activity as statesmanship and would enable us satisfactorily to discover that which we seek? What do you say, Socrates, if we have nothing else at hand, to taking at random the art of weaving, and, if you please, not the whole of that? For I fancy the art of weaving wool will be enough; if we choose that part only it will probably furnish us with the illustration we desire.

Y. Soc. Agreed.

Str. Then just as we divided each subject before by cutting off parts from parts, why not now apply the same process to the art of weaving and, by going through all the steps as briefly as we possibly can, arrive quickly at that which serves our present purpose?

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. I will answer you by actually going through the process.

Y. Soc. Excellent

Str. Well, then, all things which we make or acquire are for the sake of doing something or else they are for defence against suffering; and of the defensive class some are spells and antidotes, both divine and human, and some are material defences; and of the material defences some are equipment for war and some are protections; and of protections some are screens and some are defences against heat and cold; and such defences are either shelters or coverings; and coverings are either rugs to spread under us or wrappings to wrap round us; and wrappings are either all of one piece or composed of several pieces; and of the composite garments some are stitched and others put together without stitching; and of the unstitched some are made of the fibres of plants and some are of hair; and of those made with hair some are stuck together with liquids and cement and others are fastened without any such extraneous matter. Now to these protective coverings made of materials fastened without extraneous matter we give the name of clothes; and just as we called the art statecraft which was concerned with the state, so we shall call the art concerned with clothes, from the nature of its activity, clothes-making, shall we not? And may we say further that weaving, in so far as the greatest part of it is, as we saw, concerned with the making of clothes, differs in name only from this art of clothes-making, just as in the other case the royal art differed from statecraft?

Y. Soc. That is perfectly correct.

Str. Let us next reflect that a person might think that this description of the art of weaving was satisfactory, because he cannot

understand that it has not yet been distinguished from the closely co-operative arts, though it has been separated from many other kindred arts.

Y. Soc. What kindred arts?

Str. You do not seem to have followed what I have been saying; so I think I had better go back again and begin at the end. For if you understand what I mean by kinship, we distinguished from clothing something akin to it a moment ago when we separated rugs from it by the distinction between spreading under and wrapping round.

Y. Soc. I understand.

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Str. And we removed the entire manufacture of cloth made from flax and broom-cords and all that we just now called vegetable fibres; and then, too, we separated off the process of felting and the kind of joining that employs piercing and sewing, most important of which is the shoemaker's art.

Y. Soc. Yes, to be sure.

Str. And we separated off the art of making coverings of leather in single pieces and all the arts of making shelters, which we find in house-building and carpentering in general and in other methods of protection against water, and all the arts which furnish protection against theft and acts of violence, the arts, that is to say, of making lids and constructing doors, which are regarded as parts of the joiner's art; and we cut off the armorer's art, which is a section of the great and various function of making defences; and at the very beginning we cut off the whole art of magic which is concerned with antidotes and spells, and we have left, as it would seem, just the art we were seeking, which furnishes protection from the weather, manufactures a defence of wool, and is called the art of weaving.

Y. Soc. That seems to be the case.

Str. But, my boy, this is not yet completely stated; for the man who is engaged in the first part of the making of clothes appears to do something the opposite of weaving.

Y. Soc. How so?

Str. The process of weaving is, I take it, a kind of joining together.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. But the first part I refer to is a separation of what is combined and matted together.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. The work of the carder's art. Or shall we have the face to say

that carding is weaving and the carder is a weaver?

Y. Soc. No, certainly not.

Str. And surely if we say the art of making the warp or the woof is the art of weaving, we are employing an irrational and false designation.

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. Well then, shall we say that the whole arts of fulling and mending are no part of the care and treatment of clothes, or shall we declare that these also are entirely included in the art of weaving?

Y. Soc. By no means.

Str. But surely all these will contest the claim of the art of weaving in the matter of the treatment and the production of clothes; they will grant that the part of weaving is the most important, but will claim that their own parts are of some importance, too.

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Y. Soc. Yes, certainly.

Str. Then we must believe that besides these the arts which produce the tools by means of which the works of weaving are accomplished will claim to be collaborators in every work of weaving.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. Will our definition of the art of weaving (I mean the part of it we selected) be satisfactory if we say that of all the activities connected with woollen clothing it is the noblest and the greatest? Or would that, although it contains some truth, yet lack clearness and completeness until we separate from weaving all these other arts?

Y. Soc. You are right.

Str. Then shall our next move be to do this, that our discussion may proceed in due order?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. First, then, let us observe that there are two arts involved in all production.

Y. Soc. What are they?

Str. The one is a contingent cause, the other is the actual cause.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. Those arts which do not produce the actual thing in question, but which supply to the arts which do produce it the tools without which no art could ever perform its prescribed work, may be called contingent causes, and those which produce the actual thing are causes.

Y. Soc. At any rate, that is reasonable.

Str. Next, then, shall we designate all the arts which produce spindles, shuttles, and the various other tools that partake in the pro-

duction of clothing as contingent causes, and those which treat and manufacture the clothing itself as causes?

Y. Soc. Quite right.

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Str. And among the causal arts we may properly include washing and mending and all the care of clothing in such ways; and, since the art of adornment is a wide one, we may classify them as a part of it under the name of fulling.

Y. Soc. Good.

Str. And, again, carding and spinning and all the processes concerned with the actual fabrication of the clothing under consideration, form collectively one art familiar to every one—the art of wool-working.

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Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. And wool-working comprises two divisions, and each of these is a part of two arts at once.

Y. Soc. How is that?

Str. Carding, and one half of the use of the weaver's rod, [15] and the other crafts which separate things that are joined—all this collectively is a part of the art of wool-working; and in all things we found two great arts, that of composition and that of division.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Now carding and all the other processes just mentioned are parts of the art of division; for the art of division in wool and threads, exercised in one way with the rod and in another with the hands, has all the names just mentioned.

Y. Soc. Yes, certainly.

Str. Then let us again take up something which is at once a part of the arts of composition and of wool-working. Let us put aside all that belongs to division, making two parts of wool-working, by applying the principles of division and of composition.

Y. Soc. Let us make that distinction.

Str. The part which belongs at once to composition and to wool-working, Socrates, you must allow us to divide again, if we are to get a satisfactory concept of the aforesaid art of weaving.

[15] The weaver's rod (for the Greeks appear to have used a rod, not a comb) was used to drive the threads of the woof close together, and also to keep the threads of the warp and woof distinct (cf. *Plat. Crat. 388a*). All the processes here described, familiar as they were to the ancients, have been done away with, or, at least, greatly modified, in Europe and America by the modern methods of industry.

Y. Soc. Then we must divide it.

Str. Yes, we must; and let us call one part of it the art of twisting threads, and the other the art of intertwining them.

Y. Soc. I am not sure I understand. By the art of twisting I think you mean the making of the warp.

Str. Not that only, but also the making of the woof. We shall not find that the woof is made without twisting, shall we?

Y. Soc. No, of course not.

Str. Well, just define warp and woof; perhaps the definition would serve you well at this junction.

Y. Soc. How shall I do it?

Str. In this way: A piece of carded wool, which is lengthened out and is wide, is said to be a lap of wool, is it not?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And if any such lap of wool is twisted with a spindle and made into a hard thread, we call the thread warp, and the art which governs this process is the art of spinning the warp.

Y. Soc. Right.

Str. And the threads, in turn, which are more loosely twisted and have in respect to the force used in the carding a softness adapted to the interweaving with the warp we will call the woof, and the art devoted to these we will call the art of preparing the woof. [16]

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. So now the part of the art of weaving which we chose for our discussion is clear to pretty much every understanding; for when that part of the art of composition which is included in the art of weaving forms a web by the right intertwining of woof and warp, we call the entire web a woollen garment, and the art which directs this process we call weaving.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. Very good. Then why in the world did we not say at once that weaving is the intertwining of woof and warp? Why did we beat about the bush and make a host of futile distinctions?

Y. Soc. For my part, I thought nothing that was said was futile, Stranger.

Str. And no wonder; but perhaps you might change your mind. Now to avoid any such malady, in case it should, as is not unlikely, attack you frequently hereafter, I will propose a principle of procedure

[16] i.e. the pull (ὁλκή) of the carder's comb was less strong in the preparation of the threads of the woof than in that of the threads of the warp.

which is applicable to all cases of this sort.

Y. Soc. Do so.

Str. First, then, let us scrutinize the general nature of excess and deficiency, for the sake of obtaining a rational basis for any praise or blame we may bestow upon excessive length or brevity in discussions of this kind.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is a good thing to do.

Str. Then the proper subjects for our consideration would, I fancy, be these.

Y. Soc. What?

Str. Length and shortness and excess and deficiency in general; for all of them may be regarded as the subjects of the art of measurement.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Let us, then, divide that art into two parts; that is essential for our present purpose.

Y. Soc. Please tell how to make the division.

Str. In this way: one part is concerned with relative greatness or smallness, the other with the something without which production would not be possible.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. Do you not think that, by the nature of the case, we must say that the greater is greater than the less and than nothing else, and that the less is less than the greater and than nothing else?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. But must we not also assert the real existence of excess beyond the standard of the mean, and of inferiority to the mean, whether in words or deeds, and is not the chief difference between good men and bad found in such excess or deficiency?

Y. Soc. That is clear.

Str. Then we must assume that there are these two kinds of great and small, and these two ways of distinguishing between them; we must not, as we did a little while ago, say that they are relative to one another only, but rather, as we have just said, that one kind is relative in that way, and the other is relative to the standard of the mean. Should we care to learn the reason for this?

Y. Soc. Of course.

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Str. If we assert that the greater has no relation to anything except the less, it will never have any relation to the standard of the mean, will it?

Y. Soc. No.

Str. Will not this doctrine destroy the arts and their works one and all, and do away also with statesmanship, which we are now trying to define, and with weaving, which we did define? For all these are doubtless careful about excess and deficiency in relation to the standard of the mean; they regard them not as non-existent, but as real difficulties in actual practice, and it is in this way, when they preserve the standard of the mean, that all their works are good and beautiful.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. And if we do away with the art of statesmanship, our subsequent search for the kingly art will be hopeless, will it not?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Then just as in the case of the sophist [17] we forced the conclusion that not-being exists, since that was the point at which we had lost our hold of the argument, so now we must force this second conclusion, that the greater and the less are to be measured in relation, not only to one another, but also to the establishment of the standard of the mean, must we not? For if this is not admitted, neither the statesman nor any other man who has knowledge of practical affairs can be said without any doubt to exist.

Y. Soc. Then we must by all means do now the same that we did then.

Str. This, Socrates, is a still greater task than that was; and yet we remember how long that took us; but it is perfectly fair to make about them some such assumption as this.

Y. Soc. As what?

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Str. That sometime we shall need this principle of the mean for the demonstration of absolute precise truth. But our belief that the demonstration is for our present purpose good and sufficient is, in my opinion, magnificently supported by this argument—that we must believe that all the arts alike exist and that the greater and the less are measured in relation not only to one another but also to the establishment of the standard of the mean. For if this exists, they exist also, and if they exist, it exists also, but neither can ever exist if the other does not.

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Y. Soc. That is quite right. But what comes next?

Str. We should evidently divide the science of measurement into two parts in accordance with what has been said. One part comprises

[17] *Plat. Soph. 235*

all the arts which measure number, length, depth, breadth, and thickness in relation to their opposites; the other comprises those which measure them in relation to the moderate, the fitting, the opportune, the needful, and all the other standards that are situated in the mean between the extremes.

Y. Soc. Both of your divisions are extensive, and there is a great difference between them.

Str. Yes, for what many clever persons occasionally say, Socrates, fancying that it is a wise remark, namely, that the science of measurement has to do with everything, is precisely the same as what we have just said. For in a certain way all things which are in the province of art do partake of measurement; but because people are not in the habit of considering things by dividing them into classes, they hastily put these widely different relations [18] into the same category, thinking they are alike; and again they do the opposite of this when they fail to divide other things into parts. What they ought to do is this: when a person at first sees only the unity or common quality of many things, he must not give up until he sees all the differences in them, so far as they exist in classes; and conversely, when all sorts of dissimilarities are seen in a large number of objects he must find it impossible to be discouraged or to stop until has gathered into one circle of similarity all the things which are related to each other and has included them in some sort of class on the basis of their essential nature. No more need be said, then, about this or about deficiency and excess; let us only bear carefully in mind that two kinds of measurement which apply to them have been found, and let us remember what those kinds are.

Y. Soc. We will remember.

Str. Now that we have finished this discussion, let us take up another which concerns the actual objects of our inquiry and the conduct of such discussions in general.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. Suppose we were asked the following question about a group of pupils learning their letters:

"When a pupil is asked of what letters some word or other composed, is the question asked for the sake of the one particular word before him or rather to make him more learned about all words in the lesson?"

Y. Soc. Clearly to make him more learned about them all.

Str. And how about our own investigation of the statesman? Has

[18] i.e. relations to each other and relations to the standard of the mean.

it been undertaken for the sake of his particular subject or rather to make us better thinkers about all subjects?

Y. Soc. Clearly this also is done with a view to them all.

Str. Of course no man of sense would wish to pursue the discussion of weaving for its own sake; but most people, it seems to me, fail to notice that some things have sensible resemblances which are easily perceived; and it is not at all difficult to show them when anyone wishes, in response to a request for an explanation of some one of them, to exhibit them easily without trouble and really without explanation. But, on the other hand, the greatest and noblest conceptions have no image wrought plainly for human vision, which he who wishes to satisfy the mind of the inquirer can apply to some one of his senses and by mere exhibition satisfy the mind.

Str. We must therefore endeavor by practice to acquire the power of giving and understanding a rational definition of each one of them; for immaterial things, which are the noblest and greatest, can be exhibited by reason only, and it is for their sake that all we are saying is said. But it is always easier to practise in small matters than in greater ones.

Y. Soc. Excellent.

Str. Let us, then, remember the reason for all that we have said about these matters.

Y. Soc. What is the reason?

Str. The reason is chiefly just that irritating impatience which we exhibited in relation to the long talk about weaving and the revolution of the universe and the sophist's long talk about the existence of not-being. [19] We felt that they were too long, and we reproached ourselves for all of them, fearing that our talk was not only long, but irrelevant. Consider, therefore, that the reason for what has just been said is my wish to avoid any such impatience in the future.

Y. Soc. Very well. Please go on with what you have to say.

Str. What I have to say, then, is that you and I, remembering what has just been said, must praise or blame the brevity or length of our several discussions, not by comparing their various lengths with one another, but with reference to that part of the science of measurement which we said before must be borne in mind; I mean the standard of fitness.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. But we must not always judge of length by fitness, either. For we shall not in the least want a length that is fitted to give pleasure, except,

[19] See *Plat. theaet. 283*, *Plat. Theaet. 277*, *Plat. Soph. 261*

perhaps, as a secondary consideration; and again reason counsels us to accept fitness for the easiest and quickest completion of the inquiry in which we are engaged, not as the first, but as the second thing to be desired. By far our first and most important object should be to exalt the method itself of ability to divide by classes, and therefore, if a discourse, even though it be very long, makes the hearer better able to discover the truth, we should accept it eagerly and should not be offended by its length, or if it is short, we should judge it in the same way. And, moreover, anyone who finds fault with the length of discourses in our discussions, or objects to roundabout methods, must not merely find fault with the speeches for their length and then pass them quickly and hastily by, but he must also show that there is ground for the belief that if they had been briefer they would have made their hearers better dialecticians and quicker to discover through reason the truth of realities. About other people and the praise or blame they direct towards other qualities in discourse, we need not be concerned; we need not even appear to hear them. But enough of this, if you feel about it as I do; so let us go back to the statesman and apply to him the example of weaving that we spoke of a while ago.

Y. Soc. Very well; let us do so.

Str. The art of the king, then, has been separated from most of the kindred arts, or rather from all the arts that have to do with herds. There remain, however, the arts that have to do with the state itself. These are both causes and contingent causes, and our first duty is to separate them from one another.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. It is not easy to divide them into halves, you know. But I think the reason will nevertheless be clear as we go on.

Y. Soc. Then we had better divide in another way.

Str. Let us divide them, then, like an animal that is sacrificed, by joints, since we cannot bisect them; for we must always divide into a number of parts as near two as possible.

Y. Soc. How shall we do it in the present instance?

Str. Just as in the previous case, you know, we classed all the arts which furnished tools for weaving as contingent causes.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. So now we must do the same thing, but it is even more imperative. For all the arts which furnish any implement, great or small, for the state, must be classed as contingent causes; for without them neither state nor statesmanship could ever exist, and yet I do not suppose we shall reckon any of them as the work of the kingly art.

Y. Soc. No.

Str. We shall certainly be undertaking a hard task in separating this class from the rest; for it might be said that everything that exists is the instrument of something or other, and the statement seems plausible. But there are possessions of another kind in the state, about which I wish to say something.

Y. Soc. What do you wish to say?

Str. That they do not possess this instrumental function. For they are not, like tools or instruments, made for the purpose of being causes of production, but exist for the preservation of that which has been produced.

Y. Soc. What is this class of possessions?

Str. That very various class which is made with dry and wet materials and such as are wrought by fire and without fire; it is called collectively the class of receptacles; it is a very large class and has, so far as I can see, nothing at all to do with the art we are studying.

Y. Soc. No, of course not.

Str. And there is a third very large class of possessions to be noticed, differing from these; it is found on land and on water, it wanders about and is stationary, it is honorable and without honor, but it has one name, because the whole class is always a seat for some one and exists to be sat upon.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. We call it a vehicle, and it certainly is not at all the work of statesmanship, but much rather that of the arts of carpentry, pottery and bronze-working.

Y. Soc. I understand.

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Str. And is there a fourth class? Shall we say that there is one, differing from those three, one to which most of the things we have mentioned belong—all clothing, most arms, all circuit walls of earth or of stone, and countless other things? And since they are all made for defence, they may most rightly be called by the collective name of defence, and this may much more properly be considered for the most part the work of the art of building or of weaving than of statesmanship.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

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Str. And should we care to make a fifth class, of ornamentation and painting and all the imitations created by the use of painting and music solely for our pleasure and properly included under one name?

Y. Soc. What is its name?

Str. It is called by some such name as plaything.

Y. Soc. To be sure.

Str. So this one name will properly be applied to all the members of this class; for none of them is practised for any serious purpose, but all of them merely for play.

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Y. Soc. I understand that pretty well, too.

Str. And shall we not make a sixth class of that which furnishes to all these the materials of which and in which all the arts we have mentioned fashion their works, a very various class, the offspring of many other arts?

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. Gold and silver and all the products of the mines and all the materials which tree-felling and wood-cutting in general cut and provide for carpentry and basket-weaving; and then, too, the art of stripping the bark from plants and the leather-worker's art which takes off the skins of animals, and all the other arts which have to do with such matters, and those that make corks and paper and cords and enable us to manufacture composite classes of things from kinds that are not composite. We call all this, as one class, the primary and simple possession of man, and it is in no way the work of the kingly science.

Y. Soc. Good.

Str. And property in food and all the things which, mingling parts of themselves with parts of the body, have any function of keeping it in health, we may say is the seventh class, and we will call it collectively our nourishment, unless we have some better name to give it. All this we can assign to the arts of husbandry, hunting, gymnastics, medicine, and cooking more properly than to that of statesmanship.

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. Now I think I have in these seven classes mentioned nearly all kinds of property except tame animals. See: there was the primary possession, which ought in justice to have been placed first, and after this the instrument, receptacle, vehicle, defence, plaything, nourishment. Whatever we have omitted, unless some important thing has been overlooked, can find its place in one of those classes; for instance, the group of coins, seals, and stamps, for there is not among these any kinship such as to form a large class, but some of them can be made to fit into the class of ornaments, others into that of instruments, though

the classification is somewhat forced. All property in tame animals, except slaves, is included in the art of herding, which has already been divided into parts.

Y. Soc. Yes quite true.

Str. There remains the class of slaves and servants in general, and here I prophesy that we shall find those who set up claims against the king for the very fabric of his art, just as the spinners and carders and the rest of whom we spoke advanced claims against the weavers a while ago. All the others, whom we called contingent causes, have been removed along with the works we just mentioned and have been separated from the activity of the king and the statesman.

Y. Soc. That seems to be the case, at least.

Str. Come then, let us step up and look from close at hand at those who are left, that so we may know them more surely.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is what we should do.

Str. We shall find, then, that the greatest servants, when seen from near at hand, are in conduct and condition the opposite of that which we suspected.

Y. Soc. Who are they?

Str. The bought servants, acquired by purchase, whom we can without question call slaves. They make no claim to any share in the kingly art.

Y. Soc. Certainly not.

Str. How about those free men who put themselves voluntarily in the position of servants of those whom we mentioned before? I mean the men who carry about and distribute among one another the productions of husbandry and the other arts, whether in the domestic marketplaces or by travelling from city to city by land or sea, exchanging money for wares or money for money, the men whom we call brokers, merchants, shipmasters, and peddlers; do they lay any claim to statesmanship?

Y. Soc. Possibly to commercial statesmanship

Str. But certainly we shall never find laborers, whom we see only too glad to serve anybody for hire, claiming a share in the kingly art.

Y. Soc. Certainly not.

Str. But there are people who perform services of another kind. How about them?

Y. Soc. What services and what men do you mean?

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Str. The class of heralds and those who become by long practice skilled

as clerks and other clever men who perform various services in connection with public offices. What shall we call them?

Y. Soc. What you called the others, servants; they are not themselves rulers in the states.

Str. But surely it was no dream that made me say we should find somewhere in this region those who more than others lay claim to the art of statesmanship; and yet it would be utterly absurd to look for them in any servile position.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. But let us draw a little closer still to those whom we have not yet examined. There are men who have to do with divination and possess a portion of a certain menial science; for they are supposed to be interpreters of the gods to men.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And then, too, the priests, according to law and custom, know how to give the gods, by means of sacrifices, the gifts that please them from us and by prayers to ask for us the gain of good things from them; now these are both part of a servant's art.

Y. Soc. At least they seem to be so.

Str. At last, then, I think we are, as it were, on the track of our quarry. For the bearing of the priests and prophets is indeed full of pride, and they win high esteem because of the magnitude of their undertakings. In Egypt, for example, no king can rule without being a priest, and if he happens to have forced his way to the throne from some other class, he must enroll himself in the class of priests afterwards; and among the Greeks, too, you would find that in many states the performance of the greatest public sacrifices is a duty imposed upon the highest officials. Yes, among you Athenians this is very plain, for they say the holiest and most national of the ancient sacrifices are performed by the man whom the lot has chosen to be the King. [20]

Y. Soc. Yes, certainly.

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Str. We must, then, examine these elected kings and priests and their assistants, and also another very large crowd of people which has just come in sight now that the others are out of the way.

Y. Soc. Who are these people?

Str. A very queer lot.

Y. Soc. How so?

[20] The second in order of the nine annual archons.

Str. They are of very mixed race at least they seem so now, when I can just see them. For many of them are like lions and centaurs and other fierce creatures, and very many are like satyrs and the weak and cunning beasts; and they make quick exchanges of forms and qualities with one another. Ah, but now, Socrates, I think I have just made out who they are.

Y. Soc. Tell me; for you seem to have caught sight of something strange.

Str. Yes, for ignorance makes things seem strange to everybody. That was what happened to me just now; when I suddenly caught sight of them I did not recognize the troop of those who busy themselves with the affairs of the state.

Y. Soc. What troop?

Str. That which of all the sophists is the greatest charlatan and most practised in charlatanry. This, although it is a hard thing to do, must be separated from the band of really statesmanlike and kingly men, if we are to get a clear view of the object of our search.

Y. Soc. But we certainly cannot give that up.

Str. No, of course not. I agree to that. And now please answer a question.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. We agree that monarchy is one of the forms of government, do we not?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And after monarchy one might, I should say, mention the rule of the few.

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

Str. And a third form of government is the rule of the multitude, called democracy, is it not?

Y. Soc. Yes, certainly.

Str. Do not these three become after a fashion five, producing out of themselves two additional names?

Y. Soc. What names?

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Str. People nowadays are likely to take into consideration enforced subjection and voluntary obedience, poverty and wealth, law and lawlessness as they occur in governments, and so they divide two of the forms we mentioned, giving to the two aspects of monarchy the two names tyranny and royalty.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. And the state that is ruled by the few is called, as the case may be, aristocracy or oligarchy.

Y. Soc. To be sure.

Str. In the case of democracy, however, whether the multitude rule those who have property by violence or with their willing consent, and whether the laws are carefully observed or not, no one ever habitually changes the name.

Y. Soc. True.

Str. Now then, do we believe that any of these forms of government which are defined by the distinctions between the one, the few, and the many, or wealth and poverty, or violence and willingness, or written constitution and absence of laws, is a right one?

Y. Soc. I don't see why not.

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Str. Look a bit more closely along the line I am going to point out.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. Shall we abide by what we said in the beginning, or dissent from it?

Y. Soc. To what do you refer?

Str. We said, I believe, that royal power was one of the sciences.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And not only a science, but we selected it from the rest as a science of judgement and command.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And from the science of command we distinguished one part which rules inanimate works, and one which rules living beings; and so we have gone on dividing in this manner to the present moment, never forgetting that it is a science, but as yet unable to state with sufficient accuracy what science it is.

Y. Soc. You are right.

Str. Then is this our understanding, that the distinction between forms of government ought not to be found in the words few or many, or voluntary or unwilling, or wealth or poverty, but some science must be the distinguishing feature, if we are to be consistent with our previous statement?

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Y. Soc. Yes, indeed; it cannot be otherwise.

Str. Necessarily, then, our present duty is to inquire in which, if any, of these forms of government is engendered the science of ruling men, which is about the greatest of sciences and the most difficult to

acquire. We must discover that in order to see what men are to be distinguished from the wise king—men, I mean, who pretend to be, and make many believe that they are, statesmen, but are really not such at all.

Y. Soc. Yes, we must do this; that is implied in what was said before.

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Str. Does it seem at all possible that a multitude in a state could acquire this science?

Y. Soc. By no means.

Str. But in a state of one thousand men could perhaps a hundred or as many as fifty acquire it adequately?

Y. Soc. No, in that case this would be the easiest of all the arts; for we know that a city of a thousand men could never produce that number of finished draught-players in comparison with those in other Greek cities, still less so many kings. For the man who possesses the kingly science, whether he rule or not, must be called kingly, as our previous argument showed.

Str. You did well to remind me. And in agreement with this, we must, I suppose, look for the right kind of rule in one or two or very few men, whenever such right rule occurs.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. And these men, whether they rule over willing or unwilling subjects, with or without written laws, and whether they are rich or poor, must, according to our present opinion, be supposed to exercise their rule in accordance with some art or science. And physicians offer a particularly good example of this point of view. Whether they cure us against our will or with our will, by cutting us or burning us or causing us pain in any other way, and whether they do it by written rules or without them, and whether they are rich or poor, we call them physicians just the same, so long as they exercise authority by art or science, purging us or reducing us in some other way, or even adding to our weight, provided only that they who treat their patients treat them for the benefit of their health and preserve them by making them better than they were. In this way and no other, in my opinion, shall we determine this to be the only right definition of the rule of the physician or of any other rule whatsoever.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. It is, then, a necessary consequence that among forms of government that one is preeminently right and is the only real govern-

ment, in which the rulers are found to be truly possessed of science, not merely to seem to possess it, whether they rule by law or without law, whether their subjects are willing or unwilling, and whether they themselves are rich or poor—none of these things can be at all taken into account on any right method.

Y. Soc. Excellent.

Str. And whether they purge the state for its good by killing or banishing some of the citizens, or make it smaller by sending out colonies somewhere, as bees swarm from the hive, or bring in citizens from elsewhere to make it larger, so long as they act in accordance with science and justice and preserve and benefit it by making it better than it was, so far as is possible, that must at that time and by such characteristics be declared to be the only right form of government. All other forms must be considered not as legitimate or really existent, but as imitating this; those states which are said to be well governed imitate it better, and the others worse.

Y. Soc. Everything else that you have said seems reasonable; but that government should be carried on without laws is a hard saying.

Str. You got ahead of me a little with your question, Socrates; for I was just going to ask whether you accepted all I have said, or were displeased with anything. But now it is clear that we shall have to discuss the question of the propriety of government without laws.

Y. Soc. Of course we shall.

Str. In a sense, however, it is clear that law-making belongs to the science of kingship; but the best thing is not that the laws be in power, but that the man who is wise and of kingly nature be ruler. Do you see why?

Y. Soc. Why is it?

Str. Because law could never, by determining exactly what is noblest and must just for one and all, enjoin upon them that which is best; for the differences of men and of actions and the fact that nothing, I may say, in human life is ever at rest, forbid any science whatsoever to promulgate any simple rule for everything and for all time. We agree to that, I suppose?

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

Str. But we see that law aims at pretty nearly this very thing, like a stubborn and ignorant man who allows no one to do anything contrary to his command, or even to ask a question, not even if something new occurs to some one, which is better than the rule he has himself ordained.

Y. Soc. True; the law treats each and all of us exactly as you

describe.

Str. So that which is persistently simple is inapplicable to things which are never simple?

Y. Soc. I suppose so.

Str. Why in the world, then, is it necessary to make laws, since law is not the most perfect right? We must ask the reason for this.

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

Str. Well, there are here at Athens, as in other cities, classes for practice in athletics to prepare for contests in running or the like, are there not?

Y. Soc. Yes, a great many of them.

Str. Now let us recall to mind the orders given by the professional trainers when they are in charge of such classes.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. They think they cannot go into details in individual cases and order what is best for each person's physique; they think they must employ a rougher method and give a general rule which will be good for the physique of the majority.

Y. Soc. Good.

Str. And therefore they nowadays assign equal exercise to whole classes; they make them begin at the same time and stop at the same time, whether they run or wrestle or practise any other kind of bodily exercise.

Y. Soc. That is true.

Str. And so we must believe that the law-maker who is to watch over the herds and maintain justice and the obligation of contracts, will never be able by making laws for all collectively, to provide exactly that which is proper for each individual.

Y. Soc. Probably not, at any rate.

Str. But he will, I fancy, legislate for the majority and in a general way only roughly for individuals, whether he issues written laws or his enactments follow the unwritten traditional customs.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. Yes, quite right. For how could anyone, Socrates, sit beside each person all his life and tell him exactly what is proper for him to do? Certainly anyone who really possessed the kingly science, if he were able to do this, would hardly, I imagine, ever put obstacles in his own way by writing what we call laws.

Y. Soc. No, at least not according to what has just been said.

Str. Or rather, my friend, not according to what is going to be said.

Y. Soc. What is that?

Str. Something of this sort: Let us suppose that a physician or a gymnastic trainer is going away and expects to be a long time absent from his patients or pupils; if he thinks they will not remember his instructions, he would want to write them down, would he not?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. What if he should come back again after a briefer absence than he expected? Would he not venture to substitute other rules for those written instructions if others happened to be better for his patients, because the winds or something else had, by act of God, changed unexpectedly from their usual course? Would he persist in the opinion that no one must transgress the old laws, neither he himself by enacting new ones nor his patient by venturing to do anything contrary to the written rules, under the conviction that these laws were medicinal and healthful and anything else was unhealthful and unscientific? If anything of that sort occurred in the realm of science and true art, would not any such regulations on any subject assuredly arouse the greatest ridicule?

Y. Soc. Most assuredly.

Str. But he who has made written or unwritten laws about the just and unjust, the honorable and disgraceful, the good and the bad for the herds of men that are tended in their several cities in accordance with the laws of the law-makers, is not to be permitted to give other laws contrary to those, if the scientific law-maker, or another like him, should come! Would not such a prohibition appear in truth as ridiculous as the other?

Y. Soc. It certainly would.

Str. Do you know what people in general say about such a case?

Y. Soc. I don't recall it just now off-hand.

Str. Yes, it is very plausible; for they say that if anyone has anything better than the old laws to offer, he must first persuade the state, and then he may make his laws, but not otherwise.

Y. Soc. And is that not right?

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Str. Perhaps. But suppose a man does not use persuasion, but makes an improvement by force. What is this force to be called? Answer me—or, no, not yet; first answer in reference to what we were talking of before.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. Suppose a physician who has right knowledge of his profession

does not persuade, but forces, his patient, whether man, woman, or child, to do the better thing, though it be contrary to the written precepts, what will such violence be called? The last name in the world to call it would be "unscientific and baneful error," as the phrase is, would it not? And the patient so forced might rightly say anything else rather than that he had been treated in a baneful or unscientific way by the physicians who used force upon him.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. But what can we call the unscientific error in the field of statesmanship? Is it not baseness and evil and injustice?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Now if people are forced, contrary to the written laws and inherited traditions, to do what is juster and nobler and better than what they did before, tell me, will not anyone who blames such use of force, unless he is to be most utterly ridiculous, always say anything or everything rather than that those who have been so forced have suffered base and unjust and evil treatment at the hands of those who forced them?

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. But would the violence be just if he who uses it is rich, and unjust if he is poor? Or if a man, whether rich or poor, by persuasion or by other means, in accordance with written laws or contrary to them, does what is for the good of the people, must not this be the truest criterion of right government, in accordance with which the wise and good man will govern the affairs of his subjects?

Str. Just as the captain of a ship keeps watch for what is at any moment for the good of the vessel and the sailors, not by writing rules, but by making his science his law, and thus preserves his fellow voyagers, so may not a right government be established in the same way by men who could rule by this principle, making science more powerful than the laws? And whatever the wise rulers do, they can commit no error, so long as they maintain one great principle and by always dispensing absolute justice to them with wisdom and science are able to preserve the citizens and make them better than they were, so far as that is possible. Is not this true?

Y. Soc. There is no denying the truth of what you have just said.

Str. And those other statements cannot be denied, either.

Y. Soc. What statements?

Str. That no great number of men, whoever they may be, could ever acquire political science and be able to administer a state with wisdom, but our one right form of government must be sought in some

small number or one person, and all other forms are merely, as we said before, more or less successful imitations of that.

Y. Soc. What do you mean by that? I did not understand about the imitations a little while ago, either.

Str. And yet it is quite a serious matter if after stirring up this question we drop it and do not go on and show the error which is committed in relation to it nowadays.

Y. Soc. What is the error?

Str. I will tell you what we must investigate; it is not at all familiar or easy to see, but let us try to grasp it nevertheless. Tell me this: Assuming that the form of government we have described is the only right form, don't you see that the other forms must employ its written laws if they are to be preserved by doing that which is approved of nowadays, although it is not perfectly right?

Y. Soc. What is not perfectly right?

Str. That no citizen shall dare to do anything contrary to the laws, and that he who does shall be punished by death and the most extreme penalties. And this is perfectly right and good as a second choice, as soon as you depart from the first form of which we were just speaking. Now let us tell in some detail how this which we called the second choice comes about. Shall we do so?

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. Let us return once more to the images which we always have to use in portraying kingly rulers.

Y. Soc. What images?

Str. The noble captain of a ship and the "physician who is worth as much as many others." [21] Let us make a simile of them and use it to help us to discover something.

Y. Soc. What is your simile?

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Str. Something of this sort: Imagine that we all thought in regard to captains and physicians: "We are most abominably treated by them. For whomsoever of us either of them wishes to save, he saves, one of them just like the other, and whomsoever he wishes to maltreat, he maltreats. They cut us up and burn us and order us to bring them payments of money, as if they were exacting tribute, of which they

[21] Cf. *Hom. Il. 12.514*: *ἰητρὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀντάξιος ἄλλων.* The image of the physician was used above, 293. The image of the captain (for the Greek *κυβερνήτης* had an importance commensurate with that of the captain, rather than of the pilot, in modern times) has just been used. See also *Plat. Rep. 6.488 A*; *Plat. Laws 12.963 B.*

spend little or nothing for their patients; they themselves and their servants use the rest. And finally they are bribed by the patient's relatives or enemies and actually bring about his death. And as for the captains, they commit countless other misdeeds they make plots and leave us deserted ashore when they put out to sea, they bring on mishaps at sea and so cast us into the water, and are guilty of other wrong-doings." Now suppose, with these thoughts in mind, we deliberated about them and decided that we would no longer allow either of these arts to rule without control over slaves or free men, but that we would call an assembly either of all the people or of the rich only, and that anyone, whether he were engaged in some other form of skilled labor or were without any special qualifications, should be free to offer an opinion about navigation and diseases, how drugs and surgical or medical instruments should be applied to the patients, and how ships and nautical instruments should be used for navigation and in meeting dangers, not only those of winds and sea that affect the voyage itself, but also those met in encounters with pirates, and if battles have to be fought between ships of war; and that whatever the majority decided about these matters, whether any physicians or ship captains or merely unskilled persons took part in the deliberations, should be inscribed upon tablets and slabs or in some instances should be adopted as unwritten ancestral customs, and that henceforth forever navigation and the care of the sick should be conducted in accordance with these provisions.

Y. Soc. That is a most absurd state of things that you have described.

Str. And suppose that rulers of the people are set up annually, whether from the rich or from the whole people, on the principle that whoever is chosen by lot should rule, and that these rulers exercise their authority in commanding the ships or treating the sick in accordance with the written rules.

Y. Soc. That is still harder to imagine.

Str. Now consider what comes next. When the year of office has passed for each set of rulers, there will have to be sessions of courts in which the judges are chosen by lot either from a selected list of the rich or from the whole people, and the rulers will have to be brought before these courts and examined as to their conduct in office, and anyone who pleases can bring against the captains an accusation for failure to command the ships during the year in accordance with the written laws or the ancestral customs, and similarly against the physicians for their treatment of the sick; and if any of them is found guilty, the court

shall decide what his punishment or his fine shall be.

Y. Soc. Surely anyone who consents voluntarily to hold office under such conditions would richly deserve any penalty or fine that might be imposed.

Str. And then, in addition to all this, there will have to be a law that if anyone is found to be investigating the art of pilotage or navigation or the subject of health and true medical doctrine about winds and things hot and cold, contrary to the written rules, or to be indulging in any speculation whatsoever on such matters, he shall in the first place not be called a physician or a ship captain, but a star-gazer, [22] a kind of loquacious sophist, and secondly anyone who is properly qualified may bring an accusation against him and hale him into court for corrupting the young and persuading them to attack the arts of navigation and medicine in opposition to the laws and to govern the ships and the sick according to their own will; and if he is found to be so persuading either young or old contrary to the laws and written rules, he shall suffer the most extreme penalties. Nothing, they say, ought to be wiser than the laws; for no one is ignorant of medicine and the laws of health or of the pilot's art and navigation, since anyone who pleases can learn the existing written rules and ancestral customs. Now if these regulations which I speak of were to be applied to these sciences, Socrates, and to strategy and every part of the entire art of hunting and to painting or every kind of imitation and to carpentry including every kind of utensil-making, or even to husbandry and all the art that is concerned with plants, or if we were to see an art of horse-breeding conducted by written rules, or herdsmanship in general or prophecy or everything that is included in the art of serving, or draught-playing or the whole science of number, whether arithmetic or plane geometry or solid geometry or problems of motion—what would you think of carrying on all these in such a way, by written rules and not by knowledge?

Y. Soc. Clearly all the arts would be utterly ruined, nor could they ever rise again, through the operation of the law prohibiting investigation; and so life, which is hard enough now, would then become absolutely unendurable.

[22] This passage obviously refers to the trial of Socrates. The word *μετέωρα* was used by those who made all sorts of general accusations against Socrates (see *Plat. Apol. 18 B*, 19 B, with its reference to the *Clouds* of Aristophanes), and the reference of the words *διαφθείροντα ἄλλους νεωτέρους* to the accusation brought against him by Miletus, Anytus, and Lycon (*Plat. Apol. 24 C*: *φησὶ γὰρ δὴ τοὺς νέους ἀδικεῖν με διαφθείροντα*) is perfectly plain.

Str. Here is a further point. If we ordained that each of the aforesaid arts must be carried on by written rules and that the observance of our written rules be under the charge of the man who is elected or chosen by lot, but he should disregard the written rules and for the sake of some gain or to do a favor to some one should try to act contrary to them, without possessing any knowledge, would not this be a greater evil than the former?

Y. Soc. Most assuredly.

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Str. Since the laws are made after long experience and after commissioners of some kind have carefully considered each detail with delicate skill and have persuaded the people to pass them, anyone, I fancy, who ventured to violate them would be involved in error many times greater than the first, and would cause even greater ruin than the written laws to all kinds of transactions.

Y. Soc. Of course he would.

Str. Therefore the next best course for those who make laws or written rules about anything whatsoever is to prohibit any violation of them whatsoever, either by one person or by a greater number.

Y. Soc. Right.

Str. These laws, then, written by men who know in so far as knowledge is possible, are imitations in each instance of some part of truth?

Y. Soc. Of course.

Str. And yet we said, if we remember, that the man of knowledge, the real statesman, would by his art make many changes in his practice without regard to his writings, when he thought another course was better though it violated the rules he had written and sent to his absent subjects. [23]

Y. Soc. Yes, we did say that.

Str. But is it not true that any man or any number of men whatsoever who have written laws, if they undertake to make any change in those laws, thinking it is all improvement, are doing, to the best of their ability, the same thing which our true statesman does?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. If, then, they were to do this without science, however, imitate badly in every case; but if they were scientific, then it would no longer be imitation, but the actual perfect reality of which we spoke?

Y. Soc. Yes, assuredly.

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[23] See 295 E.

Str. And yet we agreed definitely a while ago that no multitude is able to acquire any art whatsoever.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is definitely agreed.

Str. Then if there is a kingly [24] art, neither the collective body of the wealthy nor the whole people could ever acquire this science of statesmanship.

Y. Soc. No; certainly not.

Str. Such states, then, it seems, if they are to imitate well, so far as possible, that true form of government— by a single ruler who rules with science—must never do anything in contravention of their existing written laws and ancestral customs.

Y. Soc. You are quite right.

Str. Then whenever the rich imitate this government, we call such a state an aristocracy; and when they disregard the laws, we call it an oligarchy.

Y. Soc. Yes, I think we do.

Str. And again, when one man rules according to laws and imitates the scientific ruler, we call him a king, making no distinction in name between the single ruler who rules by science and him who rules by opinion if they both rule in accordance with laws.

Y. Soc. Yes, I think we do.

Str. Accordingly, if one man who is really scientific rules, he will assuredly be called by the same name, king, and by no other; and so the five names of what are now called the forms of government have become only one. [25]

Y. Soc. So it seems, at least.

Str. But when a single ruler acts in accordance with neither laws nor customs, but claims, in imitation of the scientific ruler, that whatever is best must be done, even though it be contrary to the written laws, and this imitation is inspired by desire and ignorance, is not such a ruler to be called in every instance a tyrant?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Thus, we say, the tyrant has arisen, and the king and oligarchy and aristocracy and democracy, because men are not contented with that one perfect ruler, and do not believe that there could ever be any

[24] See 292 E.

[25] What are called five distinct forms of government are resolved into one—the one right form of which all others are imitations (297 C). This is to be sought in some small number or one person (ibid.). We have found it in the really scientific monarchy, and the other so-called forms of government, being merely imitations of this, require no names of their own.

one worthy of such power or willing and able by ruling with virtue and knowledge to dispense justice and equity rightly to all, but that he will harm and kill and injure any one of us whom he chooses on any occasion, since they admit that if such a man as we describe should really arise, he would be welcomed and would continue to dwell among them, directing to their weal as sole ruler a perfectly right form of government.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. But, as the case now stands, since, as we claim, no king is produced in our states who is, like the ruler of the bees in their hives, by birth pre-eminently fitted from the beginning in body and mind, we are obliged, as it seems, to follow in the track of the perfect and true form of government by coming together and making written laws.

Y. Soc. Yes, I suppose we are.

Str. Can we wonder, then, Socrates, at all the evils that arise and are destined to arise in such kinds of government, when they are based upon such a foundation, and must conduct their affairs in accordance with written laws and with customs, without knowledge? For every one can see that any other art built upon such a foundation would ruin all its works that are so produced. Ought we not rather to wonder at the stability that inheres in the state? For states have labored under such conditions for countless ages, nevertheless some of them are lasting and are not overthrown. Many, to be sure, like ships that founder at sea, are destroyed, have been destroyed, and will be destroyed hereafter, through the worthlessness of their captains and crews who have the greatest ignorance of the greatest things, men who have no knowledge of statesmanship, but think they have in every respect most perfect knowledge of this above all other sciences.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. Is it, then, our duty to see which of these not right forms of government is the least difficult to live with, though all are difficult, and which is the most oppressive, although this is somewhat aside from the subject we had proposed for ourselves? On the whole, however, perhaps all of us have some such motive in mind in all that we are doing.

Y. Soc. Yes, it is our duty, of course.

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Str. Well then, you may say that of the three forms, the same is both the hardest and the easiest.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. Just this: I mean that there are three forms of government, as we said at the beginning of the discussion which has now flowed in upon us—monarchy, the rule of the few, and the rule of the many.

Y. Soc. Yes, there were those three.

Str. Let us, then, by dividing each of these into two parts, make six, and by distinguishing the right government from these, a seventh.

Y. Soc. How shall we make the division?

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Str. We said that monarchy comprised royalty and tyranny, and the rule of the few comprised aristocracy, which has a name of good omen, and oligarchy; but to the rule of the many we gave then only a single name, democracy; now, however, that also must be divided.

Y. Soc. How? On what principle shall we divide that?

Str. On the same that we used for the others, though the name of this form is already twofold in meaning. [26] At any rate, the distinction between ruling according to law and without law applies alike to this and the rest.

Y. Soc. Yes, it does.

Str. Before, when we were in search of the right government, this division was of no use, as we showed at the time but now that we have set that apart and have decided that the others are the only available forms of government, the principle of lawfulness and lawlessness bisects each of them.

Y. Soc. So it seems, from what has been said.

Str. Monarchy, then, when bound by good written rules, which we call laws, is the best of all the six; but without law it is hard and most oppressive to live with.

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Y. Soc. I fancy it is.

Str. But just as few is intermediate between one and a multitude, so the government of the few must be considered intermediate, both in good and in evil. But the government of the multitude is weak in all respects and able to do nothing great, either good or bad, when compared with the other forms of government, because in this the powers of government are distributed in small shares among many men; therefore of all these governments when they are lawful, this is the worst, and when they are all lawless it is the best; and if they

[26] The name is said to be twofold in meaning, probably because it was applied in cases in which there was a regularly constituted popular government and also in cases of mob rule.

are all without restraint, life is most desirable in a democracy, but if they are orderly, that is the worst to live in; but life in the first kind of state is by far the first and best, with the exception of the seventh, for that must be set apart from all the others, as God is set apart from men. [27]

Y. Soc. That statement appears to be true to the facts, and we must do as you say.

Str. Then those who participate in all those governments with the exception of the scientific one—are to be eliminated as not being statesmen, but partisans and since they preside over the greatest counterfeits, they are themselves counterfeits, and since they are the greatest of imitators and cheats, they are the greatest of all sophists.

Y. Soc. This term "sophist" seems to have come round quite rightly to the so-called statesmen.

Str. Well, this part has been exactly like a play. Just as we remarked a moment ago, [28] a festive troop of centaurs or satyrs was coming into view, which we had to separate from the art of statesmanship; and now we have succeeded in doing this, though it has been very difficult.

Y. Soc. So it seems.

Str. But another group remains, which is still more difficult to separate, because it is more closely akin to the kingly class and is also harder to recognize. I think we are in somewhat the same position as refiners of gold.

Y. Soc. How so?

Str. Why, the refiners first remove earth and stones and all that sort of thing; and after that there remain the precious substances which are mixed with the gold and akin to it and can be removed only by fire—copper and silver and sometimes adamant. [29] These are removed

[27] The concentration of power in the hands of one man makes monarchy most efficient, but, since no human monarch is perfect, monarchy must be regulated by laws. Its efficiency makes it under such conditions the best government to live under. But without restraint of law monarchy becomes tyranny—the worst kind of oppression. Oligarchy occupies a position intermediate between monarchy and democracy—less efficient than the one and more efficient than the other, because power is distributed among a small number of persons—and is, therefore, when lawful less good, and when lawless less bad, than monarchy. Democracy, in turn, since power is too greatly subdivided, is inefficient, either for good or evil, and is, therefore, when lawful less good, and when lawless less bad, than either of the others.

[28] 291 A.

[29] *Plat. Tim. 59 B*, defines adamant as *χρυσοῦ ὄζος* a branch of gold. It was, then, a substance akin to gold. Platinum has been suggested.

by the difficult processes of smelting and tests, leaving before our eyes what is called unalloyed gold in all its purity.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is said, at least, to be the process.

Str. By the same method I think all that is different and alien and incompatible has now been eliminated by us from the science of statesmanship, and what is precious and akin to it is left. Herein are included the arts of the general and of the judge and that kind of oratory which partakes of the kingly art because it persuades men to justice and thereby helps to steer the ship of state. Now in what way shall we most easily eliminate these and show him whom we seek alone by himself and undisguised?

Y. Soc. Clearly we must do this somehow.

Str. Then if it is a question of trying, he will be shown. But I think we had better try to disclose him by means of music. Please answer my question.

Y. Soc. What is it?

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Str. Shall we agree that there is such a thing as learning music and the sciences of handicraft in general?

Y. Soc. There is.

Str. And how about this? Shall we say that there is another science connected with those, which tells whether we ought or ought not to learn any one of then?

Y. Soc. Yes, we shall say that there is.

Str. And shall we agree that this is different from those?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And shall we say that none of them ought to have control of any other, or that those sciences should control this one, or that this should control and rule all the others?

Y. Soc. This should control those others.

Str. You mean that the science which decides whether we ought to learn or not should control the science which is learnt or teaches?

Y. Soc. Emphatically.

Str. And the science which decides whether to persuade or not should control that which can persuade?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Well, then, to what science shall we assign the power of persuading a multitude or a mob by telling edifying stories, not by teaching?

Y. Soc. It is, I think, clear that this must be added to rhetoric.

Str. But the power of deciding whether some action, no matter what, should be taken, either by persuasion or by some exercise of force, in relation to any person, or whether to take no action at all—to what science is that to be assigned?

Y. Soc. To the science which controls the sciences of persuasion and speech.

Str. And that would, I think, be no other than the function of the statesman.

Y. Soc. A most excellent conclusion.

Str. So rhetoric also seems to have been quickly separated from statesmanship [30] as a different species, subservient to the other.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Here is another function or power; what are we to think about it?

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. The power of determining how war shall be waged against those upon whom we have declared war, whether we are to call this a science or not a science?

Y. Soc. How could we think it is not a science, when generalship and all military activity practise it?

Str. And the power which is able and knows how to deliberate and decide whether to make war or peace, shall we assume that it is the same as this or different?

Y. Soc. If we are consistent, we must assume that it is different.

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Str. Shall we, then, assume that it controls the other, if we are to agree with our views in the former examples?

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. And what other art shall we make bold to declare is mistress of that great and terrible art, the art of war as a whole, except the truly kingly art?

Y. Soc. No other.

Str. We shall, then, not call the art of the generals statesmanship, since it is subservient.

Y. Soc. No; that would not be reasonable.

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Str. Now let us examine the function of the righteous judges.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

[30] Cf. 303 C.

Str. Has it any power beyond that of judging men's contracts with one another, pronouncing them right or wrong by the standard of the existing laws which it has received from the king and law-giver; showing its own peculiar virtue in that it is not so perverted by any bribes, or fears, or pity, or enmity, or friendship, as ever to consent to decide the lawsuits of men with each other contrary to the enactments of the lawgiver?

Y. Soc. No; the business of this power is about as you have described it.

Str. Then we find that the strength of judges is not kingly, but is guardian of laws and a servant of the kingly power.

Y. Soc. So it appears.

Str. The consideration of all these arts which have been mentioned leads to the conclusion that none of them is the art of the statesman. For the art that is truly kingly ought not to act itself, but should rule over the arts that have the power of action; it should decide upon the right or wrong time for the initiation of the most important measures in the state, and the other arts should perform its behests.

Y. Soc. Right.

Str. Therefore those arts which we have just described, as they control neither one another nor themselves, but have each its own peculiar sphere of action, are quite properly called by special names corresponding to those special actions.

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Y. Soc. That appears, at least, to be the case.

Str. But the art which holds sway over them all and watches over the laws and all things in the state, weaving them all most perfectly together, we may, I think, by giving to its function a designation which indicates its power over the community, with full propriety call "statecraft."

Y. Soc. Most assuredly.

Str. Shall we then proceed to discuss it after the model supplied by weaving, [31] now that all the classes in the state have been made plain to us?

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. Then the kingly process of weaving must be described, its nature, the manner in which it combines the threads, and the kind of web it produces.

Y. Soc. Evidently.

[31] See 287-290, 303-305.

Str. It has, apparently, become necessary, after all, to explain a difficult matter.

Y. Soc. But certainly the explanation must be made.

Str. It is difficult, for the assertion that one part of virtue is in a way at variance with another sort of virtue may very easily be assailed by those who appeal to popular opinion in contentious arguments.

Y. Soc. I do not understand.

Str. I will say it again in another way. I suppose you believe that courage [32] is one part of virtue.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. And, of course, that self-restraint is different from courage, but is also a part of virtue of which courage is a part.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Now I must venture to utter a strange doctrine about them.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. That, in a way, they are in a condition of great hostility and opposition to each other in many beings.

Y. Soc. What do you mean?

Str. Something quite unusual; for, you know, all the parts of virtue are usually said to be friendly to one another.

Y. Soc. Yes.

Str. Now shall we pay careful attention and see whether this is so simple, or, quite the contrary, there is in some respects a variance between them and their kin?

Y. Soc. Yes; please tell how we shall investigate the question.

Str. Among all the parts we must look for those which we call excellent but place in two opposite classes.

Y. Soc. Say more clearly what you mean.

Str. Acuteness and quickness, whether in body or soul or vocal utterance, whether they are real or exist in such likenesses as music and graphic art produce in imitation of them—have you never yourself praised one of them or heard them praised by others?

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

Str. And do you remember in what way they praise them as occasion offers?

Y. Soc. Not in the least.

[32] The word *ἀνδρεία* has a much wider meaning than the English courage. Like the Latin *virtus,* it embraces all qualities which are desirable in a perfect man, especially the more active and positive virtues. When applied to one particular kind of virtue it is applied to courage, but throughout this discussion it is used in the wider sense, for which there is no single English equivalent.

Str. I wonder if I can express to you in words what I have in mind.

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Y. Soc. Why not?

Str. You seem to think that is an easy thing to do. However, let us consider the matter as it appears in the opposite classes. For example, when we admire, as we frequently do in many actions, quickness and energy and acuteness of mind or body or even of voice, we express our praise of them by one word, courage.

Y. Soc. How so?

Str. We say acute and courageous in the first instance, also quick and courageous, and energetic and courageous; and when we apply this word as a common term applicable to all persons and actions of this class, we praise them.

Y. Soc. Yes, we do.

Str. But do we not also praise the gentle type of movement in many actions?

Y. Soc. We do, decidedly.

Str. And in doing so, do we not say the opposite of what we said about the other class?

Y. Soc. How is that?

Str. We are always saying

"How quiet!" and

"How restrained!" when we are admiring the workings of the mind, and again we speak of actions as slow and gentle, of the voice as smooth and deep, and of every rhythmic motion and of music in general as having appropriate slowness; and we apply to them all the term which signifies, not courage, but decorum.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. And again, on the other hand, when these two classes seem to us out of place, we change our attitude and blame them each in turn; then we use the terms in the opposite sense.

Y. Soc. How is that?

Str. Why, whatsoever is sharper than the occasion warrants, or seems to be too quick or too hard, is called violent or mad, and whatever is too heavy or slow or gentle, is called cowardly and sluggish; and almost always we find that the restraint of one class of qualities and the courage of the opposite class, like two parties arrayed in hostility to each other, do not mix with each other in the actions that are concerned with such qualities. Moreover, if we pursue the inquiry, we shall see that the men who have these qualities in their souls are at

variance with one another.

Y. Soc. In what do you mean that they are at variance?

Str. In all those points which we just mentioned, and probably in many others. For men who are akin to each class, I imagine, praise some qualities as their own and find fault with those of their opposites as alien to themselves, and thus great enmity arises between them on many grounds.

Y. Soc. Yes, that is likely to be the case.

Str. Now this opposition of these two classes is mere child's play but when it affects the most important matters it becomes a most detestable disease in the state.

Y. Soc. What matters does it affect?

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Str. The whole course of life, in all probability. For those who are especially decorous are ready to live always a quiet and retired life and to mind their own business; this is the manner of their intercourse with every one at home, and they are equally ready at all times to keep peace in some way or other with foreign states. And because of this desire of theirs, which is often inopportune and excessive, when they have their own way they quite unconsciously become unwarlike, and they make the young men unwarlike also; they are at the mercy of aggressors; and thus in a few years they and their children and the whole state often pass by imperceptible degrees from freedom to slavery.

Y. Soc. That is a hard and terrible experience.

Str. But how about those who incline towards courage? Do they not constantly urge their countries to war, because of their excessive desire for a warlike life? Do they not involve them in hostilities with many powerful opponents and either utterly destroy their native lands or enslave and subject them to their foes?

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Y. Soc. Yes, that is true, too.

Str. Then in these examples how can we deny that these two classes are always filled with the greatest hostility and opposition to one another?

Y. Soc. We certainly cannot deny it.

Str. Have we not, then, found just what we had in view in the beginning, that important parts of virtue are by nature at variance with one another and also that the persons who possess them exhibit the same opposition?

Y. Soc. Yes, I suppose that is true.

Str. Let us then take up another question.

Y. Soc. What question?

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Str. Whether any constructive science voluntarily composes any, even the most worthless, of its works out of good and bad materials, or every science invariably rejects the bad, so far as possible, taking only the materials which are good and fitting, out of which, whether they be like or unlike, it gathers all elements together and produces one form or value.

Y. Soc. The latter, of course.

Str. Then neither will the true natural art of statecraft ever voluntarily compose a state of good and bad men; but obviously it will first test them in play, and after the test will entrust them in turn to those who are able to teach and help them to attain the end in view; it will itself give orders and exercise supervision, just as the art of weaving constantly commands and supervises the carders and others who prepare the materials for its web, directing each person to do the tasks which it thinks are requisite for its fabric.

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. In the same way I think the kingly art, keeping for itself the function of supervision, will not allow the duly appointed teachers and foster fathers to give any training, unless they can thereby produce characters suitable to the constitution it is creating, but in these things only it exhorts them to give instruction. And those men who have no capacity for courage and self-restraint and the other qualities which tend towards virtue, but by the force of an evil nature are carried away into godlessness, violence, and injustice, it removes by inflicting upon them the punishments of death and exile and deprivation of the most important civic rights.

Y. Soc. That is about what people say, at any rate.

Str. And those in turn who wallow in ignorance and craven humility it places under the yoke of slavery.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. As for the rest of the people, those whose natures are capable, if they get education, of being made into something fine and noble and of uniting with each other as art requires, the kingly art takes those natures which tend more towards courage, considering that their character is sturdier, like the warp in weaving, and those which incline towards decorum, for these, to continue the simile, are spun thick and soft like the threads of the woof, and tries to combine these natures of

opposite tendencies and weave them together in the following manner.

Y. Soc. In what manner?

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Str. First it binds the eternal part of their souls with a divine bond, to which that part is akin, and after the divine it binds the animal part of them with human bonds.

Y. Soc. Again I ask What do you mean?

Str. I mean that really true and assured opinion about honor, justice, goodness and their opposites is divine, and when it arises in men's souls, it arises in a godlike race.

Y. Soc. That would be fitting, at any rate.

Str. Do we not know, then, that the statesman and good lawgiver is the only one to whom the power properly belongs, by the inspiration of the kingly art, to implant this true opinion in those who have rightly received education, those of whom we were just now speaking?

Y. Soc. Well, probably.

Str. And let us never, Socrates, call him who has not such power by the names we are now examining.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. Now is not a courageous soul, when it lays hold upon such truth, made gentle, and would it not then be most ready to partake of justice? And without it, does it not incline more towards brutality?

Y. Soc. Yes, of course.

Str. And again if the decorous nature partakes of these opinions, does it not become truly self-restrained and wise, so far as the state is concerned, and if it lacks participation in such qualities, does it not very justly receive the shameful epithet of simpleton?

Y. Soc. Certainly.

Str. Then can we say that such interweaving and binding together of the bad with the bad or of the good with the bad ever becomes enduring, or that any science would ever seriously make use of it in uniting such persons?

Y. Soc. Of course not.

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Str. But we may say that in those only who were of noble nature from their birth and have been nurtured as befits such natures it is implanted by the laws, and for them this is the medicine prescribed by science, and, as we said before, this bond which unites unlike and divergent parts of virtue is more divine.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. The remaining bonds, moreover, being human, are not very difficult to devise or, after one has devised them, to create, when once this divine bond exists.

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Y. Soc. How so? And what are the bonds?

Str. Those made between states concerning intermarriages and the sharing of children by adoption, [33] and those relating to portionings and marriages within the state. For most people make such bonds without proper regard to the procreation of children.

Y. Soc. How is that?

Str. The pursuit of wealth or power in connection with matrimony—but why should anyone ever take the trouble to blame it, as though it were worth arguing about?

Y. Soc. There is no reason for doing so.

Str. We have better cause, however, to speak our minds about those whose chief care is the family, in case their conduct is not what it should be.

Y. Soc. Yes; very likely.

Str. The fact is, they act on no right theory at all; they seek their ease for the moment; welcoming gladly those who are like themselves, and finding those who are unlike them unendurable, they give the greatest weight to their feeling of dislike.

Y. Soc. How so?

Str. The decorous people seek for characters like their own; so far as they can they marry wives of that sort and in turn give their daughters in marriage to men of that sort; and the courageous do the same, eagerly seeking natures of their own kind, whereas both classes ought to do quite the opposite.

Y. Soc. How so, and why?

Str. Because in the nature of things courage, if propagated through many generations with no admixture of a self-restrained nature, though at first it is strong and flourishing, in the end blossoms forth in utter madness.

Y. Soc. That is likely.

Str. But the soul, on the other hand, that is too full of modesty and contains no alloy of courage or boldness, after many generations of the same kind becomes too sluggish and finally is utterly crippled.

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[33] More or less equivalent to naturalization. It apparently means the adoption into one state of children born to citizens of another. This was not, as a rule, practiced in the Greek city states, but Plato here seems to recommend it.

Y. Soc. That also is likely to happen.

Str. It was these bonds, then, that I said there was no difficulty in creating, provided that both classes have one and the same opinion about the honorable and the good. For indeed the whole business of the kingly weaving is comprised in this and this alone,—in never allowing the self-restrained characters to be separated from the courageous, but in weaving them together by common beliefs and honors and dishonors and opinions and interchanges of pledges, thus making of them a smooth and, as we say, well-woven fabric, and then entrusting to them in common for ever the offices of the state.

Y. Soc. How is that to be done?

Str. When one official is needed, by choosing a president who possesses both qualities; and when a hoard is desired, by combining men of each class. For the characters of self-restrained officials are exceedingly careful and just and conservative, but they lack keenness and a certain quick and active boldness.

Y. Soc. That also seems, at least, to be true.

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Str. The courageous natures, on the other hand, are deficient in justice and caution in comparison with the former, but excel in boldness of action; and unless both these qualities are present it is impossible for a state to be entirely prosperous in public and private matters.

Y. Soc. Yes, certainly.

Str. This, then, is the end, let us declare, of the web of the statesman's activity, the direct interweaving of the characters of restrained and courageous men, when the kingly science has drawn them together by friendship and community of sentiment into a common life, and having perfected the most glorious and the best of all textures, clothes with it all the inhabitants of the state, both slaves and freemen, holds them together by this fabric, and omitting nothing which ought to belong to a happy state, rules and watches over them.

Y. Soc. You have given us, Stranger, a most complete and admirable treatment of the king and the statesman.

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