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Plotinus, *Psychic and Physical Treatises; comprising the Second and Third Enneads* [253 AD]



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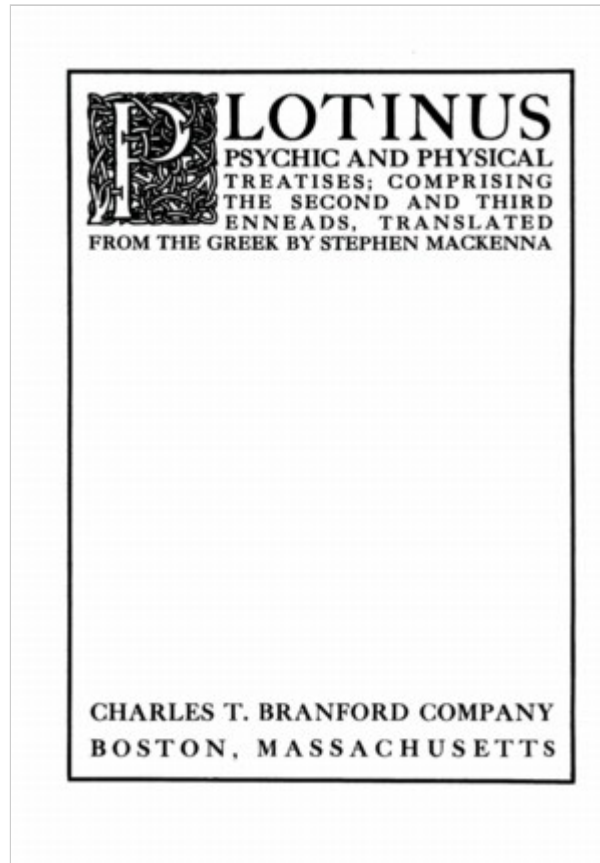
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Edition Used:

Psychic and Physical Treatises; comprising the Second and Third Enneads, translated from Greek by Stephen Mackenna (Boston: Charles T. Branford, 1918).

Author: [Plotinus](#)

Translator: [Stephen Mackenna](#)

About This Title:

Plotinus is primarily remembered for his teachings, which were collected by Porphyry into a volume called the *Enneads*. This work gives Plotinus's accounts of the religions and cults of his age. He was interested in the occult but only in a detached and speculative way. He was indifferent to traditional paganism but critical of the Gnostic Christian heretics who preached the mystical dualism of the divine, which he regarded as antiphilosophical, un-Greek, and emotional superstition. His own religious beliefs inclined toward the idea that one could achieve a spiritual union with the good (understood as the Platonic idea of a perfect realm of the ideal) through philosophic reflection.

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Do ċum glóire Dé & onóra na n-Éireann,

i nDo?naç-Droc ?aile-Á?a-Clia? ?om,

Stíofán mac-Enna. Nodlaig 1916.

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THE THIRD ENNEAD

FIRST TRACTATE

Fate

1.

In the two orders of things—those whose existence is that of process and those in whom it is Authentic Being—there is a variety of possible relation to Cause.

Cause might conceivably underly all the entities in both orders or none in either. It might underly some, only, in each order, the others being causeless. It might, again, underly the Realm of Process universally while in the Realm of Authentic Existence some things were caused, others not, or all were causeless. Conceivably, on the other hand, the Authentic Existents are all caused while in the Realm of Process some things are caused and others not, or all are causeless.

Now, to begin with the Eternal Existents:—

The Firsts among these, by the fact that they are Firsts, cannot be referred to outside Causes; but all such (Eternals) as depend upon those Firsts may be admitted to derive their Being from them.

And in all cases the Act may be referred to the Essence (as its cause), for their Essence consists, precisely, in giving forth an appropriate Act.

As for Things of Process—or for Eternal Existents whose Act is not eternally invariable—we must hold that these are due to Cause; Causelessness is quite inadmissible; we can make no place here for unwarranted “slantings,” for sudden movement of bodies apart from any initiating power, for precipitate spurts in a soul with nothing to drive it into the new course of action. Such causelessness would bind the Soul under an even sterner compulsion, no longer master of itself, but at the mercy of movements apart from will and cause. Something willed—within itself or without—something desired, must lead it to action; without motive it can have no motion.

On the assumption that all happens by Cause, it is easy to discover the nearest determinants of any particular act or state and to trace it plainly to them.

The cause of a visit to the centre of affairs will be that one thinks it necessary to see some person or to receive a debt, or, in a word, that one has some definite motive or impulse confirmed by a judgment of expediency. Sometimes a condition may be referred to the arts, the recovery of health for instance to medical science and the doctor. Wealth has for its cause the discovery of a treasure or the receipt of a gift, or

the earning of money by manual or intellectual labour. The child is traced to the father as its Cause and perhaps to a chain of favourable outside circumstances such as a particular diet or, more immediately, a special organic aptitude or a wife apt to childbirth.

And the general cause of all is Nature.

2.

But to halt at these nearest determinants, not to be willing to penetrate deeper, indicates a sluggish mind, a dullness to all that calls us towards the primal and transcendent causes.

How comes it that the same surface causes produce different results? There is moonshine, and one man steals and the other does not: under the influence of exactly similar surroundings one man falls sick and the other keeps well; an identical set of operations makes one rich and leaves another poor. The differences amongst us in manners, in characters, in success, force us to go still further back.

Men therefore have never been able to rest at the surface causes.

One school postulates material principles, such as atoms; from the movement, from the collisions and combinations of these, it derives the existence and the mode of being of all particular phenomena, supposing that all depends upon how these atoms are agglomerated, how they act, how they are affected; our own impulses and states, even, are supposed to be determined by these principles.

Such teaching, then, obtrudes this compulsion, an atomic Anagke, even upon Real Being. Substitute, for the atoms, any other material entities as principles and the cause of all things, and at once Real Being becomes servile to the determination set up by them.

Others rise to the first-principle of all that exists and from it derive all they tell of a cause penetrating all things, not merely moving all but making each and everything; but they pose this as a fate and a supremely dominating cause; not merely all else that comes into being, but even our own thinking and thoughts would spring from its movement, just as the several members of an animal move not at their own choice but at the dictation of the leading principle which animal life presupposes.

Yet another school fastens on the universal Circuit as embracing all things and producing all by its motion and by the positions and mutual aspect of the planets and fixed stars in whose power of foretelling they find warrant for the belief that this Circuit is the universal determinant.

Finally, there are those that dwell on the interconnection of the causative forces and on their linked descent—every later phenomenon following upon an earlier, one always leading back to others by which it arose and without which it could not be, and the latest always subservient to what went before them—but this is obviously to bring

in fate by another path. This school may be fairly distinguished into two branches; a section which makes all depend upon some one principle and a section which ignores such a unity.

Of this last opinion we will have something to say, but for the moment we will deal with the former, taking the others in their turn.

3.

“Atoms” or “elements”—it is in either case an absurdity, an impossibility, to hand over the universe and its contents to material entities, and out of the disorderly swirl thus occasioned to call order, reasoning, and the governing soul into being; but the atomic origin is, if we may use the phrase, the most impossible.

A good deal of truth has resulted from the discussion of this subject; but, even to admit such principles does not compel us to admit universal compulsion or any kind of “fate.”

Suppose the atoms to exist:—

These atoms are to move, one downwards—admitting a down and an up (in the Universe or before the Universe is in being)—another slantwise, all at haphazard, in a confused conflict. Nothing here is orderly; order has not come into being, though the outcome, this Universe, when it achieves existence, is all order; and thus prediction and divination are utterly impossible, whether by the laws of the science—what science can operate where there is no order?—or by divine possession and inspiration, which no less require that the future be something regulated.

Material entities exposed to all this onslaught may very well be under compulsion to yield to whatsoever the atoms may bring: but would anyone pretend that the acts and states of a soul or mind could be explained by any atomic movements? How can we imagine that the onslaught of an atom, striking downwards or dashing in from any direction, could force the soul to definite and necessary reasonings or impulses or into any reasonings, impulses or thoughts at all, necessary or otherwise? And what of the soul’s resistance to bodily states? What movement of atoms could compel one man to be a geometrician, set another studying arithmetic or astronomy, lead a third to the philosophic life? In a word, if we must go, like soulless bodies, wherever bodies push and drive us, there is an end to our personal act and to our very existence as living beings.

The School that erects other material forces (such as “the elements”) into universal causes is met by the same reasoning: we say that while these can warm us and chill us, and destroy weaker forms of existence, they can be causes of nothing that is done in the sphere of mind or soul: all this must be traceable to quite another kind of Principle.

4.

Another theory:—

The Universe is permeated by one Soul, Cause of all things and events; every separate phenomenon as a member of a whole moves in its place with the general movement; all the various causes spring into action from one source: therefore, it is argued, the entire descending claim of causes and all their interaction must follow inevitably and so constitute a universal determination. A plant rises from a root, and we are asked on that account to reason that not only the interconnection linking the root to all the members and every member to every other but the entire activity and experience of the plant, as well, must be one organised overruling, a “destiny” of the plant.

But such an extremity of determination, a destiny so all-pervasive, does away with the very destiny that is affirmed: it shatters the sequence and co-operation of causes.

It would be unreasonable to attribute to destiny the movement of our limbs dictated by the mind and will: this is no case of something outside (some destiny) bestowing motion while another thing (mind) accepts it and is thus set into action; the mind itself (and not destiny) is the prime mover.

Similarly in the case of the universal system; if all that performs act and is subject to experience constitutes one substance, if one thing does not really produce another thing under causes leading back continuously one to another, then it is not a truth that all happens by causes, there is nothing but a rigid unity. We are no “We”: nothing is our act; our thought is not ours; our decisions are the reasoning of something outside ourselves; we are no more agents than our feet are kickers when we use them to kick with.

No; each several thing must be a separate thing; there must be acts and thoughts that are our own; the good and evil done by each human being must be his own; and it is quite certain that we must not lay any vileness to the charge of the All.

5.

But perhaps the explanation of every particular act or event is rather that they are determined by the spheric movement—the Phora—and by the changing position of the heavenly bodies as these stand at setting or rising or in mid course and in various aspects with each other.

Augury, it is urged, is able from these indications to foretell what is to happen not merely to the universe as a whole, but even to individuals, and this not merely as regards external conditions of fortune but even as to the events of the mind. We observe, too, how growth or check in other orders of beings—animals and plants—is determined by their sympathetic relations with the heavenly bodies and how widely they are influenced by them, how, for example, the various countries show a different produce according to their situation on the earth and especially their lie towards the

sun. And the effect of place is not limited to plants and animals; it rules human beings too, determining their appearance, their height and colour, their mentality and their desires, their pursuits and their moral habit. Thus the universal circuit would seem to be the monarch of the All.

Now a first answer to this theory is that its advocates have merely devised another shift to immolate to the heavenly bodies all that is ours, our acts of will and our states, all the evil in us, our entire personality; nothing is allowed to us; we are left to be stones set rolling, not men, not beings whose nature implies a task.

But we must be allowed our own—with the understanding that to what is primarily ours, our personal holding, there is added some influx from the All—the distinction must be made between our individual act and what is thrust upon us: we are not to be immolated to the stars.

Place and climate, no doubt, produce constitutions warmer or colder; and the parents tell on the offspring, as is seen in the resemblance between them, very general in personal appearance and noted also in some of the unreflecting states of the mind.

None the less, in spite of physical resemblance and similar environment, we observe the greatest difference in temperament and in ideas: this side of the human being, then, derives from some quite other Principle (than any external causation or destiny). A further confirmation is found in the efforts we make to correct both bodily constitution and mental aspirations.

If the stars are held to be causing principles on the ground of the possibility of foretelling individual fate or fortune from observation of their positions, then the birds and all the other things which the soothsayer observes for divination must equally be taken as causing what they indicate.

Some further considerations will help to clarify this matter:—

The heavens are observed at the moment of a birth and the individual fate is thence predicted in the idea that the stars are no mere indications, but active causes, of the future events. Sometimes the Astrologers tell of noble birth; “the child is born of highly placed parents”; yet how is it possible to make out the stars (of the natal chart) to be causes of a condition which existed in the father and mother previously to that star pattern on which the prediction is based?

And consider still further:—

They are really announcing the fortunes of parents from the birth of children; the character and career of children are included in the predictions as to the parents—they predict for the yet unborn!—in the lot of one brother they are foretelling the death of another; a girl’s fate includes that of a future husband, a boy’s that of a wife.

Now, can we think that the star-grouping over any particular birth can be the cause of what stands already announced in the facts about the parents? Either the previous star-groupings were the determinants of the child’s future career or, if they were not, then

neither is the immediate grouping. And notice further that physical likeness to the parents—the Astrologers hold—is of purely domestic origin: this implies that ugliness and beauty are so caused and not by astral movements.

Again, there must at one and the same time be a widespread coming to birth—men, and the most varied forms of animal life at the same moment—and these should all be under the one destiny since the one pattern rules at the moment; how explain that identical star-groupings give here the human form, there the animal?

6.

But in fact everything follows its own Kind; the birth is a horse because it comes from the Horse Kind, a man by springing from the Human Kind; offspring answers to species. Allow the kosmic circuit its part, a very powerful influence upon the thing brought into being: allow the stars a wide material action upon the bodily part of the man, producing heat and cold and their natural resultants in the physical constitution; still does such action explain character, vocation and especially all that seems quite independent of material elements, a man taking to letters, to geometry, to gambling, and becoming an originator in any of these pursuits? And can we imagine the stars, divine beings, bestowing wickedness? And what of a doctrine that makes them wreak vengeance, as for a wrong, because they are in their decline or are being carried to a position beneath the earth—as if a decline from our point of view brought any change to themselves, as if they ever ceased to traverse the heavenly spheres and to make the same figure around the earth.

Nor may we think that these divine beings lose or gain in goodness as they see this one or another of the company in various aspects, and that in their happier position they are benignant to us and, less pleasantly situated, turn maleficent. We can but believe that their circuit is for the protection of the entirety of things while they furnish the incidental service of being letters on which the augur, acquainted with that alphabet, may look and read the future from their pattern—arriving at the thing signified by such analogies as that a soaring bird tells of some lofty event.

7.

It remains to notice the theory of the one Causing-Principle alleged to interweave everything with everything else, to make things into a chain, to determine the nature and condition of each phenomenon—a Principle which, acting through seminal (operatively productive) Reason-Forms—Logoi Spermatikoi—elaborates all that exists and happens.

The doctrine is close to that which makes the Soul of the Universe the source and cause of all condition and of all movement whether without or—supposing that we are allowed as individuals some little power towards personal act—within ourselves.

But it is the theory of the most rigid and universal Necessity: all the causative forces enter into the system, and so every several phenomenon rises necessarily; where

nothing escapes Destiny, nothing has power to check or to change. Such forces beating upon us, as it were, from one general cause leave us no resource but to go where they drive. All our ideas will be determined by a chain of previous causes; our doings will be determined by those ideas; personal action becomes a mere word. That we are the agents does not save our freedom when our action is prescribed by those causes; we have precisely what belongs to everything that lives, to infants guided by blind impulses, to lunatics; all these act; why, even fire acts; there is act in everything that follows the plan of its being, servilely.

No one that sees the implications of this theory can hesitate: unable to halt at such a determinant principle, we seek for other explanations of our action.

8.

What can this other cause be; one standing above those treated of; one that leaves nothing causeless, that preserves sequence and order in the Universe and yet allows ourselves some reality and leaves room for prediction and augury?

Soul: we must place at the crest of the world of beings, this other Principle, not merely the Soul of the Universe but, included in it, the Soul of the individual: this, no mean Principle, is needed to be the bond of union in the total of things, not, itself, a thing sprung like things from life-seeds, but a first-hand Cause, bodiless and therefore supreme over itself, free, beyond the reach of kosmic Cause: for, brought into body, it would not be unrestrictedly sovereign; it would hold rank in a series.

Now the environment into which this independent principle enters, when it comes to this midpoint, will be largely led by secondary causes (or, by chance-causes): there will therefore be a compromise; the action of the Soul will be in part guided by this environment while in other matters it will be sovereign, leading the way where it will. The nobler Soul will have the greater power; the poorer Soul, the lesser. A soul which defers to the bodily temperament cannot escape desire and rage and is abject in poverty, overbearing in wealth, arbitrary in power. The soul of nobler nature holds good against its surroundings; it is more apt to change them than to be changed, so that often it improves the environment and, where it must make concession, at least keeps its innocence.

9.

We admit, then, a Necessity in all that is brought about by this compromise between evil and accidental circumstance: what room was there for anything else than the thing that is? Given all the causes, all must happen beyond aye or nay—that is, all the external and whatever may be due to the sidereal circuit—therefore when the Soul has been modified by outer forces and acts under that pressure so that what it does is no more than an unreflecting acceptance of stimulus, neither the act nor the state can be described as voluntary: so, too, when even from within itself, it falls at times below its best and ignores the true, the highest, laws of action.

But when our Soul holds to its Reason-Principle, to the guide, pure and detached and native to itself, only then can we speak of personal operation, of voluntary act. Things so done may truly be described as our doing, for they have no other source; they are the issue of the unmingled Soul, a Principle that is a First, a leader, a sovereign not subject to the errors of ignorance, not to be overthrown by the tyranny of the desires which, where they can break in, drive and drag, so as to allow of no act of ours, but mere answer to stimulus.

10.

To sum the results of our argument:—All things and events are foreshown and brought into being by causes; but the causation is of two Kinds; there are results originating from the Soul and results due to other causes, those of the environment.

In the action of our Souls all that is done of their own motion in the light of sound reason is the Soul's work, while what is done where they are hindered from their own action is not so much done as suffered. Unwisdom, then, is not due to the Soul, and, in general—if we mean by Fate a compulsion outside ourselves—an act is fated when it is contrary to wisdom.

But all our best is of our own doing: such is our nature as long as we remain detached. The wise and good do perform acts; their right action is the expression of their own power: in the others it comes in the breathing spaces when the passions are in abeyance; but it is not that they draw this occasional wisdom from outside themselves; simply, they are for the time being unhindered.

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SECOND TRACTATE

Providence: First Treatise

1.

To make the existence and coherent structure of this Universe depend upon automatic activity and upon chance is against all good sense.

Such a notion could be entertained only where there is neither intelligence nor even ordinary perception; and reason enough has been urged against it, though none is really necessary.

But there is still the question as to the process by which the individual things of this sphere have come into being, how they were made.

Some of them seem so undesirable as to cast doubts upon a Universal Providence; and we find, on the one hand, the denial of any controlling power, on the other the belief that the Kosmos is the work of an evil creator.

This matter must be examined through and through from the very first principles. We may, however, omit for the present any consideration of the particular providence, that beforehand decision which accomplishes or holds things in abeyance to some good purpose and gives or withholds in our own regard: when we have established the Universal Providence which we affirm, we can link the secondary with it.

Of course the belief that after a certain lapse of time a Kosmos previously non-existent came into being would imply a foreseeing and a reasoned plan on the part of God providing for the production of the Universe and securing all possible perfection in it—a guidance and partial providence, therefore, such as is indicated. But since we hold the eternal existence of the Universe, the utter absence of a beginning to it, we are forced, in sound and sequent reasoning, to explain the providence ruling in the Universe as a universal consonance with the divine Intelligence to which the Kosmos is subsequent not in time but in the fact of derivation, in the fact that the Divine Intelligence, preceding it in Kind, is its cause as being the Archtype and Model which it merely images, the primal by which, from all eternity, it has its existence and subsistence.

The relationship may be presented thus:—

The authentic and primal Kosmos is the Being of the Intellectual Principle and of the Veritable Existent. This contains within itself no spatial distinction, and has none of the feebleness of division, and even its parts bring no incompleteness to it since here the individual is not severed from the entire. In this Nature inheres all life and all intellect, a life living and having intellection as one act within a unity: every part that

it gives forth is a whole; all its content is its very own, for there is here no separation of thing from thing, no part standing in isolated existence estranged from the rest, and therefore nowhere is there any wronging of any other, any opposition. Everywhere one and complete, it is at rest throughout and shows difference at no point; it does not make over any of its content into any new form; there can be no reason for changing what is everywhere perfect.

Why should Reason elaborate yet another Reason, or Intelligence another Intelligence? An indwelling power of making things is in the character of a being not at all points as it should be but making, moving, by reason of some failure in quality. Those whose nature is all blessedness have no more to do than to repose in themselves and be their being.

A widespread activity is dangerous to those who must go out from themselves to act. But such is the blessedness of this Being that in its very non-action it magnificently operates and in its self-dwelling it produces mightily.

2.

By derivation from that Authentic Kosmos, one within itself, there subsists this lower kosmos, no longer a true unity.

It is multiple, divided into various elements, thing standing apart from thing in a new estrangement. No longer is there concord unbroken; hostility, too, has entered as the result of difference and distance; imperfection has inevitably introduced discord; for a part is not self-sufficient, it must pursue something outside itself for its fulfilment, and so it becomes the enemy to what it needs.

This Kosmos of parts has come into being not as the result of a judgment establishing its desirability, but by the sheer necessity of a secondary Kind.

The Intellectual Realm was not of a nature to be the ultimate of existents. It was the First and it held great power, all there is of power; this means that it is productive without seeking to produce; for if effort and search were incumbent upon it, the Act would not be its own, would not spring from its essential nature; it would be, like a craftsman, producing by a power not inherent but acquired, mastered by dint of study.

The Intellectual Principle, then, in its unperturbed serenity has brought the universe into being, by communicating from its own store to Matter: and this gift is the Reason-Form flowing from it. For the Emanation of the Intellectual Principle is Reason, an emanation unailing as long as the Intellectual Principle continues to have place among beings.

The Reason-Principle within a seed contains all the parts and qualities concentrated in identity; there is no distinction, no jarring, no internal hindering; then there comes a pushing out into bulk, part rises in distinction with part, and at once the members of the organism stand in each other's way and begin to wear each other down.

So from this, the One Intellectual Principle, and the Reason-Form emanating from it, our Universe rises and develops part, and inevitably are formed groups concordant and helpful in contrast with groups discordant and combative; sometimes of choice and sometimes incidentally, the parts maltreat each other; engendering proceeds by destruction.

Yet: Amid all that they effect and accept, the divine Realm imposes the one harmonious act; each utters its own voice, but all is brought into accord, into an ordered system, for the universal purpose, by the ruling Reason-Principle. This Universe is not Intelligence and Reason, like the Supernal, but participant in Intelligence and Reason: it stands in need of the harmonising because it is the meeting ground of Necessity and divine Reason—Necessity pulling towards the lower, towards the unreason which is its own characteristic, while yet the Intellectual Principle remains sovran over it.

The Intellectual Sphere (the Divine) alone is Reason, and there can never be another Sphere that is Reason and nothing else; so that, given some other system, it cannot be as noble as that first; it cannot be Reason: yet since such a system cannot be merely Matter, which is the utterly unordered, it must be a mixed thing. Its two extremes are Matter and the Divine Reason; its governing principle is Soul, presiding over the conjunction of the two, and to be thought of not as labouring in the task but as administering serenely by little more than an act of presence.

3.

Nor would it be sound to condemn this Kosmos as less than beautiful, as less than the noblest possible in the corporeal; and neither can any charge be laid against its source.

The world, we must reflect, is a product of Necessity, not of deliberate purpose: it is due to a higher Kind engendering in its own likeness by a natural process. And none the less, a second consideration, if a considered plan brought it into being it would still be no disgrace to its maker—for it stands a stately whole, complete within itself, serving at once its own purpose and that of all its parts which, leading and lesser alike, are of such a nature as to further the interests of the total. It is, therefore, impossible to condemn the whole on the merits of the parts which, besides, must be judged only as they enter harmoniously or not into the whole, the main consideration, quite overpassing the members which thus cease to have importance. To linger about the parts is to condemn not the Kosmos but some isolated appendage of it; in the entire living Being we fasten our eyes on a hair or a toe neglecting the marvellous spectacle of the complete Man; we ignore all the tribes and kinds of animals except for the meanest; we pass over an entire race, humanity, and bring forward—Thersites.

No: this thing that has come into Being is (not a mass of fragments, but) the Kosmos complete: do but survey it, and surely this is the pleading you will hear:—

I am made by a God: from that God I came perfect above all forms of life, adequate to my function, self-sufficing, lacking nothing: for I am the container of all, that is, of

every plant and every animal, of all the Kinds of created things, and many Gods and nations of Spirit-Beings and lofty souls and men happy in their goodness.

And do not think that, while earth is ornate with all its growths and with living things of every race, and while the very sea has answered to the power of Soul, do not think that the great air and the ether and the far-spread heavens remain void of it: there it is that all good Souls dwell, infusing life into the stars and into that orderly eternal circuit of the heavens which in its conscious movement ever about the one Centre, seeking nothing beyond, is a faithful copy of the divine Mind. And all that is within me strives towards the Good; and each, to the measure of its faculty, attains. For from that Good all the heavens depend, with all my own Soul and the Gods that dwell in my every part, and all that lives and grows, and even all in me that you may judge inanimate.

But there are degrees of participation: here no more than Existence, elsewhere Life; and, in Life, sometimes mainly that of Sensation, higher again that of Reason, finally Life in all its fullness. We have no right to demand equal powers in the unequal: the finger is not to be asked to see; there is the eye for that; a finger has its own business—to be finger and have finger power.

4.

That water extinguishes fire and fire consumes other things should not astonish us. The thing destroyed derived its being from outside itself: this is no case of a self-originating substance being annihilated by an external; it rose on the ruin of something else, and thus in its own ruin it suffers nothing strange; and for every fire quenched, another is kindled.

In the immaterial heaven every member is unchangeably itself for ever; in the heavens of our universe, while the whole has life eternally and so too all the nobler and lordlier components, the Souls pass from body to body entering into varied forms—and, when it may, a Soul will rise outside of the realm of birth and dwell with the one Soul of all. For the embodied lives by virtue of a Form or Idea: individual or partial things exist by virtue of Universals; from these priors they derive their life and maintenance, for life here is a thing of change; only in that prior realm is it unmoving. From that unchangingness change had to emerge and from that self-cloistered Life its derivative, this which breathes and stirs, the respiration of the still life of the divine.

The conflict and destruction that reign among living beings are inevitable, since things here are derived, brought into existence because the Divine Reason which contains all of them in the upper Heavens—how could they come here unless they were There?—must outflow over the whole extent of Matter.

Similarly, the very wronging of man by man may be derived from an effort towards the Good; foiled, in their weakness, of their true desire, they turn against each other: still, when they do wrong, they pay the penalty—that of having hurt their Souls by their evil conduct and of degradation to a lower place—for nothing can ever escape what stands decreed in the law of the Universe.

This is not to accept the idea, sometimes urged, that order is an outcome of disorder and law of lawlessness, as if evil were a necessary preliminary to their existence or their manifestation: on the contrary order is the original and enters this sphere as imposed from without: it is because order, law and reason exist that there can be disorder; breach of law and unreason exist because Reason exists—not that these better things are directly the causes of the bad but simply that what ought to absorb the Best is prevented by its own nature, or by some accident, or by foreign interference. An entity which must look outside itself for a law, may be foiled of its purpose by either an internal or an external cause; there will be some flaw in its own nature, or it will be hurt by some alien influence, for often harm follows, unintended, upon the action of others in the pursuit of quite unrelated aims. Such living beings, on the other hand, as have freedom of motion under their own will sometimes take the right turn, sometimes the wrong.

Why the wrong course is followed is scarcely worth enquiring: a slight deviation at the beginning develops with every advance into a continuously wider and graver error—especially since there is the attached body with its inevitable concomitant of desire—and the first step, the hasty movement not previously considered and not immediately corrected, ends by establishing a set habit where there was at first only a fall.

Punishment naturally follows: there is no injustice in a man suffering what belongs to the condition in which he is; nor can we ask to be happy when our actions have not earned us happiness; the good, only, are happy; divine beings are happy only because they are good.

5.

Now, once Happiness is possible at all to Souls in this Universe, if some fail of it, the blame must fall not upon the place but upon the feebleness insufficient to the staunch combat in the one arena where the rewards of excellence are offered. Men are not born divine; what wonder that they do not enjoy a divine life. And poverty and sickness mean nothing to the good—only to the evil are they disastrous—and where there is body there must be ill-health.

Besides, these accidents are not without their service in the co-ordination and completion of the Universal system.

One thing perishes, and the Kosmic Reason—whose control nothing anywhere eludes—employs that ending to the beginning of something new; and, so, when the body suffers and the Soul, under the affliction, loses power, all that has been bound under illness and evil is brought into a new set of relations, into another class or order. Some of these troubles are helpful to the very sufferers—poverty and sickness, for example—and as for vice, even this brings something to the general service: it acts as a lesson in right doing, and, in many ways even, produces good; thus, by setting men face to face with the ways and consequences of iniquity, it calls them from lethargy, stirs the deeper mind and sets the understanding to work; by the contrast of the evil under which wrong-doers labour it displays the worth of the right. Not that evil exists

for this purpose; but, as we have indicated, once the wrong has come to be, the Reason of the Kosmos employs it to good ends; and, precisely, the proof of the mightiest power is to be able to use the ignoble nobly and, given formlessness, to make it the material of unknown forms.

The principle is that evil by definition is a falling short in good, and good cannot be at full strength in this Sphere where it is lodged in the alien: the good here is in something else, in something distinct from the Good, and this something else constitutes the falling short for it is not good. And this is why evil is ineradicable: there is, first, the fact that in relation to this principle of Good, thing will always stand less than thing, and, besides, all things come into being through it, and are what they are by standing away from it.

6.

As for the disregard of desert—the good afflicted, the unworthy thriving—it is a sound explanation no doubt that to the good nothing is evil and to the evil nothing can be good: still the question remains why should what essentially offends our nature fall to the good while the wicked enjoy all it demands? How can such an allotment be approved?

No doubt since pleasant conditions add nothing to true happiness and the unpleasant do not lessen the evil in the wicked, the conditions matter little: as well complain that a good man happens to be ugly and a bad man handsome.

Still, under such a dispensation, there would surely be a propriety, a reasonableness, a regard to merit which, as things are, do not appear, though this would certainly be in keeping with the noblest Providence: even though external conditions do not affect a man's hold upon good or evil, none the less it would seem utterly unfitting that the bad should be the masters, be sovereign in the state, while honourable men are slaves: a wicked ruler may commit the most lawless acts; and in war the worst men have a free hand and perpetrate every kind of crime against their prisoners.

We are forced to ask how such things can be, under a Providence. Certainly a maker must consider his work as a whole, but none the less he should see to the due ordering of all the parts, especially when these parts have Soul, that is, are Living and Reasoning Beings: the Providence must reach to all the details; its functioning must consist in neglecting no point.

Holding, therefore, as we do, despite all, that the Universe lies under an Intellectual Principle whose power has touched every existent, we cannot be absolved from the attempt to show in what way the detail of this sphere is just.

7.

A preliminary observation: in looking for excellence in this thing of mixture, the Kosmos, we cannot require all that is implied in the excellence of the unmingled; it is

folly to ask for Firsts in the Secondary, and since this Universe contains body, we must allow for some bodily influence upon the total and be thankful if the mingled existent lack nothing of what its nature allowed it to receive from the Divine Reason.

Thus, supposing we were enquiring for the finest type of the human being as known here, we would certainly not demand that he prove identical with Man as in the Divine Intellect; we would think it enough in the Creator to have so brought this thing of flesh and nerve and bone under Reason as to give grace to these corporeal elements and to have made it possible for Reason to have contact with Matter.

Our progress towards the object of our investigation must begin from this principle of gradation which will open to us the wonder of the Providence and of the power by which our universe holds its being.

We begin with evil acts entirely dependent upon the Souls which perpetrate them—the harm, for example, which perverted Souls do to the good and to each other. Unless the fore-planning power alone is to be charged with the vice in such Souls, we have no ground of accusation, no claim to redress: the blame lies on the Soul exercising its choice. Even a Soul, we have seen, must have its individual movement; it is not abstract Spirit; the first step towards animal life has been taken and the conduct will naturally be in keeping with that character.

It is not because the world existed that Souls are here: before the world was, they had it in them to be of the world, to concern themselves with it, to presuppose it, to administer it: it was in their nature to produce it—by whatever method, whether by giving forth some emanation while they themselves remained above, or by an actual descent, or in both ways together, some presiding from above, others descending; for we are not at the moment concerned about the mode of creation but are simply urging that, however the world was produced, no blame falls on Providence for what exists within it.

There remains the other phase of the question—the distribution of evil to the opposite classes of men: the good go bare while the wicked are rich: all that human need demands, the least deserving have in abundance; it is they that rule; peoples and states are at their disposal. Would not all this imply that the divine power does not reach to earth?

That it does is sufficiently established by the fact that Reason rules in the lower things: animals and plants have their share in Reason, Soul and Life.

Perhaps, then, it reaches to earth but is not master over all?

We answer that the universe is one living organism: as well maintain that while human head and face are the work of nature and of the ruling reason-principle, the rest of the frame is due to other agencies—accident or sheer necessity—and owes its inferiority to this origin, or to the incompetence of unaided Nature. And even granting that those less noble members are not in themselves admirable it would still be neither pious nor even reverent to censure the entire structure.

8.

Thus we come to our enquiry as to the degree of excellence found in things of this Sphere, and how far they belong to an ordered system or in what degree they are, at least, not evil.

Now in every living being the upper parts—head, face—are the most beautiful, the mid and lower members inferior. In the Universe the middle and lower members are human beings; above them, the Heavens and the Gods that dwell there; these Gods with the entire circling expanse of the heavens constitute the greater part of the Kosmos: the earth is but a central point, and may be considered as simply one among the stars. Yet human wrong-doing is made a matter of wonder; we are evidently asked to take humanity as the choice member of the Universe, nothing wiser existent!

But humanity, in reality, is poised midway between gods and beasts, and inclines now to the one order, now to the other; some men grow like to the divine, others to the brute, the greater number stand neutral. But those that are corrupted to the point of approximating to irrational animals and wild beasts pull the mid-folk about and inflict wrong upon them; the victims are no doubt better than the wrong-doers, but are at the mercy of their inferiors in the field in which they themselves are inferior, where, that is, they cannot be classed among the good since they have not trained themselves in self-defence.

A gang of lads, morally neglected, and in that respect inferior to the intermediate class, but in good physical training, attack and throw another set, trained neither physically nor morally, and make off with their food and their dainty clothes. What more is called for than a laugh?

And surely even the lawgiver would be right in allowing the second group to suffer this treatment, the penalty of their sloth and self-indulgence: the gymnasium lies there before them, and they, in laziness and luxury and listlessness, have allowed themselves to fall like fat-loaded sheep, a prey to the wolves.

But the evil-doers also have their punishment: first they pay in that very wolfishness, in the disaster to their human quality: and next there is laid up for them the due of their Kind; living ill here, they will not get off by death; on every precedent through all the line there waits its sequent, reasonable and natural—worse to the bad, better to the good.

This at once brings us outside the gymnasium with its fun for boys; they must grow up, both kinds, amid their childishness and both one day stand girt and armed. Then there is a finer spectacle than is ever seen by those that train in the ring. But at this stage some have not armed themselves—and the duly armed win the day.

Not even a God would have the right to deal a blow for the unwarlike: the law decrees that to come safe out of battle is for fighting men, not for those that pray. The harvest comes home not for praying but for tilling; healthy days are not for those that neglect

their health: we have no right to complain of the ignoble getting the richer harvest if they are the only workers in the fields, or the best.

Again: it is childish, while we carry on all the affairs of our life to our own taste and not as the Gods would have us, to expect them to keep all well for us in spite of a life that is lived without regard to the conditions which the Gods have prescribed for our well-being. Yet death would be better for us than to go on living lives condemned by the laws of the Universe. If things took the contrary course, if all the modes of folly and wickedness brought no trouble in life—then indeed we might complain of the indifference of a Providence leaving the victory to evil.

Bad men rule by the feebleness of the ruled: and this is just; the triumph of weaklings would not be just.

9.

It would not be just, because Providence cannot be a something reducing us to nothingness: to think of Providence as everything, with no other thing in existence, is to annihilate the Universe; such a providence could have no field of action; nothing would exist except the Divine. As things are, the Divine, of course, exists, but has reached forth to something other—not to reduce that to nothingness but to preside over it; thus in the case of Man, for instance, the Divine presides as the Providence, preserving the character of human nature, that is the character of a being under the providential law, which, again, implies subjection to what that law may enjoin.

And that law enjoins that those who have made themselves good shall know the best of life, here and later, the bad the reverse. But the law does not warrant the wicked in expecting that their prayers should bring others to sacrifice themselves for their sakes; or that the gods should lay aside the divine life in order to direct their daily concerns; or that good men, who have chosen a path nobler than all earthly rule, should become their rulers. The perverse have never made a single effort to bring the good into authority, nor do they take any steps to improve themselves; they are all spite against anyone that becomes good of his own motion, though if good men were placed in authority the total of goodness would be increased.

In sum: Man has come into existence, a living being but not a member of the noblest order; he occupies by choice an intermediate rank; still, in that place in which he exists, Providence does not allow him to be reduced to nothing; on the contrary he is ever being led upwards by all those varied devices which the Divine employs in its labour to increase the dominance of moral value. The human race, therefore, is not deprived by Providence of its rational being; it retains its share, though necessarily limited, in wisdom, intelligence, executive power and right doing, the right doing, at least, of individuals to each other—and even in wronging others people think they are doing right and only paying what is due.

Man is, therefore, a noble creation, as perfect as the scheme allows; a part, no doubt, in the fabric of the All, he yet holds a lot higher than that of all the other living things of earth.

Now, no one of any intelligence complains of these others, man's inferiors, which serve to the adornment of the world; it would be feeble indeed to complain of animals biting man, as if we were to pass our days asleep. No: the animal, too, exists of necessity, and is serviceable in many ways, some obvious and many progressively discovered—so that not one lives without profit to itself and even to humanity. It is ridiculous, also, to complain that many of them are dangerous—there are dangerous men abroad as well—and if they distrust us, and in their distrust attack, is that anything to wonder at?

10.

But: if the evil in men is involuntary, if their own will has not made them what they are, how can we either blame wrong-doers or even reproach their victims with suffering through their own fault?

If there is a Necessity, bringing about human wickedness either by force of the celestial movement or by a rigorous sequence set up by the First Cause, is not the evil a thing rooted in Nature? And if thus the Reason-Principle of the universe is the creator of evil, surely all is injustice?

No: Men are no doubt involuntary sinners in the sense that they do not actually desire to sin; but this does not alter the fact that wrongdoers, of their own choice, are, themselves, the agents; it is because they themselves act that the sin is in their own; if they were not agents they could not sin.

The Necessity (held to underlie human wickedness) is not an outer force (actually compelling the individual), but exists only in the sense of a universal relationship.

Nor is the force of the celestial Movement such as to leave us powerless: if the universe were something outside and apart from us it would stand as its makers willed so that, once the gods had done their part, no man, however impious, could introduce anything contrary to their intention. But, as things are, efficient act does come from men: given the starting Principle, the secondary line, no doubt, is inevitably completed; but each and every principle contributes towards the sequence. Now Men are Principles, or, at least, they are moved by their characteristic nature towards all that is good, and that nature is a Principle, a freely acting cause.

11.

Are we, then, to conclude that particular things are determined by Necessities rooted in Nature and by the sequence of causes, and that everything is as good as anything can be?

No: the Reason-Principle is the sovereign, making all: it wills things as they are and, in its reasonable act, it produces even what we know as evil: it cannot desire all to be good: an artist would not make an animal all eyes; and in the same way, the Reason-Principle would not make all divine; it makes Gods but also celestial spirits, the

intermediate order, then men, then the animals; all is graded succession, and this in no spirit of grudging but in the expression of a Reason teeming with intellectual variety.

We are like people ignorant of painting who complain that the colours are not beautiful everywhere in the picture: but the Artist has laid on the appropriate tint to every spot. Or we are censuring a drama because the persons are not all heroes but include a servant and a rustic and some scurrilous clown; yet take away the low characters and the power of the drama is gone; these are part and parcel of it.

12.

Suppose this Universe were the direct creation of the Reason-Principle applying itself, quite unchanged, to Matter, retaining, that is, the hostility to partition which it derives from its Prior, the Intellectual Principle—then, this its product, so produced, would be of supreme and unparalleled excellence. But the Reason-Principle (if it is to be the author of a universe) could not be a thing of entire identity or even of closely compact diversity; and the mode in which it is here manifested is no matter of censure since its function is to be all things, each single thing in some distinctive way.

But (it will be asked) has it not, besides itself entering Matter, brought other beings down? Has it not for example brought Souls into Matter and, in adapting them to its creation, twisted them against their own nature and been the ruin of many of them? And can this be right?

The answer is that the Souls are, in a fair sense, members of this Reason-Principle and that it has not adapted them to the creation by perverting them, but has set them in the place here to which their quality entitles them.

13.

And we must not despise the familiar observation that there is something more to be considered than the present. There are the periods of the past and, again, those in the future; and these have everything to do with fixing worth of place.

Thus a man, once a ruler, will be made a slave because he abused his power and because the fall is to his future good. Those that have money will be made poor—and to the good poverty is no hindrance. Those that have unjustly killed, are killed in turn, unjustly as regards the murderer but justly as regards the victim, and those that are to suffer are thrown into the path of those that administer the merited treatment.

It is not an accident that makes a man a slave; no one is a prisoner by chance; every bodily outrage has its due cause. The man once did what he now suffers. A man that murders his mother will become a woman and be murdered by a son; a man that wrongs a woman will become a woman, to be wronged.

Hence arises that awesome word *Adrasteia* (the Inevadable Retribution); for in very truth this ordinance is an *Adrasteia*, Justice itself and a wonderful wisdom.

We cannot but recognise from what we observe in this universe that some such principle of order prevails throughout the entire of existence—the minutest of things a tributary to the vast total; the marvellous art shown not merely in the mightiest works and sublimest members of the All, but even amid such littleness as one would think Providence must disdain: the varied workmanship of wonder in any and every animal form; the world of vegetation, too; the grace of fruits and even of leaves, the lavishness, the delicacy, the diversity of exquisite bloom: and all this not issuing once, and then to die out, but made ever and ever anew as the Transcendent Beings move variously over this earth.

In all the changing, there is no change by chance: there is no taking of new forms but to desirable ends and in ways worthy of Divine Powers. All that is Divine executes the Act of its quality; its quality is the expression of its essential Being: and this essential Being in the Divine is the Being whose activities produce as one thing the desirable and the just—for if the good and the just are not produced, there, where, then, have they their being?

14.

The ordinance of the Kosmos, then, is in keeping with the Intellectual Principle. True, no reasoning went to its creation, but it so stands that the keenest reasoning must wonder—since no reasoning could be able to make it otherwise—at the spectacle before it, a product which, even in the Kinds of the partial and particular Sphere, displays the Divine Intelligence to a degree in which no arranging by reason could express it. Every one of the ceaselessly recurrent types of being manifests a creating Reason-Principle above all censure. No fault is to be found unless on the assumption that everything ought to come into being with all the perfection of those that have never known such a coming, the Eternals. In that case, things of the Intellectual realm and things of the realm of sense must remain one unbroken identity for ever.

In this demand for more good than exists, there is implied a failure to recognise that the form allotted to each entity is sufficient in itself; it is like complaining because one kind of animal lacks horns. We ought to understand both that the Reason-Principle must extend to every possible existent and, at the same time, that every greater must include lesser things, that to every whole belong its parts, and that all cannot be equality unless all part is to be absent.

This is why in the Over-World each entity is all, while here, below, the single thing is not all (is not the Universe but a “Self”). Thus too, a man, an individual, in so far as he is a part, is not Humanity complete: but wheresoever there is associated with the parts something that is no part (but a Divine, an Intellectual Being), this makes a whole of that in which it dwells. Man, man as partial thing, cannot be required to have attained to the very summit of goodness: if he had, he would have ceased to be of the partial order. Not that there is any grudging in the whole towards the part that grows in goodness and dignity; such an increase in value is a gain to the beauty of the whole; the lesser grows by being made over in the likeness of the greater, by being admitted, as it were, to something of that greatness, by sharing in that rank, and thus even from this place of man, from man’s own self, something gleams forth, as the stars shine in

the divine firmament, so that all appears one great and lovely figure—living or wrought in the furnaces of craftsmanship—with stars radiant not only in the ears and on the brow but on the breasts too, and wherever else they may be displayed in beauty.

15.

These considerations apply very well to things considered as standing alone: but there is a stumbling-block, a new problem, when we think of all these forms, permanent and ceaselessly produced, in mutual relationship.

The animals devour each other: men attack each other: all is war without rest, without truce: this gives new force to the question how Reason can be author of the plan and how all can be declared well done.

This new difficulty is not met by the former answer; that all stands as well as the nature of things allows; that the blame for their condition falls on Matter dragging them down; that, given the plan as we know it, evil cannot be eliminated and should not be; that the Matter making its presence felt is still not supreme but remains an element taken in from outside to contribute to a definite total, or rather to be itself brought to order by Reason.

The Divine Reason is the beginning and the end; all that comes into being must be rational and fall at its coming into an ordered scheme reasonable at every point. Where, then, is the necessity of this bandit war of man and beast?

This devouring of Kind by Kind is necessary as the means to the transmutation of living things which could not keep form for ever even though no other killed them: what grievance is it that when they must go their despatch is so planned as to be serviceable to others?

Still more, what does it matter when they are devoured only to return in some new form? It comes to no more than the murder of one of the personages in a play; the actor alters his make-up and enters in a new rôle. The actor, of course, was not really killed; but if dying is but changing a body as the actor changes a costume, or even an exit from the body like the exit of the actor from the boards when he has no more to say or do, what is there so very dreadful in this transformation of living beings one into another?

Surely it is much better so than if they had never existed: that way would mean the bleak quenching of life, precluded from passing outside itself; as the plan holds, life is poured copiously throughout a Universe, engendering the universal things and weaving variety into their being, never at rest from producing an endless sequence of comeliness and shapeliness, a living pastime.

Men directing their weapons against each other—under doom of death yet neatly lined up to fight as in the pyrrhic sword-dances of their sport—this is enough to tell us that all human intentions are but play, that death is nothing terrible, that to die in a

war or in a fight is but to taste a little beforehand what old age has in store, to go away earlier and come back the sooner. So for misfortunes that may accompany life, the loss of property, for instance; the loser will see that there was a time when it was not his, that its possession is but a mock boon to the robbers, who will in their turn lose it to others, and even, that to retain property is a greater loss than to forfeit it.

Murders, death in all its guises, the reduction and sacking of cities, all must be to us just such a spectacle as the changing scenes of a play; all is but the varied incident of a plot, costume on and off, acted grief and lament. For on earth, in all the succession of life, it is not the Soul within but the Shadow outside of the authentic man, that grieves and complains and acts out the plot on this world stage which men have dotted with stages of their own constructing. All this is the doing of man knowing no more than to live the lower and outer life, and never perceiving that, in his weeping and in his graver doings alike, he is but at play; to handle austere matters austere is reserved for the thoughtful: the other kind of man is himself a futility. Those incapable of thinking gravely read gravity into frivolities which correspond to their own frivolous Nature. Anyone that joins in their trifling and so comes to look on life with their eyes must understand that by lending himself to such idleness he has laid aside his own character. If Socrates himself takes part in the trifling, he trifles in the outer Socrates.

We must remember, too, that we cannot take tears and laments as proof that anything is wrong; children cry and whimper where there is nothing amiss.

16.

But if all this is true, what room is left for evil? Where are we to place wrong-doing and sin?

How explain that in a world organised in good, the efficient agents (human beings) behave unjustly, commit sin? And how comes misery if neither sin nor injustice exists?

Again, if all our action is determined by a natural process, how can the distinction be maintained between behaviour in accordance with nature and behaviour in conflict with it?

And what becomes of blasphemy against the divine? The blasphemer is made what he is: a dramatist has written a part insulting and maligning himself and given it to an actor to play.

These considerations oblige us to state the Logos (the Reason-Principle of the Universe) once again, and more clearly, and to justify its nature.

This Reason-Principle, then—let us dare the definition in the hope of conveying the truth—this Logos is not the Intellectual Principle unmingled, not the Absolute Divine Intellect; nor does it descend from the pure Soul alone; it is a dependent of that Soul while, in a sense, it is a radiation from both those divine Hypostases: the Intellectual

Principle and the Soul—the Soul as conditioned by the Intellectual

Principle—engender this Logos which is a Life holding restfully a certain measure of Reason.

Now all life, even the least valuable, is an activity, and not a blind activity like that of flame; even where there is not sensation the activity of life is no mere haphazard play of Movement: any object in which life is present, any object which participates in Life, is at once enreasoned in the sense that the activity peculiar to life is formative, shaping as it moves.

Life, then, aims at pattern as does the pantomimic dancer with his set movements; the mime, in himself, represents life, and, besides, his movements proceed in obedience to a pattern designed to symbolise life.

Thus far to give us some idea of the nature of Life in general.

But this Reason-Principle which emanates from the complete unity, divine Mind, and the complete unity Life (=Soul)—is neither a uniate complete Life nor a uniate complete divine Mind, nor does it give itself whole and all-including to its subject. (By an imperfect communication) it sets up a conflict of part against part: it produces imperfect things and so engenders and maintains war and attack, and thus its unity can be that only of a sum-total not of a thing undivided. At war with itself in the parts which it now exhibits, it has the unity, or harmony, of a drama torn with struggle. The drama, of course, brings the conflicting elements to one final harmony, weaving the entire story of the clashing characters into one thing; while in the Logos the conflict of the divergent elements rises within the one element, the Reason-Principle: the comparison therefore is rather with a harmony emerging directly from the conflicting elements themselves, and the question becomes what introduces clashing elements among these Reason-Principles.

Now in the case of music, tones high and low are the product of Reason-Principles which, by the fact that they are Principles of harmony, meet in the unit of Harmony, the absolute Harmony, a more comprehensive Principle, greater than they and including them as its parts. Similarly in the Universe at large we find contraries—white and black, hot and cold, winged and wingless, footed and footless, reasoning and unreasoning—but all these elements are members of one living body, their sum-total; the Universe is a self-accordant entity, its members everywhere clashing but the total being the manifestation of a Reason-Principle. That one Reason-Principle, then, must be the unification of conflicting Reason-Principles whose very opposition is the support of its coherence and, almost, of its Being.

And indeed, if it were not multiple, it could not be a Universal Principle, it could not even be at all a Reason-Principle; in the fact of its being a Reason-Principle is contained the fact of interior difference. Now the maximum of difference is contrariety; admitting that this differentiation exists and creates, it will create difference in the greatest and not in the least degree; in other words, the Reason-Principle, bringing about differentiation to the uttermost degree, will of necessity

create contrarieties: it will be complete only by producing itself not in merely diverse things but in contrary things.

17.

The nature of the Reason-Principle is adequately expressed in its Act and, therefore, the wider its extension the nearer will its productions approach to full contrariety: hence the world of sense is less a unity than is its Reason-Principle; it contains a wider multiplicity and contrariety: its partial members will, therefore, be urged by a closer intention towards fullness of life, a warmer desire for unification.

But desire often destroys the desired; it seeks its own good, and if the desired object is perishable, the ruin follows: and the partial thing (a human being, for example) straining towards its completing principle draws towards itself all it possibly can.

Thus, with the good we have the bad: we have the opposed movements of a dancer guided by one artistic plan; we recognise in his steps the good as against the bad, and see that in the opposition lies the merit of the design.

But, thus, the wicked disappear?

No: their wickedness remains; simply, their rôle is not of their own planning.

But, surely, this excuses them?

No; excuse lies with the Reason-Principle—and the Reason-Principle does not excuse them.

No doubt all are members of this Principle but one is a good man, another is bad—the larger class, this—and it goes as in a play; the poet while he gives each actor a part is also using them as they are in their own persons: he does not himself rank the men as leading actor, second, third; he simply gives suitable words to each, and by that assignment fixes each man's standing.

Thus, every man has his place, a place that fits the good man, a place that fits the bad: each within the two orders of men makes his way, naturally, reasonably, to the place, good or bad, that suits him, and takes the position he has made his own. There he talks and acts, in blasphemy and crime or in all goodness: for the actors bring to this play what they were before it was ever staged.

In the dramas of human art, the poet provides the words but the actors add their own quality, good or bad—for they have more to do than merely repeat the author's words—in the truer drama which dramatic genius imitates in its degree, the Soul displays itself in a part assigned by the creator of the piece.

As the actors of our stages get their masks and their costume, robes of state or rags, so a Soul is allotted its fortunes, and not at haphazard but always under a Reason: it adapts itself to the fortunes assigned to it, attunes itself, ranges itself rightly to the

drama, to the whole Principle of the piece: then it speaks out its business, exhibiting at the same time all that a Soul can express of its own quality, as a singer in a song. A voice, a bearing, naturally fine or vulgar, may increase the charm of a piece; on the other hand, an actor with his ugly voice may make a sorry exhibition of himself, yet the drama stands as good a work as ever: the dramatist taking the action which a sound criticism suggests, disgraces one, taking his part from him, with perfect justice: another man he promotes to more serious rôles or to any more important play he may have, while the first is cast for whatever minor work there may be.

Just so the Soul, entering this drama of the Universe, making itself a part of the Play, bringing to its acting its personal excellence or defect, set in a definite place at the entry and accepting from the author its entire rôle—superimposed upon its own character and conduct—just so, it receives in the end its punishment and reward.

But these actors, Souls, hold a peculiar dignity: they act in a vaster place than any stage: the Author has made them masters of all this world; they have a wide choice of place; they themselves determine the honour or discredit in which they are agents since their place and part are in keeping with their quality: they therefore fit into the Reason-Principle of the Universe, each adjusted, most legitimately, to the appropriate environment, as every string of the lyre is set in the precisely right position, determined by the Principle directing musical utterance, for the due production of the tones within its capacity. All is just and good in the Universe in which every actor is set in his own quite appropriate place, though it be to utter in the Darkness and in Tartarus the dreadful sounds whose utterance there is well.

This Universe is good not when the individual is a stone, but when everyone throws in his own voice towards a total harmony, singing out a life—thin, harsh, imperfect, though it be. The Syrinx does not utter merely one pure note; there is a thin obscure sound which blends in to make the harmony of Syrinx music: the harmony is made up from tones of various grades, all the tones differing, but the resultant of all forming one sound.

Similarly the Reason-Principle entire is One, but it is broken into unequal parts: hence the difference of place found in the Universe, better spots and worse; and hence the inequality of Souls, finding their appropriate surroundings amid this local inequality. The diverse places of this sphere, the Souls of unequal grade and unlike conduct, are well exemplified by the distinction of parts in the Syrinx or any other instrument: there is local difference, but from every position every string gives forth its own tone, the sound appropriate, at once, to its particular place and to the entire plan.

What is evil in the single Soul will stand a good thing in the universal system; what in the unit offends nature will serve nature in the total event—and still remains the weak and wrong tone it is, though its sounding takes nothing from the worth of the whole, just as, in another order of image, the executioner's ugly office does not mar the well-governed state: such an officer is a civic necessity; and the corresponding moral type is often serviceable; thus, even as things are, all is well.

18.

Souls vary in worth; and the difference is due, among other causes, to an almost initial inequality; it is in reason that, standing to the Reason-Principle, as parts, they should be unequal by the fact of becoming separate.

We must also remember that every Soul has its second grade and its third, and that, therefore, its expression may take any one of three main forms. But this point must be dealt with here again: the matter requires all possible elucidation.

We may perhaps think of actors having the right to add something to the poet's words: the drama as it stands is not perfectly filled in, and they are to supply where the Author has left blank spaces here and there; the actors are to be something else as well; they become parts of the poet, who on his side has a fore-knowledge of the word they will add, and so is able to bind into one story what the actors bring in and what is to follow.

For, in the All, the sequences, including what follows upon wickedness, become Reason-Principles, and therefore in right reason. Thus: from adultery and the violation of prisoners the process of nature will produce fine children, to grow, perhaps, into fine men; and where wicked violence has destroyed cities, other and nobler cities may rise in their place.

But does not this make it absurd to introduce Souls as responsible causes, some acting for good and some for evil? If we thus exonerate the Reason-Principle from any part in wickedness do we not also cancel its credit for the good? Why not simply take the doings of these actors (in the universal drama) for representative parts of the Reason-Principle as the doings of stage-actors are representative parts of the stage-drama? Why not admit that the Reason-Principle itself includes evil action as much as good action, and inspires the precise conduct of all its representatives? Would not this be all the more plausible in that the universal drama is the completer creation and that the Reason-Principle is the source of all that exists?

But this raises the question, What motive could lead the Logos to produce evil?

The explanation, also, would take away all power in the Universe from Souls, even those nearest to the divine; they would all be mere parts of a Reason-Principle.

And, further—unless all Reason-Principles are Souls—why should some be souls and others exclusively Reason-Principles when the All is itself a Soul?

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THIRD TRACTATE

On Providence: Second Treatise

1.

What is our answer?

All events and things, good and evil alike, are included under the Universal Reason-Principle of which they are parts—strictly “included” for this Universal Idea does not engender them but encompasses them.

The Reason-Principles are acts or expressions of a Universal Soul; its parts (i.e. events good and evil) are expressions of these Soul-parts.

This unity, Soul, has different parts; the Reason-Principles, correspondingly, will also have their parts, and so, too, will the ultimates of the system, all that they bring into being.

The Souls are in harmony with each other and so, too, are their acts and effects; but it is harmony in the sense of a resultant unity built out of contraries. All things, as they rise from a unity, come back to unity by a sheer need of nature; differences unfold themselves, contraries are produced, but all is drawn into one organised system by the unity at the source.

The principle may be illustrated from the different classes of animal life: there is one genus, horse, though horses among themselves fight and bite and show malice and angry envy: so all the others within the unity of their Kind; and so humanity.

All these types, again, can be ranged under the one Kind, that of living things; objects without life can be thought of under their specific types and then be resumed under the one Kind of the “non-living”; if we choose to go further yet, living and non-living may be included under the one Kind, “Beings,” and, further still, under the Source of Being.

Having attached all to this source, we turn to move down again in continuous division: we see the Unity fissuring, as it reaches out into Universality, and yet embracing all in one system so that with all its differentiation it is one multiple living thing—an organism in which each member executes the function of its own nature while it still has its being in that One Whole; fire burns; horse does horse work; men give, each the appropriate act of the peculiar personal quality—and upon the several particular Kinds to which each belongs follow the acts, and the good or evil of the life.

2.

Circumstances are not sovereign over the good of life, for they are themselves moulded by their priors and come in as members of a sequence. The Leading-Principle holds all the threads while the minor agents, the individuals, serve according to their own capacities, as in a war the generalissimo lays down the plan and his subordinates do their best to its furtherance. The Universe has been ordered by a Providence that may be compared to a general; he has considered operations, conditions and such practical needs as food and drink, arms and engines of war; all the problem of reconciling these complex elements has been worked out beforehand so as to make it probable that the final event may be success. The entire scheme emerges from the general's mind with a certain plausible promise, though it cannot cover the enemy's operations, and there is no power over the disposition of the enemy's forces: but where the mighty general is in question whose power extends over all that is, what can pass unordered, what can fail to fit into the plan?

3.

For, even though the I is sovereign in choosing, yet by the fact of the choice the thing done takes its place in the ordered total. Your personality does not come from outside into the universal scheme; you are a part of it, you and your personal disposition.

But what is the cause of this initial personality?

This question resolves itself into two: are we to make the Creator, if Creator there is, the cause of the moral quality of the individual or does the responsibility lie with the creature?

Or is there, perhaps, no responsibility? After all, none is charged in the case of plants brought into being without the perceptive faculties; no one is blamed because animals are not all that men are—which would be like complaining that men are not all that gods are. Reason acquits plant and animal and, their maker; how can it complain because men do not stand above humanity?

If the reproach simply means that Man might improve by bringing from his own stock something towards his betterment we must allow that the man failing in this is answerable for his own inferiority: but if the betterment must come not from within the man but from without, from his Author, it is folly to ask more than has been given, as foolish in the case of man as in plant and animal.

The question is not whether a thing is inferior to something else but whether in its own Kind it suffices to its own part; universal equality there cannot be.

Then the Reason-Principle has measured things out with the set purpose of inequality?

Certainly not: the inequality is inevitable by the nature of things: the Reason-Principle of this Universe follows upon a phase of the Soul; the Soul itself follows upon an

Intellectual Principle, and this Intellectual Principle is not one among the things of the Universe but is all things; in all things, there is implied variety of things; where there is variety and not identity there must be primals, secondaries, tertiaries and every grade downward. Forms of life, then, there must be that are not pure Soul but the dwindling of Souls enfeebled stage by stage of the process. There is, of course, a Soul in the Reason-Principle constituting a living being, but it is another Soul (a lesser phase), not that (the Supreme Soul) from which the Reason-Principle itself derives; and this combined vehicle of life weakens as it proceeds towards matter, and what it engenders is still more deficient. Consider how far the engendered stands from its origin and yet, what a marvel!

In sum nothing can secure to a thing of process the quality of the prior order, loftier than all that is product and amenable to no charge in regard to it: the wonder is, only, that it reaches and gives to the lower at all, and that the traces of its presence should be so noble. And if its outgiving is greater than the lower can appropriate, the debt is the heavier; all the blame must fall upon the unreceptive creature, and Providence be the more exalted.

4.

If man were all of one piece—I mean, if he were nothing more than a made thing, acting and acted upon according to a fixed nature—he could be no more subject to reproach and punishment than the mere animals. But as the scheme holds, man is singled out for condemnation when he does evil; and this with justice. For he is no mere thing made to rigid plan; his nature contains a Principle apart and free.

This does not, however, stand outside of Providence or of the Reason of the All; the Over-World cannot be dependent upon the World of Sense. The higher shines down upon the lower, and this illumination is Providence in its highest aspect: The Reason-Principle has two phases, one which creates the things of process and another which links them with the higher beings: these higher beings constitute the over-providence on which depends that lower providence which is the secondary Reason-Principle inseparably united with its primal: the two—the Major and Minor Providence—acting together produce the universal woof, the one all-comprehensive Providence.

Men possess, then, a distinctive Principle: but not all men turn to account all that is in their Nature; there are men that live by one Principle and men that live by another or, rather, by several others, the least noble. For all these Principles are present even when not acting upon the man—though we cannot think of them as lying idle; everything performs its function.

“But,” it will be said, “what reason can there be for their not acting upon the man once they are present; inaction must mean absence?”

We maintain their presence always, nothing void of them.

But surely not where they exercise no action? If they necessarily reside in all men, surely they must be operative in all—this Principle of free action, especially.

First of all, this free Principle is not an absolute possession of the animal Kinds and is not even an absolute possession to all men.

So this Principle is not the only effective force in all men?

There is no reason why it should not be. There are men in whom it alone acts, giving its character to the life while all else is but Necessity (and therefore outside of blame).

For (in the case of an evil life) whether it is that the constitution of the man is such as to drive him down the troubled paths or whether (the fault is mental or spiritual in that) the desires have gained control, we are compelled to attribute the guilt to the substratum (something inferior to the highest principle in Man). We would be naturally inclined to say that this substratum (the responsible source of evil) must be Matter and not, as our argument implies, the Reason-Principle; it would appear that not the Reason-Principle but Matter were the dominant, crude Matter at the extreme and then Matter as shaped in the realised man: but we must remember that to this free Principle in man (which is a phase of the All Soul) the Substratum (the direct inferior to be moulded) is (not Matter but) the Reason-Principle itself with whatever that produces and moulds to its own form, so that neither crude Matter nor Matter organised in our human total is sovereign within us.

The quality now manifested may be probably referred to the conduct of a former life; we may suppose that previous actions have made the Reason-Principle now governing within us inferior in radiance to that which ruled before; the Soul which later will shine out again is for the present at a feebler power.

And any Reason-Principle may be said to include within itself the Reason-Principle of Matter which therefore it is able to elaborate to its own purposes, either finding it consonant with itself or bestowing upon it the quality which makes it so. The Reason-Principle of an ox does not occur except in connection with the Matter appropriate to the ox-Kind. It must be by such a process that the transmigration, of which we read (in Plato) takes place; the Soul must lose its nature, the Reason-Principle be transformed; thus there comes the ox-soul which once was Man.

The degradation, then, is just.

Still, how did the inferior Principle ever come into being, and how does the higher fall to it?

Once more—not all things are Firsts; there are Secondaries and Tertiaries, of a nature inferior to that of their Priors; and a slight tilt is enough to determine the departure from the straight course. Further, the linking of any one being with any other amounts to a blending such as to produce a distinct entity, a compound of the two; it is not that the greater and prior suffers any diminution of its own nature; the lesser and secondary is such from its very beginning; it is in its own nature the lesser thing it becomes, and if it suffers the consequences, such suffering is merited: all our reasonings on these questions must take account of previous living as the source from which the present takes its rise.

5.

There is, then, a Providence, which permeates the Kosmos from first to last, not everywhere equal, as in a numerical distribution, but proportioned, differing, according to the grades of place—just as in some one animal, linked from first to last, each member has its own function, the nobler organ the higher activity while others successively concern the lower degrees of the life, each part acting of itself, and experiencing what belongs to its own nature and what comes from its relation with every other. Strike, and what is designed for utterance gives forth the appropriate volume of sound while other parts take the blow in silence but react in their own especial movement; the total of all the utterance and action and receptivity constitutes what we may call the personal voice, life and history of the living form. The parts, distinct in Kind, have distinct functions: the feet have their work and the eyes theirs; the understanding serves to one end, the Intellectual Principle to another.

But all sums to a unity, a comprehensive Providence. From the inferior grade downwards is Fate: the upper is Providence alone: for in the Intellectual Kosmos all is Reason-Principle or its Priors—Divine Mind and unmingled Soul—and immediately upon these follows Providence which rises from Divine Mind, is the content of the Unmingled Soul, and, through this Soul, is communicated to the Sphere of living things.

This Reason-Principle comes as a thing of unequal parts, and therefore its creations are unequal, as, for example, the several members of one Living Being. But after this allotment of rank and function, all act consonant with the will of the gods keeps the sequence and is included under the providential government, for the Reason-Principle of providence is god-serving.

All such right-doing, then, is linked to Providence; but it is not therefore performed by it: men or other agents, living or lifeless, are causes of certain things happening, and any good that may result is taken up again by Providence. In the total, then, the right rules and what has happened amiss is transformed and corrected. Thus, to take an example from a single body, the Providence of a living organism implies its health; let it be gashed or otherwise wounded, and that Reason-Principle which governs it sets to work to draw it together, knit it anew, heal it, and put the affected part to rights.

In sum, evil belongs to the sequence of things, but it comes (not from Providence but) from necessity. It originates in ourselves; it has its causes no doubt, but we are not, therefore, forced to it by Providence: some of these causes we adapt to the operation of Providence and of its subordinates, but with others we fail to make the connection; the act instead of being ranged under the will of Providence consults the desire of the agent alone or of some other element in the Universe, something which is either itself at variance with Providence or has set up some such state of variance in ourselves.

The one circumstance does not produce the same result wherever it acts; the normal operation will be modified from case to case: Helen's beauty told very differently on Paris and on Idomeneus; bring together two handsome people of loose character and two living honourably and the resulting conduct is very different; a good man meeting

a libertine exhibits a distinct phase of his nature and, similarly, the dissolute answer to the society of their betters.

The act of the libertine is not done by Providence or in accordance with Providence; neither is the action of the good done by Providence—it is done by the man—but it is done in accordance with Providence, for it is an act consonant with the Reason-Principle. Thus a patient following his treatment is himself an agent and yet is acting in accordance with the doctor's method inspired by the art concerned with the causes of health and sickness: what one does against the laws of health is one's act, but an act conflicting with the Providence of medicine.

6.

But, if all this be true, how can evil fall within the scope of seership? The predictions of the seers are based on observation of the Universal Circuit: how can this indicate the evil with the good?

Clearly the reason is that all contraries coalesce. Take, for example, Shape and (its contrary) Matter: the living being (of the lower order) is a coalescence of these two; so that to be aware of the Shape and the Reason-Principle is to be aware of the Matter on which the Shape has been imposed.

The living-being of the compound order is not present (as pure and simple Idea) like the living being of the Intellectual order: in the compound entity, we are aware, at once, of the Reason-Principle and of the inferior element brought under form. Now the Universe is such a compound living thing: to observe, therefore, its content is to be aware not less of its lower elements than of the Providence which operates within it.

This Providence reaches to all that comes into being; its scope therefore includes living things with their actions and states, the total of their history at once overruled by the Reason-Principle and yet subject in some degree to Necessity.

These, then, are presented as mingled both by their initial nature and by the continuous process of their existence; and the Seer is not able to make a perfect discrimination setting on the one side Providence with all that happens under Providence and on the other side what the substrate communicates to its product. Such discrimination is not for a man, not for a wise man or a divine man: one may say it is the prerogative of a god. Not causes but facts lie in the Seer's province; his art is the reading of the scriptures of Nature which tell of the ordered and never condescend to the disorderly; the movement of the Universe utters its testimony to him and, before men and things reveal themselves, brings to light what severally and collectively they are.

Here conspires with There and There with Here, elaborating together the consistency and eternity of a Kosmos and by their correspondences revealing the sequence of things to the trained observer—for every form of divination turns upon correspondences. Universal interdependence, there could not be, but universal

resemblance there must. This probably is the meaning of the saying that Correspondences maintain the Universe.

This is a correspondence of inferior with inferior, of superior with superior, eye with eye, foot with foot, everything with its fellow and, in another order, virtue with right action and vice with unrighteousness. Admit such correspondence in the All and we have the possibility of prediction. If the one order acts on the other, the relation is not that of maker to thing made—the two are coeval—it is the interplay of members of one living being; each in its own place and way moves as its own nature demands; to every organ its grade and task, and to every grade and task its effective organ.

7.

And since the higher exists, there must be the lower as well. The Universe is a thing of variety, and how could there be an inferior without a superior or a superior without an inferior? We cannot complain about the lower in the higher; rather, we must be grateful to the higher for giving something of itself to the lower.

In a word, those that would like evil driven out from the All would drive out Providence itself.

What would Providence have to provide for? Certainly not for itself or for the Good: when we speak of a Providence above, we mean an act upon something below.

That which resumes all under a unity is a Principle in which all things exist together and the single thing is All. From this Principle, which remains internally unmoved, particular things push forth as from a single root which never itself emerges. They are a branching into part, into multiplicity, each single outgrowth bearing its trace of the common source. Thus, phase by phase, there is finally the production into this world; some things close still to the root, others widely separate in the continuous progression until we have, in our metaphor, bough and crest, foliage and fruit. At the one side all is one point of unbroken rest, on the other is the ceaseless process, leaf and fruit, all the things of process carrying ever within themselves the Reason-Principles of the Upper Sphere, and striving to become trees in their own minor order and producing, if at all, only what is in strict gradation from themselves.

As for the abandoned spaces in what corresponds to the branches these too draw upon the root, from which, despite all their variance, they also derive; and the branches again operate upon their own furthest extremities: operation is to be traced only from point to next point, but, in the fact, there has been both inflow and outgo (of creative or modifying force) at the very root which, itself again, has its priors.

The things that act upon each other are branchings from a far-off beginning and so stand distinct; but they derive initially from the one source: all interaction is like that of brothers, resemblant as drawing life from the same parents.

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FOURTH TRACTATE

Our Tutelary Spirit

1.

Some Existents (Absolute Unity and Intellectual-Principle) remain at rest while their Hypostases, or Expressed-Idea, come into being; but, in our view, the Soul generates by its motion, to which is due the sensitive faculty—that in any of its expression-forms—Nature and all forms of life down to the vegetable order. Even as it is present in human beings the Soul carries its Expression-form (Hypostasis) with it, but is not the dominant since it is not the whole man (humanity including the Intellectual Principle, as well): in the vegetable order it is the highest since there is nothing to rival it; but at this phase it is no longer reproductive, or, at least, what it produces is of quite another order; here life ceases; all later production is lifeless.

What does this imply?

Everything the Soul engenders down to this point (of sheer lifelessness) comes into being shapeless, and takes form by orientation towards its author and supporter: therefore (and even more certainly) the thing engendered on the further side can be no image of the Soul, since it is not even alive; it must be an utter Indetermination. No doubt even in things of the nearer order there was indetermination, but within a form; they were undetermined not utterly but only in contrast with their perfect state: at this extreme point we have the utter lack of determination. Let it be raised to its highest degree and it becomes body by taking such shape as serves its scope; then it becomes the recipient of its author and sustainer: this presence in body is the only example of the boundaries of Higher Existents running into the boundary of the Lower.

2.

It is of this Soul especially that we read “All Soul has care for the Soulless”—though the several Souls thus care in their own degree and way. The passage continues—“Soul passes through the entire heavens in forms varying with the variety of place”—the sensitive form, the reasoning form, even the vegetative form—and this means that in each “place” the phase of the soul there dominant carries out its own ends while the rest, not present there, is idle.

Now, in humanity the lower is not supreme; it is an accompaniment; but neither does the better rule unfailingly; the lower element also has a footing, and Man, therefore, lives in part under sensation, for he has the organs of sensation, and in large part even by the merely vegetative principle, for the body grows and propagates: all the graded phases are in a collaboration, but the entire form, man, takes rank by the dominant,

and when the life-principle leaves the body it is what it is, what it most intensely lived.

This is why we must break away towards the High: we dare not keep ourselves set towards the sensuous principle, following the images of sense, or towards the merely vegetative, intent upon the gratifications of eating and procreation; our life must be pointed towards the Intellective, towards the Intellectual-Principle, towards God.

Those that have maintained the human level are men once more. Those that have lived wholly to sense become animals—corresponding in species to the particular temper of the life—ferocious animals where the sensuality has been accompanied by a certain measure of spirit, gluttonous and lascivious animals where all has been appetite and satiation of appetite. Those who in their pleasures have not even lived by sensation, but have gone their way in a torpid grossness become mere growing things, for this lethargy is the entire act of the vegetative, and such men have been busy be-treering themselves. Those, we read, that, otherwise untainted, have loved song become vocal animals; kings ruling unreasonably but with no other vice are eagles; futile and flighty visionaries ever soaring skyward, become high-flying birds; observance of civic and secular virtue makes man again, or where the merit is less marked, one of the animals of communal tendency, a bee or the like.

3.

What, then, is the spirit (guiding the present life and determining the future?)

The Spirit of here and now.

And the God?

The God of here and now.

Spirit, God; This in act within us, conducts every life; for, even here and now, it is the dominant of our Nature.

That is to say that the dominant is the spirit which takes possession of the human being at birth?

No: the dominant is the Prior of the individual spirit; it presides inoperative while its secondary acts: so that if the acting force is that of men of the sense-life, the tutelary spirit is the Rational Being, while if we live by that Rational Being, our tutelary Spirit is the still higher Being, not directly operative but assenting to the working principle. The words “You shall yourselves choose (your presiding Spirit)” are true, then; for by our life we elect our own loftier.

But how does this spirit come to be the determinant of our fate?

It is not when the life is ended that it conducts us here or there; it operates during the lifetime; when we cease to live, our death hands over to another principle this energy of our own personal career.

That principle (of the new birth) strives to gain control, and if it succeeds it also lives and itself, in turn, possesses a guiding spirit (its next higher): if on the contrary it is weighed down by the developed evil in the character, the spirit of the previous life pays the penalty: the evil-liver loses grade because during his life the active principle of his being took the tilt towards the brute by force of affinity. If, on the contrary, the Man is able to follow the leading of his higher Spirit, he rises: he lives that Spirit; that noblest part of himself to which he is being led becomes sovereign in his life; this made his own, he works for the next above until he has attained the height.

For the Soul is many things, is all, is the Above and the Beneath to the totality of life: and each of us is an Intellectual Kosmos, linked to this world by what is lowest in us, but, by what is the highest, to the Divine Intellect: by all that is intellective we are permanently in that higher realm, but at the fringe of the Intellectual we are fettered to the lower; it is as if we gave forth from it some emanation towards that lower, or, rather some Act, which however leaves our diviner part not in itself diminished.

4.

But is this lower extremity of our intellective phase fettered to body for ever?

No: if we turn, this turns by the same act.

And the Soul of the All—are we to think that when it turns from this sphere its lower phase similarly withdraws?

No: for it never accompanied that lower phase of itself; it never knew any coming, and therefore never came down; it remains unmoved above, and the material frame of the Universe draws close to it, and, as it were, takes light from it, no hindrance to it, in no way troubling it, simply lying unmoved before it.

But has the Universe, then, no sensation? “It has no Sight,” we read, since it has no eyes, and obviously it has not ears, nostrils, or tongue. Then has it perhaps such a consciousness as we have of our own inner conditions?

No: where all is the working out of one nature, there is nothing but still rest; there is not even enjoyment. Sensibility is present as the quality of growth is, unrecognised. But the Nature of the World will be found treated elsewhere; what stands here is all that the question of the moment demands.

5.

But if the presiding Spirit and the conditions of life are chosen by the Soul in the over-world, how can anything be left to our independent action here?

The answer is that that very choice in the over-world is merely an allegorical statement of the Soul's tendency and temperament, a total character which it must express wherever it operates.

But if the tendency of the Soul is the master-force and, in the Soul, the dominant is that phase which has been brought to the fore by a previous history, then the body stands acquitted of any bad influence upon it? The Soul's quality exists before any bodily life; it has exactly what it chose to have; and, we read, it never changes its chosen spirit; therefore neither the good man nor the bad is the product of this life?

Is the solution, perhaps, that man is potentially both good and bad but becomes the one or the other by force of act?

But what if a man temperamentally good happens to enter a disordered body, or if a perfect body falls to a man naturally vicious?

The answer is that the Soul, to whichever side it inclines, has in some varying degree the power of working the forms of body over to its own temper, since outlying and accidental circumstances cannot overrule the entire decision of a Soul. Where we read that, after the casting of lots, the sample lives are exhibited with the casual circumstances attending them and that the choice is made upon vision, in accordance with the individual temperament, we are given to understand that the real determination lies with the Souls, who adapt the allotted conditions to their own particular quality.

The *Timæus* indicates the relation of this guiding spirit to ourselves: it is not entirely outside of ourselves; is not bound up with our nature; is not the agent in our action; it belongs to us as belonging to our Soul, but not in so far as we are particular human beings living a life to which it is superior: take the passage in this sense and it is consistent; understand this Spirit otherwise and there is contradiction. And the description of the Spirit, moreover, as "the power which consummates the chosen life," is, also, in agreement with this interpretation; for while its presidency saves us from falling much deeper into evil, the only direct agent within us in some thing neither above it nor equal to it but under it: Man cannot cease to be characteristically Man.

6.

What, then, is the achieved Sage?

One whose Act is determined by the higher phase of the Soul.

It does not suffice to perfect virtue to have only this Spirit (equivalent in all men) as co-operator in the life: the acting force in the Sage is the Intellective Principle (the diviner phase of the human Soul) which therefore is itself his presiding spirit or is guided by a presiding spirit of its own, no other than the very Divinity.

But this exalts the Sage above the Intellectual Principle as possessing for presiding spirit the Prior to the Intellectual Principle: how then does it come about that he was not, from the very beginning, all that he now is?

The failure is due to the disturbance caused by birth—though, before all reasoning, there exists the instinctive movement reaching out towards its own.

An instinct which the Sage finally rectifies in every respect?

Not in every respect: the Soul is so constituted that its life-history and its general tendency will answer not merely to its own nature but also to the conditions among which it acts.

The presiding Spirit, as we read, conducting a Soul to the Underworld ceases to be its guardian—except when the Soul resumes (in its later choice) the former state of life.

But, meanwhile, what happens to it?

From the passage (in the Phædo) which tells how it presents the Soul to judgment we gather that after the death it resumes the form it had before the birth, but that then, beginning again, it is present to the Souls in their punishment during the period of their renewed life—a time not so much of living as of expiation.

But the Souls that enter into brute bodies, are they controlled by some thing less than this presiding Spirit? No: theirs is still a Spirit, but an evil or a foolish one.

And the Souls that attain to the highest?

Of these higher Souls some live in the world of Sense, some above it: and those in the world of Sense inhabit the Sun or another of the planetary bodies; the others occupy the fixed Sphere (above the planetary) holding the place they have merited through having lived here the superior life of reason.

We must understand that, while our Souls do contain an Intellectual Kosmos they also contain a subordination of various forms like that of the Kosmic Soul. The world Soul is distributed so as to produce the fixed sphere and the planetary circuits corresponding to its graded powers: so with our Souls; they must have their provinces according to their different powers, parallel to those of the World Soul: each must give out its own special act; released, each will inhabit there a star consonant with the temperament and faculty in act within and constituting the principle of the life; and this star or the next highest power will stand to them as God or more exactly as tutelary spirit.

But here some further precision is needed.

Emancipated Souls, for the whole period of their sojourn there above, have transcended the Spirit-nature and the entire fatality of birth and all that belongs to this visible world, for they have taken up with them that Hypostasis of the Soul in which the desire of earthly life is vested. This Hypostasis may be described as the

distributable Soul, for it is what enters bodily forms and multiplies itself by this division among them. But its distribution is not (arithmetical, not) a matter of magnitudes; wherever it is present, there is the same thing present entire; its unity can always be reconstructed: when living things—animal or vegetal—(distribute themselves and) produce their constant succession of new forms, they do so in virtue of the self-distribution of this phase of the Soul, for it must be as much distributed among the new forms as the propagating originals are. In some cases it communicates its force by permanent presence—the life principle in plants for instance—in other cases it withdraws after imparting its virtue—for instance where from the putridity of dead animal or vegetable matter a multitudinous birth is produced from one organism.

A power corresponding to this in the All must reach down and co-operate in the life of our world—in fact the very same power.

If the Soul returns to this Sphere it finds itself under the same Spirit or a new, according to the life it is to live. With this Spirit it embarks in the skiff of the universe: the “spindle of Necessity” then takes control and appoints the seat for the voyage, the seat of the lot in life.

The Universal circuit is like a breeze, and the voyager, still or stirring, is carried forward by it. He has a hundred varied experiences, fresh sights, changing circumstances, all sorts of events. The vessel itself furnishes incident, tossing as it drives on. And the voyager also acts of himself in virtue of that individuality which he retains because he is on the vessel in his own person and character. Under identical circumstances individuals answer very differently in their movements and acts: hence it comes about that, be the occurrences and conditions of life similar or dissimilar, the result may differ from man to man, as on the other hand a similar result may be produced by dissimilar conditions: this (personal answer to incident) it is that constitutes destiny.

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FIFTH TRACTATE

On Love

1.

What is Love? A God, a Celestial Spirit, a state of mind? Or is it, perhaps, sometimes to be thought of as a God or Spirit and sometimes merely as an experience? And what is it essentially in each of these respects?

These important questions make it desirable to review prevailing opinions on the matter, the philosophical treatment it has received and, especially, the theories of the great Plato who has many passages dealing with Love, from a point of view entirely his own.

Plato does not treat of it as simply a state observed in Souls; he also makes it a Spirit-being so that we read of the birth of Eros, under definite circumstances and by a certain parentage.

Now everyone recognises that the emotional state for which we make this “Love” responsible rises in souls aspiring to be knit in the closest union with some beautiful object, and that this aspiration takes two forms, that of the good whose devotion is for beauty itself, and that other which seeks its consummation in some vile act. But this generally admitted distinction opens a new question: we need a philosophical investigation into the origin of the two phases.

It is sound, I think, to find the primal source of Love in a tendency of the Soul towards pure beauty, in a recognition, in a kinship, in an unreasoned consciousness of friendly relation. The vile and ugly is in clash, at once, with Nature and with God: Nature produces by looking to the Good, for it looks towards Order—which has its being in the consistent total of the good, while the unordered is ugly, a member of the system of evil—and besides Nature itself, clearly, springs from the divine realm, from Good and Beauty; and when anything brings delight and the sense of kinship, its very image attracts.

Reject this explanation, and no one can tell how the mental state rises and what are its causes: it is the explanation of even copulative love which is the will to beget in beauty; Nature seeks to produce the beautiful and therefore by all reason cannot desire to procreate in the ugly.

Those that desire earthly procreation are satisfied with the beauty found on earth, the beauty of image and of body; it is because they are strangers to the Archetype, the source of even the attraction they feel towards what is lovely here. There are Souls to whom earthly beauty is a leading to the memory of that in the higher realm and these love the earthly as an image; those that have not attained to this memory do not

understand what is happening within them, and take the image for the reality. Once there is perfect self-control, it is no fault to enjoy the beauty of earth; where appreciation degenerates into carnality, there is sin.

Pure Love seeks the beauty alone, whether there is Reminiscence or not; but there are those that feel, also, a desire of such immortality as lies within mortal reach; and these are seeking Beauty in their demand for perpetuity, the desire of the eternal; Nature teaches them to sow the seed and to beget in beauty, to sow towards eternity, but in beauty through their own kinship with the beautiful. And indeed the eternal is of the one stock with the beautiful, the Eternal-Nature is the first shaping of beauty and makes beautiful all that rises from it.

The less the desire for procreation, the greater is the contentment with beauty alone, yet procreation aims at the engendering of beauty; it is the expression of a lack; the subject is conscious of insufficiency and, wishing to produce beauty, feels that the way is to beget in a beautiful form. Where the procreative desire is lawless or against the purposes of nature, the first inspiration has been natural, but they have diverged from the way, they have slipped and fallen, and they grovel; they neither understand whither Love sought to lead them nor have they any instinct to production; they have not mastered the right use of the images of beauty; they do not know what the Authentic Beauty is.

Those that love beauty of person without carnal desire love for beauty's sake; those that have—for women, of course—the copulative love, have the further purpose of self-perpetuation: as long as they are led by these motives, both are on the right path, though the first have taken the nobler way. But, even in the right, there is the difference that the one set, worshipping the beauty of earth, look no further, while the others, those of recollection, venerate also the beauty of the other world while they, still, have no contempt for this in which they recognise, as it were, a last outgrowth, an attenuation of the higher. These, in sum, are innocent frequenters of beauty, not to be confused with the class to whom it becomes an occasion of fall into the ugly—for the aspiration towards a good degenerates into an evil often.

So much for love, the state.

Now we have to consider Love, the God.

2.

The existence of such a being is no demand of the ordinary man, merely; it is supported by Theologians (Orphic teachers) and, over and over again, by Plato to whom Eros is child of Aphrodite, minister of beautiful children, inciter of human souls towards the supernal beauty or quickener of an already existing impulse thither. All this requires philosophical examination. A cardinal passage is that in *The Banquet* where we are told Eros was not a child of Aphrodite but born on the day of Aphrodite's birth, Penia, Poverty, being the mother, and Poros, Possession, the father.

The matter seems to demand some discussion of Aphrodite since in any case Eros is described as being either her son or in some association with her. Who then is Aphrodite, and in what sense is Love either her child or born with her or in some way both her child and her birth-fellow?

To us Aphrodite is twofold; there is the heavenly Aphrodite, daughter of Ouranos or Heaven: and there is the other the daughter of Zeus and Dione, this is the Aphrodite who presides over earthly unions; the higher was not born of a mother and has no part in marriages for in Heaven there is no marrying.

The Heavenly Aphrodite, daughter of Kronos (Saturn) who is no other than the Intellectual Principle—must be the Soul at its divinest: unmingled as the immediate emanation of the unmingled; remaining ever Above, as neither desirous nor capable of descending to this sphere, never having developed the downward tendency, a divine Hypostasis essentially aloof, so unreservedly an Authentic Being as to have no part with Matter—and therefore mythically “the unmothered”—justly called not Celestial Spirit but God, as knowing no admixture, gathered cleanly within itself.

Any Nature springing directly from the Intellectual Principle must be itself also a clean thing: it will derive a resistance of its own from its nearness to the Highest, for all its tendency, no less than its fixity, centres upon its author whose power is certainly sufficient to maintain it Above.

Soul then could never fall from its sphere; it is closer held to the divine Mind than the very sun could hold the light it gives forth to radiate about it, an outpouring from itself held firmly to it, still.

But following upon Kronos—or, if you will, upon Heaven, (Ouranos) the father of Kronos—the Soul directs its Act towards him and holds closely to him and in that love brings forth the Eros through whom it continues to look towards him. This Act of the Soul has produced an Hypostasis, a Real-Being; and the mother and this Hypostasis—her offspring, noble Love—gaze together upon Divine Mind. Love, thus, is ever intent upon that other loveliness, and exists to be the medium between desire and that object of desire. It is the eye of the desirer; by its power what loves is enabled to see the loved thing. But it is first; before it becomes the vehicle of vision, it is itself filled with the sight; it is first, therefore, and not even in the same order—for desire attains to vision only through the efficacy of Love, while Love, in its own Act, harvests the spectacle of beauty playing immediately above it.

3.

That Love is a Hypostasis (a “Person”) a Real-Being sprung from a Real-Being—lower than the parent but authentically existent—is beyond doubt.

For the parent-Soul was a Real-Being sprung directly from the Act of the Hypostasis that ranks before it: it had life; it was a constituent in the Real-Being of all that authentically is—in the Real-Being which looks, rapt, towards the very Highest. That was the first object of its vision; it looked towards it as towards its good, and it

rejoiced in the looking; and the quality of what it saw was such that the contemplation could not be void of effect; in virtue of that rapture, of its position in regard to its object, of the intensity of its gaze, the Soul conceived and brought forth an offspring worthy of itself and of the vision. Thus; there is a strenuous activity of contemplation in the Soul; there is an emanation towards it from the object contemplated; and Eros is born, the Love which is an eye filled with its vision, a seeing that bears its image with it; Eros taking its name, probably, from the fact that its essential being is due to this horasis, this seeing. Of course Love, as an emotion, will take its name from Love, the Person, since a Real-Being cannot but be prior to what lacks this reality. The mental state will be designated as Love, like the Hypostasis, though it is no more than a particular act directed towards a particular object; but it must not be confused with the Absolute Love, the Divine Being. The Eros that belongs to the supernal Soul must be of one temper with it; it must itself look aloft as being of the household of that Soul, dependent upon that Soul, its very offspring; and therefore caring for nothing but the contemplation of the Gods.

Once that Soul which is the primal source of light to the heavens is recognised as an Hypostasis standing distinct and aloof, it must be admitted that Love too is distinct and aloof though not, perhaps, so loftily celestial a being as the Soul. Our own best we conceive as inside ourselves and yet something apart; so, we must think of this Love—as essentially resident where the unmingling Soul inhabits.

But besides this purest Soul, there must be also a Soul of the All: at once there is another Love—the eye with which this second Soul looks upwards—like the supernal Eros engendered by force of desire. This Aphrodite, the secondary Soul, is of this Universe—not Soul unmingled alone, not Soul, the Absolute, giving birth, therefore, to the Love concerned with the universal life; no, this is the Love presiding over marriages; but it, also, has its touch of the upward desire; and, in the degree of that striving, it stirs and leads upwards the Souls of the young and every Soul with which it is incorporated in so far as there is a natural tendency to remembrance of the divine. For every Soul is striving towards The Good, even the mingling Soul and that of particular beings, for each holds directly from the divine Soul, and is its offspring.

4.

Does each individual Soul, then, contain within itself such a Love in essence and substantial reality?

Since not only the pure All-Soul but also that of the Universe contain such a Love, it would be difficult to explain why our personal Soul should not. It must be so, even, with all that has life.

This indwelling love is no other than the Spirit which, as we are told, walks with every being, the affection dominant in each several nature. It implants the characteristic desire; the particular Soul, strained towards its own natural objects, brings forth its own Eros, the guiding spirit realising its worth and the quality of its Being.

As the All-Soul contains the Universal Love, so must the single Soul be allowed its own single Love: and as closely as the single Soul holds to the All-Soul, never cut off but embraced within it, the two together constituting one principle of life, so the single separate Love holds to the All-Love. Similarly, the individual love keeps with the individual Soul as that other, the great Love, goes with the All-Soul; and the Love within the All permeates it throughout so that the one Love becomes many, showing itself where it chooses at any moment of the Universe, taking definite shape in these its partial phases and revealing itself at its will.

In the same way we must conceive many Aphrodites in the All, Spirits entering it together with Love, all emanating from an Aphrodite of the All, a train of particular Aphrodites dependent upon the first, and each with the particular Love in attendance: this multiplicity cannot be denied, if Soul be the mother of Love, and Aphrodite mean Soul, and Love be an act of a Soul seeking good.

This Love, then, leader of particular Souls to The Good, is twofold: the Love in the loftier Soul would be a god ever linking the Soul to the divine; the Love in the mingling Soul will be a celestial spirit.

5.

But what is the Nature of this Spirit—of the Supernals in general?

The Spirit-Kind is treated in the Symposium where, with much about the others, we learn of Eros—Love—born to Penia—Poverty—and Poros—Possession—who is son of Metis—Resource—at Aphrodite's birth feast.

But (the passage has been misunderstood for) to take Plato as meaning, by Eros, this Universe—and not simply the Love native within it—involves much that is self-contradictory.

For one thing, the universe is described as a blissful god and as self-sufficing, while this “Love” is confessedly neither divine nor self-sufficing but in ceaseless need.

Again, this Kosmos is a compound of body and soul; but Aphrodite to Plato is the Soul itself, therefore Aphrodite would necessarily be a constituent part of Eros, (not mother but) dominant member! A man is the man's Soul, if the world is, similarly, the world's Soul, then Aphrodite, the Soul, is identical with Love, the Kosmos! And why should this one spirit, Love, be the Universe to the exclusion of all the others, which certainly are sprung from the same Essential-Being? Our only escape would be to make the Kosmos a complex of Supernals.

Love, again, is called the Dispenser of beautiful children: does this apply to the Universe? Love is represented as homeless, bedless and bare-footed: would not that be a shabby description of the Kosmos and quite out of the truth?

6.

What then, in sum, is to be thought of Love and of his “birth” as we are told of it?

Clearly we have to establish the significance, here, of Poverty and Possession, and show in what way the parentage is appropriate: we have also to bring these two into line with the other Supernals since one spirit nature, one spirit essence, must characterise all unless they are to have merely a name in common.

We must, therefore, lay down the grounds on which we distinguish the Gods from the Celestials—that is, when we emphasise the separate nature of the two orders and are not, as often in practice, including these Spirits under the common name of Gods.

It is our teaching and conviction that the Gods are immune to all passion while we attribute experience and emotion to the Celestials which, though eternal Beings and directly next to the Gods, are already a step towards ourselves and stand between the divine and the human.

But by what process (of degeneration) was the immunity lost? What in their nature led them downwards to the inferior?

And other questions present themselves.

Does the Intellectual Realm include no member of this spirit order, not even one? And does the Kosmos contain only these spirits, God being confined to the Intellectual? Or are there Gods in the sub-celestial too, the Kosmos itself being a God, the third, as is commonly said, and the Powers down to the Moon being all Gods as well?

It is best not to use the word “Celestial” of any Being of that Realm; the word “God” may be applied to the Essential-Celestial—the auto-daimon—and even to the Visible Powers of the Universe of Sense down to the Moon; Gods, these too, visible, secondary, sequent upon the Gods of the Intellectual Realm, consonant with Them, held about Them, as the radiance about the star.

What, then, are these spirits?

A Celestial is the representative generated by each Soul when it enters the Kosmos.

And why, by a Soul entering the Kosmos?

Because Soul pure of the Kosmos generates not a Celestial Spirit but a God; hence it is that we have spoken of Love, offspring of Aphrodite the Pure Soul, as a God.

But, first what prevents every one of the Celestials from being an Eros, a Love? And why are they not untouched by Matter like the Gods?

On the first question:—Every Celestial born in the striving of the Soul towards the good and beautiful is an Eros; and all the Souls within the Kosmos do engender this

Celestial; but other Spirit-Beings, equally born from the Soul of the All, but by other faculties of that Soul, have other functions: they are for the direct service of the All, and administer particular things to the purpose of the Universe entire. The Soul of the All must be adequate to all that is and therefore must bring into being spirit powers serviceable not merely in one function but to its entire charge.

But what participation can the Celestials have in Matter, and in what Matter?

Certainly none in bodily Matter; that would make them simply living things of the order of sense. And if, even, they are to invest themselves in bodies of air or of fire, the nature must have already been altered before they could have any contact with the corporeal. The Pure does not mix, unmediated, with body—though many think that the Celestial-Kind, of its very essence, comports a body aerial or of fire.

But (since this is not so) why should one order of Celestial descend to body and another not? The difference implies the existence of some cause or medium working upon such as thus descend. What would constitute such a medium?

We are forced to assume that there is a Matter of the Intellectual Order, and that Beings partaking of it are thereby enabled to enter into the lower Matter, the corporeal.

7.

This is the significance of Plato's account of the birth of Love.

The drunkenness of the father Poros or Possession is caused by Nectar, "wine yet not existing"; Love is born before the realm of sense has come into being: Penia (Poverty) had participation in the Intellectual before the lower image of that divine Realm had appeared; she dwelt in that Sphere, but as a mingled being consisting partly of Form but partly also of that indetermination which belongs to the Soul before she attains the Good and when all her knowledge of Reality is a fore-intimation veiled by the indeterminate and unordered: in this state (of fore-feeling and desiring The Good) Poverty brings forth the Hypostasis, Love.

This, then, is a union of Reason with something that is not Reason but a mere indeterminate striving in a being not yet illuminated: the offspring Love, therefore, is not perfect, not self-sufficient, but unfinished, bearing the signs of its parentage, the undirected striving and the self-sufficient Reason. This offspring is a Reason-Principle but not purely so; for it includes within itself an aspiration ill-defined, unreasoned, unlimited—it can never be sated as long as it contains within itself that element of the Indeterminate. Love, then, clings to the Soul, from which it sprung as from the principle of its Being, but it is lessened by including an element of the Reason-Principle which did not remain self-concentrated but blended with the indeterminate, not, it is true, by immediate contact but through its emanation. Love, therefore, is like a goad; it is without resource in itself; even winning its end, it is poor again.

It cannot be satisfied because a thing of mixture never can be so: true satisfaction is only for what has its plenitude in its own being; where craving is due to an inborn deficiency, there may be satisfaction at some given moment but it does not last. Love, then, has on the one side the powerlessness of its native inadequacy, on the other the resource inherited from the Reason-Kind.

Such must be the nature and such the origin of the entire Spirit Order, each—like its fellow, Love—has its appointed sphere, is powerful there, and wholly devoted to it, and, like Love, none is ever complete of itself but always straining towards some good which it sees in things of the partial sphere.

We understand, now, why good men have no other Love—no other Eros of life—than that for the Absolute and Authentic Good, and never follow the random attractions known to those ranged under the lower Spirit Kind.

Each human being is set under his own Spirit-Guides, but this is mere blank possession when they ignore their own and live by some other spirit adopted by them as more closely attuned to the operative part of the Soul in them. Those that go after evil are natures that have merged all the Love-Principles within them in the evil desires springing in their hearts and allowed the right reason, which belongs to our kind, to fall under the spell of false ideas from another source.

All the natural Loves, all that serve the ends of Nature, are good; in a lesser Soul, inferior in rank and in scope; in the greater Soul, superior; but all belong to the order of Being. Those forms of Love that do not serve the purposes of Nature are merely accidents attending on perversion: in no sense are they Real-Beings or even manifestations of any Reality; for they are no true issue of Soul; they are merely accompaniments of a spiritual flaw which the Soul automatically exhibits in the total of disposition and conduct.

In a word; all that is truly good in a Soul acting to the purposes of nature and within its appointed order, all this is Real-Being: anything else is alien, no act of the Soul, but merely something that happens to it: a parallel may be found in false mentation, notions behind which there is no reality as there is in the case of authentic ideas, the eternal, the strictly defined, in which there is at once an act of true knowing, a truly knowable object and authentic existence—and this not merely in the Absolute, but also in the particular being that is occupied by the authentically knowable and by the Intellectual-Principle manifest in every several form.

In each particular human being we must admit the existence of the authentic Intellective Act and of the authentically knowable object—though not as wholly merged into our being, since we are not these in the absolute and not exclusively these—and hence our longing for absolute things: it is the expression of our intellective activities: if we sometimes care for the partial, that affection is not direct but accidental, like our knowledge that a given triangular figure is made up of two right angles because the absolute triangle is so.

8.

But what are we to understand by this Zeus with the garden into which, we are told, Poros or Wealth entered? And what is the garden?

We have seen that the Aphrodite of the Myth is the Soul and that Poros, Wealth, is the Reason-Principle of the Universe: we have still to explain Zeus and his garden.

We cannot take Zeus to be the Soul, which we have agreed is represented by Aphrodite.

Plato, who must be our guide in this question, speaks in the Phaedrus of this God, Zeus, as the Great Leader—though elsewhere he seems to rank him as one of three—but in the Philebus he speaks more plainly when he says that there is in Zeus not only a royal Soul, but also a royal Intellect.

As a mighty Intellect and Soul, he must be a principle of Cause; he must be the highest for several reasons but especially because to be King and Leader is to be the chief cause: Zeus then is the Intellectual Principle. Aphrodite, his daughter, issue of him, dwelling with him, will be Soul, her very name Aphrodite (=the habra, delicate) indicating the beauty and gleam and innocence and delicate grace of the Soul.

And if we take the male gods to represent the Intellectual Powers and the female gods to be their souls—to every Intellectual Principle its companion Soul—we are forced, thus also, to make Aphrodite the Soul of Zeus; and the identification is confirmed by Priests and Theologians who consider Aphrodite and Hera one and the same and call Aphrodite's star ("Venus") the star of Hera.

9.

This Poros, Possession, then, is the Reason-Principle of all that exists in the Intellectual Realm and in the supreme Intellect; but being more diffused, kneaded out as it were, it must touch Soul, be in Soul, (as the next lower principle).

For, all that lies gathered in the Intellect is native to it: nothing enters from without; but "Poros intoxicated" is some Power deriving satisfaction outside itself: what, then, can we understand by this member of the Supreme filled with Nectar but a Reason-Principle falling from a loftier essence to a lower? This means that the Reason-Principle upon "the birth of Aphrodite" left the Intellectual for the Soul, breaking into the garden of Zeus.

A garden is a place of beauty and a glory of wealth: all the loveliness that Zeus maintains takes its splendour from the Reason-Principle within him; for all this beauty is the radiation of the Divine Intellect upon the Divine Soul, which it has penetrated. What could the Garden of Zeus indicate but the images of his Being and the splendours of his glory? And what could these divine splendours and beauties be but the Ideas streaming from him?

These Reason-Principles—this Poros who is the lavishness, the abundance of Beauty—are at one and are made manifest; this is the Nectar-drunkenness. For the Nectar of the gods can be no other than what the god-nature essentially demands; and this is the Reason pouring down from the divine Mind.

The Intellectual Principle possesses Itself to satiety, but there is no “drunken” abandonment in this possession which brings nothing alien to it. But the Reason-Principle—as its offspring, a later hypostasis—is already a separate Being and established in another Realm, and so is said to lie in the garden of this Zeus who is divine Mind; and this lying in the garden takes place at the moment when, in our way of speaking, Aphrodite enters the realm of Being.

10.

“Our way of speaking”—for myths, if they are to serve their purpose, must necessarily import time-distinctions into their subject and will often present as separate, Powers which exist in unity but differ in rank and faculty; they will relate the births of the unbegotten and discriminate where all is one substance; the truth is conveyed in the only manner possible, it is left to our good sense to bring all together again.

On this principle we have, here, Soul (successively) dwelling with the divine Intelligence, breaking away from it, and yet again being filled to satiety with the divine Ideas—the beautiful abounding in all plenty, so that every splendour become manifest in it with the images of whatever is lovely—Soul which, taken as one all, is Aphrodite, while in it may be distinguished the Reason-Principles summed under the names of Plenty and Possession, produced by the downflow of the Nectar of the over realm. The splendours contained in Soul are thought of as the garden of Zeus with reference to their existing within Life; and Poros sleeps in this garden in the sense of being sated and heavy with its produce. Life is eternally manifest, an eternal existent among the existences, and the banqueting of the gods means no more than that they have their Being in that vital blessedness. And Love—“born at the banquet of the gods”—has of necessity been eternally in existence, for it springs from the intention of the Soul towards its Best, towards the Good; as long as Soul has been, Love has been.

Still this Love is of mixed quality. On the one hand there is in it the lack which keeps it craving; on the other, it is not entirely destitute; the deficient seeks more of what it has, and certainly nothing absolutely void of good would ever go seeking the good.

It is said then to spring from Poverty and Possession in the sense that Lack and Aspiration and the Memory of the Ideal Principles, all present together in the Soul, produce that Act towards The Good which is Love. Its Mother is Poverty, since striving is for the needy; and this Poverty is Matter, for Matter is the wholly poor: the very ambition towards the good is a sign of existing indetermination; there is a lack of shape and of Reason in that which must aspire towards the Good, and the greater degree of effort implies the lower depth of materiality. A thing aspiring towards the Good is an Ideal-principle only when the striving (with attainment) will leave it still

unchanged in Kind: when it must take in something other than itself, its aspiration is the presentment of Matter to the incoming power.

Thus Love is at once, in some degree a thing of Matter and at the same time a Celestial, sprung of the Soul; for Love lacks its Good but, from its very birth, strives towards It.

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SIXTH TRACTATE

The Impassivity Of The Unembodied

1.

In our theory, feelings are not states; they are action upon experience, action accompanied by judgment: the states, we hold, are seated elsewhere; they may be referred to the vitalised body; the judgment resides in the Soul, and is distinct from the state—for, if it is not distinct, another judgment is demanded, one that is distinct, and, so, we may be sent back for ever.

Still, this leaves it undecided whether in the act of judgment the judging faculty does or does not take to itself something of its object.

If (as is sometimes asserted) the judging faculty does actually receive an imprint, then it partakes of the state—though what are called the Impressions may be of quite another nature than is supposed; they may be like Thought, that is to say they may be acts rather than states; there may be, here too, awareness without participation.

For ourselves, it could never be in our system—or in our liking—to bring the Soul down to participation in such modes and modifications as the warmth and cold of material frames.

What is known as the Impressionable faculty of the soul—to *pathetikon*—would need to be identified: we must satisfy ourselves as to whether this too, like the Soul as a unity, is to be classed as immune or, on the contrary, as precisely the only part susceptible of being affected; this question, however, may be held over; we proceed to examine its preliminaries.

Even in the superior phase of the Soul—that which precedes the impressionable faculty and any sensation—how can we reconcile immunity with the indwelling of vice, false notions, ignorance? Inviolability; and yet likings and dislikings, the Soul enjoying, grieving, angry, grudging, envying, desiring, never at peace but stirring and shifting with everything that confronts it!

If the Soul were material and had magnitude, it would be difficult, indeed quite impossible, to make it appear to be immune, unchangeable, when any of such emotions lodge in it. And even considering it as an Authentic Being, devoid of magnitude and necessarily indestructible, we must be very careful how we attribute any such experiences to it or we will find ourselves unconsciously making it subject to dissolution. If its essence is a Number or as we hold a Reason-Principle, under neither head could it be susceptible of feeling. We can think, only, that it entertains unreasoned reasons and experiences unexperienced, all transmuted from the material frames, foreign and recognised only by parallel, so that it possesses in a kind of non-

possession and knows affection without being affected. How this can be demands enquiry.

2.

Let us begin with virtue and vice in the Soul. What has really occurred when, as we say, vice is present? In speaking of extirpating evil and implanting goodness, of introducing order and beauty to replace a former ugliness, we talk in terms of real things in the Soul.

Now when we make virtue a harmony, and vice a breach of harmony, we accept an opinion approved by the ancients; and the theory helps us decidedly to our solution. For if virtue is simply a natural concordance among the phases of the Soul, and vice simply a discord, then there is no further question of any foreign presence; harmony would be the result of every distinct phase or faculty joining in, true to itself; discord would mean that not all chimed in at their best and truest. Consider, for example, the performers in a choral dance; they sing together though each one has his particular part, and sometimes one voice is heard while the others are silent; and each brings to the chorus something of his own; it is not enough that all lift their voices together; each must sing, choicely, his own part to the music set for him. Exactly so in the case of the Soul; there will be harmony when each faculty performs its appropriate part.

Yes: but this very harmony constituting the virtue of the Soul must depend upon a previous virtue, that of each several faculty within itself; and before there can be the vice of discord there must be the vice of the single parts, and these can be bad only by the actual presence of vice as they can be good only by the presence of virtue. It is true that no presence is affirmed when vice is identified with ignorance in the reasoning faculty of the Soul; ignorance is not a positive thing; but in the presence of false judgments—the main cause of vice—must it not be admitted that something positive has entered into the Soul, something perverting the reasoning faculty? So, the initiative faculty; is it not, itself, altered as one varies between timidity and boldness? And the desiring faculty, similarly, as it runs wild or accepts control?

Our teaching is that when the particular faculty is sound it performs the reasonable act of its essential nature, obeying the reasoning faculty in it which derives from the Intellectual Principle and communicates to the rest. And this following of reason is not the acceptance of an imposed shape; it is like using the eyes; the Soul sees by its act, that of looking towards reason. The faculty of sight in the performance of its act is essentially what it was when it lay latent; its act is not a change in it, but simply its entering into the relation that belongs to its essential character; it knows—that is, sees—without suffering any change: so, precisely, the reasoning phase of the Soul stands towards the Intellectual Principle; this it sees by its very essence; this vision is its knowing faculty; it takes in no stamp, no impression; all that enters it is the object of vision—possessed, once more, without possession; it possesses by the fact of knowing but “without possession” in the sense that there is no incorporation of anything left behind by the object of vision, like the impression of the seal on sealing-wax.

And note that we do not appeal to stored-up impressions to account for memory: we think of the mind awakening its powers in such a way as to possess something not present to it.

Very good: but is it not different before and after acquiring the memory?

Be it so; but it has suffered no change—unless we are to think of the mere progress from latency to actuality as change—nothing has been introduced into the mind; it has simply achieved the Act dictated by its nature.

It is universally true that the characteristic Act of immaterial entities is performed without any change in them—otherwise they would at last be worn away—theirs is the Act of the unmoving; where act means suffering change, there is Matter: an immaterial Being would have no ground of permanence if its very Act changed it.

Thus in the case of Sight, the seeing faculty is in act but the material organ alone suffers change: judgements, (true or false, are not changes within the Soul; they) are similar to visual experiences.

But how explain the alternation of timidity and daring in the initiative faculty?

Timidity would come by the failure to look towards the Reason-Principle or by looking towards some inferior phase of it or by some defect in the organs of action—some lack or flaw in the bodily equipment—or by outside prevention of the natural act or by the mere absence of adequate stimulus: boldness would arise from the reverse conditions: neither implies any change, or even any experience, in the Soul.

So with the faculty of desire: what we call loose living is caused by its acting unaccompanied; it has done all of itself; the other faculties, whose business it is to make their presence felt in control and to point the right way, have lain in abeyance; the Seer in the Soul was occupied elsewhere, for, though not always at least sometimes, it has leisure for a certain degree of contemplation of other concerns.

Often, moreover, the vice of the desiring faculty will be merely some ill condition of the body, and its virtue, bodily soundness; thus there would again be no question of anything imported into the Soul.

3.

But how do we explain likings and aversions? Sorrow, too, and anger and pleasure, desire and fear—are these not changes, affectings, present and stirring within the Soul?

This question cannot be ignored. To deny that changes take place and are intensely felt is in sharp contradiction to obvious facts. But, while we recognise this, we must make very sure what it is that changes. To represent the Soul or Mind as being the seat of these emotions is not far removed from making it blush or turn pale; it is to

forget that while the Soul or Mind is the means, the effect takes place in the distinct organism, the animated body.

At the idea of disgrace, the shame is in the Soul; but the body is occupied by the Soul—not to trouble about words—is, at any rate, close to it and very different from soulless matter; and so, is affected in the blood, mobile in its nature. Fear begins in the mind; the pallor is simply the withdrawal of the blood inwards. So in pleasure, the elation is mental, but makes itself felt in the body; the purely mental phase has not reached the point of sensation: the same is true of pain. So desire is ignored in the Soul where the impulse takes its rise; what comes outward thence, the Sensibility knows.

When we speak of the Soul or Mind being moved—as in desire, reasoning, judging—we do not mean that it is driven into its act; these movements are its own acts.

In the same way when we call Life a movement we have no idea of a changing substance; the naturally appropriate act of each member of the living thing makes up the Life, which is, therefore, not a shifting thing.

To bring the matter to the point: put it that life, tendency, are no changements; that memories are not forms stamped upon the mind, that notions are not of the nature of impressions on sealing-wax; we thence draw the general conclusion that in all such states and movements the Soul, or Mind, is unchanged in substance and in essence, that virtue and vice are not something imported into the Soul—as heat and cold, blackness or whiteness are importations into body—but that, in all this relation, matter and spirit are exactly and comprehensively contraries.

4.

We have, however, still to examine what is called the affective phase of the Soul. This has, no doubt, been touched upon above where we dealt with the passions in general as grouped about the initiative phase of the Soul and the desiring faculty in its effort to shape things to its choice: but more is required; we must begin by forming a clear idea of what is meant by this affective faculty of the Soul.

In general terms it means the centre about which we recognise the affections to be grouped; and by affections we mean those states upon which follow pleasure and pain.

Now among these affections we must distinguish. Some are pivoted upon judgements; thus, a Man judging his death to be at hand may feel fear; foreseeing some fortunate turn of events, he is happy: the opinion lies in one sphere; the affection is stirred in another. Sometimes the affections take the lead and automatically bring in the notion which thus becomes present to the appropriate faculty: but as we have explained, an act of opinion does not introduce any change into the Soul or Mind: what happens is that from the notion of some impending evil is produced the quite separate thing, fear,

and this fear, in turn, becomes known in that part of the Mind which is said under such circumstances to harbour fear.

But what is the action of this fear upon the Mind?

The general answer is that it sets up trouble and confusion before an evil anticipated. It should, however, be quite clear that the Soul or Mind is the seat of all imaginative representation—both the higher representation known as opinion or judgement and the lower representation which is not so much a judgement as a vague notion unattended by discrimination, something resembling the action by which, as is believed, the “Nature” of common speech produces, unconsciously, the objects of the partial sphere. It is equally certain that in all that follows upon the mental act or state, the disturbance, confined to the body, belongs to the sense-order; trembling, pallor, inability to speak, have obviously nothing to do with the spiritual portion of the being. The Soul, in fact, would have to be described as corporeal if it were the seat of such symptoms: besides, in that case the trouble would not even reach the body since the only transmitting principle, oppressed by sensation, jarred out of itself, would be inhibited.

None the less, there is an affective phase of the Soul or Mind and this is not corporeal; it can be, only, some kind of Ideal-form.

Now Matter is the one field of the desiring faculty, as of the principles of nutrition growth and engendering, which are root and spring to desire and to every other affection known to this Ideal-form. No Ideal-form can be the victim of disturbance or be in any way affected: it remains in tranquillity; only the Matter associated with it can be affected by any state or experience induced by the movement which its mere presence suffices to set up. Thus the vegetal Principle induces vegetal life but it does not, itself, pass through the processes of vegetation; it gives growth but it does not grow; in no movement which it originates is it moved with the motion it induces; it is in perfect repose, or, at least, its movement, really its act, is utterly different from what it causes elsewhere.

The nature of an Ideal-form is to be, of itself, an activity; it operates by its mere presence: it is as if Melody itself plucked the strings. The affective phase of the Soul or Mind will be the operative cause of all affection; it originates the movement either under the stimulus of some sense-presentment or independently—and it is a question to be examined whether the judgement leading to the movement operates from above or not—but the affective phase itself remains unmoved like Melody dictating music. The causes originating the movement may be likened to the musician; what is moved is like the strings of his instrument, and, once more, the Melodic Principle itself is not affected, but only the strings, though, however much the musician desired it, he could not pluck the strings except under dictation from the principle of Melody.

5.

But why have we to call in Philosophy to make the Soul immune if it is thus (like the Melodic Principle of our illustration) immune from the beginning?

Because representations attack it at what we call the affective phase and cause a resulting experience, a disturbance, to which disturbance is joined the image of threatened evil: this amounts to an affection and Reason seeks to extinguish it, to ban it as destructive to the well-being of the Soul which by the mere absence of such a condition is immune, the one possible cause of affection not being present.

Take it that some such affections have engendered appearances presented before the Soul or Mind from without but taken (for practical purposes) to be actual experiences within it—then Philosophy's task is like that of a man who wishes to throw off the shapes presented in dreams, and to this end recalls to waking condition the mind that is breeding them.

But what can be meant by the purification of a Soul that has never been stained and by the separation of the Soul from a body to which it is essentially a stranger?

The purification of the Soul is simply to allow it to be alone; it is pure when it keeps no company; when it looks to nothing without itself; when it entertains no alien thoughts—be the mode or origin of such notions or affections what they may, a subject on which we have already touched—when it no longer sees in the world of image, much less elaborates images into veritable affections. Is it not a true purification to turn away towards the exact contrary of earthly things?

Separation, in the same way, is the condition of a soul no longer entering into the body to lie at its mercy; it is to stand as a light, set in the midst of trouble but unperturbed through all.

In the particular case of the affective phase of the Soul, purification is its awakening from the baseless visions which beset it, the refusal to see them; its separation consists in limiting its descent towards the lower and accepting no picture thence, and of course in the banning for its part too of all which the higher Soul ignores when it has arisen from the trouble storm and is no longer bound to the flesh by the chains of sensuality and of multiplicity but has subdued to itself the body and its entire surrounding so that it holds sovereignty, tranquilly, over all.

6.

That the Intellectual Essence, wholly of the order of Ideal-form, must be taken as impassive has been already established.

But Matter also is an incorporeal, though after a mode of its own; we must examine, therefore, how this stands, whether it is passive, as is commonly held, a thing that can be twisted to every shape and Kind, or whether it too must be considered impassive and in what sense and fashion so. But in engaging this question and defining the nature of matter we must correct certain prevailing errors about the nature of the Authentic Existent, about Essence, about Being.

The Existent—rightly so called—is that which has authentic existence, that, therefore, which is existent completely, and therefore again, that which at no point fails in

existence. Having existence perfectly, it needs nothing to preserve it in being; it is, on the contrary, the source and cause from which all that appears to exist derives that appearance. This admitted, it must of necessity be in life, in a perfect life: if it failed it would be more nearly the non-existent than the existent. But: The Being thus indicated is Intellect, is wisdom unalloyed. It is, therefore, determined and rounded off; it is nothing potentially that is not of the same determined order, otherwise (that is if it contained even potentially the undetermined) it would be in default.

Hence its eternity, its identity, its utter irreceptivity and impermeability. If it took in anything, it must be taking in something outside itself, that is to say, Existence would at last include non-existence. But it must be Authentic Existence all through; it must, therefore, present itself equipped from its own stores with all that makes up Existence so that all stands together and all is one thing. The Existent (Real Being) must have thus much of determination: if it had not, then it could not be the source of the Intellectual Principle and of Life which would be importations into it originating in the sphere of non-Being; and Real Being would be lifeless and mindless; but mindlessness and lifelessness are the characteristics of non-being and must belong to the lower order, to the outer borders of the existent; for Intellect and Life rise from the Beyond-Existence (the Indefinable Supreme)—though Itself has no need of them—and are conveyed from It into the Authentic Existent.

If we have thus rightly described the Authentic Existent, we see that it can not be any kind of body nor the under-stuff of body: in such entities the Being is simply the existing of things outside of Being.

But body, a non-existence? Matter, on which all this universe rises, a non-existence? Mountain and rock, the wide solid earth, all that resists, all that can be struck and driven, surely all proclaims the real existence of the corporeal? And how, it will be asked, can we, on the contrary, attribute Being, and the only Authentic Being, to entities like Soul and Intellect, things having no weight or pressure, yielding to no force, offering no resistance, things not even visible?

Yet even the corporeal realm witnesses for us; the resting earth has certainly a scantier share in Being than belongs to what has more motion and less solidity—and less than belongs to its own most upward element, for fire begins, already, to flit up and away outside of the body-kind.

In fact, it appears to be precisely the most self-sufficing that bear least hardly, least painfully, on other things, while the heaviest and earthiest bodies—deficient, falling, unable to bear themselves upward—these, by the very down-thrust due to their feebleness, offer the resistance which belongs to the falling habit and to the lack of buoyancy. It is lifeless objects that deal the severest blows; they hit hardest and hurt most; where there is life—that is to say participation in Being—there is beneficence towards the environment, all the greater as the measure of Being is fuller.

Again, Movement, which is a sort of life within bodies, an imitation of true Life, is the more decided where there is the least of body—a sign that the waning of Being makes the object affected more distinctly corporeal.

The changes known as affections show even more clearly that where the bodily quality is most pronounced susceptibility is at its intensest—earth more susceptible than other elements, and these others again more or less so in the degree of their corporeality: sever the other elements and, failing some preventive force, they join again; but earthy matter divided remains apart indefinitely. Things whose nature represents a diminishment have no power of recuperation after even a slight disturbance and they perish; thus what has most definitely become body, having most closely approximated to non-being lacks the strength to reknit its unity: the heavy and violent crash of body against body works destruction, and weak is powerful against weak, non-being against its like.

Thus far we have been meeting those who, on the evidence of thrust and resistance, identify body with real being and find assurance of truth in the phantasms that reach us through the senses, those, in a word, who, like dreamers, take for actualities the figments of their sleeping vision. The sphere of sense, the Soul in its slumber; for all of the Soul that is in body is asleep and the true getting-up is not bodily but from the body: in any movement that takes the body with it there is no more than a passage from sleep to sleep, from bed to bed; the veritable waking or rising is from corporeal things; for these, belonging to the Kind directly opposed to Soul, present to it what is directly opposed to its essential existence: their origin, their flux, and their perishing are the warning of their exclusion from the Kind whose Being is Authentic.

7.

We are thus brought back to the nature of that underlying matter and the things believed to be based upon it; investigation will show us that Matter has no reality and is not capable of being affected.

Matter must be bodiless—for body is a later production, a compound made by Matter in conjunction with some other entity. Thus it is included among incorporeal things in the sense that body is something that is neither Real-Being nor Matter.

Matter is not Soul; it is not Intellect, is not Life, is no Ideal-Principle, no Reason-Principle; it is no limit or bound, for it is mere indetermination; it is not a power, for what does it produce?

It lives on the farther side of all these categories and so has no title to the name of Being. It will be more plausibly called a non-being, and this in the sense not of movement (away from Being) or station (in Not-Being) but of veritable Not-Being, so that it is no more than the image and phantasm of Mass, a bare aspiration towards substantial existence; it is stationary but not in the sense of having position, it is in itself invisible, eluding all effort to observe it, present where no one can look, unseen for all our gazing, ceaselessly presenting contraries in the things based upon it; it is large and small, more and less, deficient and excessive; a phantasm unabiding and yet unable to withdraw—not even strong enough to withdraw, so utterly has it failed to accept strength from the Intellectual Principle, so absolute its lack of all Being.

Its every utterance, therefore, is a lie; it pretends to be great and it is little, to be more and it is less; and the Existence with which it masks itself is no Existence, but a passing trick making trickery of all that seems to be present in it, phantasms within a phantasm; it is like a mirror showing things as in itself when they are really elsewhere, filled in appearance but actually empty, containing nothing, pretending everything. Into it and out of it move mimicries of the Authentic Existents, images playing upon an image devoid of Form, visible against it by its very formlessness; they seem to modify it but in reality effect nothing, for they are ghostly and feeble, have no thrust and meet none in Matter either; they pass through it leaving no cleavage, as through water; or they might be compared to shapes projected so as to make some appearance upon what we can know only as the Void.

Further: if visible objects were of the rank of the originals from which they have entered into Matter we might believe Matter to be really affected by them, for we might credit them with some share of the power inherent in their Senders: but the objects of our experiences are of very different virtue than the realities they represent, and we deduce that the seeming modification of matter by visible things is unreal since the visible thing itself is unreal, having at no point any similarity with its source and cause. Feeble, in itself, a false thing and projected upon a falsity, like an image in dream or against water or on a mirror, it can but leave Matter unaffected; and even this is saying too little, for water and mirror do give back a faithful image of what presents itself before them.

8.

It is a general principle that, to be modified, an object must be opposed in faculty, and in quality to the forces that enter and act upon it.

Thus where heat is present, the change comes by something that chills, where damp by some drying agency: we say a subject is modified when from warm it becomes cold, from dry wet.

A further evidence is in our speaking of a fire being burned out, when it has passed over into another element; we do not say that the Matter has been burned out: in other words, modification affects what is subject to dissolution; the acceptance of modification is the path towards dissolution; susceptibility to modification and susceptibility to dissolution go necessarily together. But Matter can never be dissolved. What into? By what process?

Still:—Matter harbours heat, cold, qualities beyond all count; by these it is differentiated; it holds them as if they were of its very substance and they blend within it—since no quality is found isolated to itself—Matter lies there as the meeting ground of all these qualities with their changes as they act and react in the blend: how, then, can it fail to be modified in keeping? The only escape would be to declare Matter utterly and for ever apart from the qualities it exhibits; but the very notion of Substance implies that any and every thing present in it has some action upon it.

9.

In answer:—It must, first, be noted that there are a variety of modes in which an object may be said to be present to another or to exist in another. There is a “presence” which acts by changing the object—for good or for ill—as we see in the case of bodies, especially where there is life. But there is also a “presence” which acts, towards good or ill, with no modification of the object, as we have indicated in the case of the Soul. Then there is the case represented by the stamping of a design upon wax, where the “presence” of the added pattern causes no modification in the substance nor does its obliteration diminish it. And there is the example of Light whose presence does not even bring change of pattern to the object illuminated. A stone becoming cold does not change its nature in the process; it remains the stone it was. A drawing does not cease to be a drawing for being coloured.

The intermediary mass on which these surface changes appear is certainly not transmuted by them; but might there not be a modification of the underlying Matter?

No: it is impossible to think of Matter being modified by, for instance, colour—for, of course we must not talk of modification when there is no more than a presence, or at most a presenting of shape.

Mirrors and transparent objects, even more, offer a close parallel; they are quite unaffected by what is seen in or through them: material things are reflections, and the Matter on which they appear is further from being affected than is a mirror. Heat and cold are present in Matter, but the Matter itself suffers no change of temperature: growing hot and growing cold have to do only with quality; a quality enters and brings the impassible Substance under a new state—though, by the way, research into nature may show that cold is nothing positive but an absence, a mere negation. The qualities come together into Matter, but in most cases they can have no action upon each other; certainly there can be none between those of unlike scope: what effect, for example, could fragrance have on sweetness or the colour-quality on the quality of form, any quality on another of some unrelated order? The illustration of the mirror may well indicate to us that a given substratum may contain something quite distinct from itself—even something standing to it as a direct contrary—and yet remain entirely unaffected by what is thus present to it or merged into it.

A thing can be hurt only by something related to it, and similarly things are not changed or modified by any chance presence: modification comes by contrary acting upon contrary; things merely different leave each other as they were. Such modification by a direct contrary can obviously not occur in an order of things to which there is no contrary: Matter, therefore (the mere absence of Reality) cannot be modified: any modification that takes place can occur only in some compound of Matter and reality, or, speaking generally, in some agglomeration of actual things. The Matter itself—isolated, quite apart from all else, utterly simplex—must remain immune, untouched in the midst of all the interacting agencies; just as when people fight within their four walls, the house and the air in it remain without part in the turmoil.

We may take it, then, that while all the qualities and entities that appear upon Matter group to produce each the effect belonging to its nature, yet Matter itself remains immune, even more definitely immune than any of those qualities entering into it which, not being contraries, are not affected by each other.

10.

Further:—If Matter were susceptible of modification, it must acquire something by the incoming of the new state; it will either adopt that state, or, at least, it will be in some way different from what it was. Now upon this first incoming quality suppose a second to supervene; the recipient is no longer Matter but a modification of Matter: this second quality, perhaps, departs but it has acted and therefore leaves something of itself after it; the substratum is still further altered. This process proceeding, the substratum ends by becoming something quite different from Matter; it becomes a thing settled in many modes and many shapes; at once it is debarred from being the all-recipient; it will have closed the entry against many incomers. In other words, the Matter is no longer there: Matter is destructible.

No: if there is to be a Matter at all, it must be always identically as it has been from the beginning: to speak of Matter as changing is to speak of it as not being Matter.

Another consideration: it is a general principle that a thing changing must remain within its constitutive Idea so that the alteration is only in the accidents and not in the essential thing; the changing object must retain this fundamental permanence, and the permanent substance cannot be the member of it which accepts modification.

Therefore there are only two possibilities: the first, that Matter itself changes and so ceases to be itself, the second that it never ceases to be itself and therefore never changes.

We may be answered that it does not change in its character as Matter: but no one could tell us in what other character it changes; and we have the admission that the Matter in itself is not subject to change.

Just as the Ideal Principles stand immutably in their essence—which consists precisely in their permanence—so, since the essence of Matter consists in its being Matter (the substratum to all material things) it must be permanent in this character; because it is Matter, it is immutable. In the Intellectual realm we have the immutable Idea; here we have Matter, itself similarly immutable.

11.

I think, in fact, that Plato had this in mind where he justly speaks of the Images of Real Existents “entering and passing out”: these particular words are not used idly: he wishes us to grasp the precise nature of the relation between Matter and the Ideas.

The difficulty on this point is not really that which presented itself to most of our predecessors—how the Ideas enter into Matter—it is rather the mode of their presence in it.

It is in fact strange at sight that Matter should remain itself intact, unaffected by Ideal-forms present within it, especially seeing that these are affected by each other. It is surprising, too, that the entrant Forms should regularly expel preceding shapes and qualities, and that the modification (which cannot touch Matter) should affect what is a compound (of Idea with Matter) and this, again, not at haphazard but precisely where there is need of the incoming or outgoing of some certain Ideal-form, the compound being deficient through the absence of a particular principle whose presence will complete it.

But the reason is that the fundamental nature of Matter can take no increase by anything entering it, and no decrease by any withdrawal: what from the beginning it was, it remains. It is not like those things whose lack is merely that of arrangement and order which can be supplied without change of substance as when we dress or decorate something bare or ugly.

But where the bringing to order must cut through to the very nature, the base original must be transmuted: it can leave ugliness for beauty only by a change of substance. Matter, then, thus brought to order must lose its own nature in the supreme degree unless its baseness is an accidental: if it is base in the sense of being Baseness the Absolute, it could never participate in order, and if evil in the sense of being Evil the Absolute, it could never participate in good.

We conclude that Matter's participation in Idea is not by way of modification within itself: the process is very different; it is a bare seeming. Perhaps we have here the solution of the difficulty as to how Matter, essentially evil, can be reaching towards The Good: there would be (in this "seeming") no such participation as would destroy its essential nature. Given this mode of pseudo-participation—in which Matter would, as we say, retain its nature, unchanged, always being what it has essentially been—there is no longer any reason to wonder as to how, while essentially evil, it yet participates in Idea: for, by this mode, it does not abandon its own character: participation is the law, but it participates only just so far as its essence allows. Under a mode of participation which allows it to remain on its own footing, its essential nature stands none the less, whatsoever the Idea, within that limit, may communicate to it: it is by no means the less evil for remaining immutably in its own order. If it had authentic participation in The Good and were veritably changed, it would not be essentially evil.

In a word, when we call Matter evil we are right only if we mean that it is not amenable to modification by The Good; but that means simply that it is subject to no modification whatever.

12.

This is Plato's conception: to him participation does not, in the case of Matter, comport any such presence of an Ideal form in a Substance to be shaped by it as would produce one compound thing made up of the two elements changing at the same moment, merging into one another, modified each by the other.

In his haste to his purpose he raises many difficult questions, but he is determined to disown that view; he labours to indicate in what mode Matter can receive the Ideal-forms without being, itself, modified. The direct way is debarred since it is not easy to point to things actually present in a base and yet leaving that base unaffected: he therefore devises a metaphor for participation without modification (patternless wax, alone taking a clear impression) one which supports, also, his thesis that all appearing to the senses is void of substantial existence and that the region of mere seeming is vast.

Holding, as he does, that it is the patterns displayed upon Matter that cause all experience in living bodies while the Matter itself remains unaffected, he chooses this way of stating its immutability, leaving us to make out for ourselves that those very patterns impressed upon it do not comport any experience, any modification, in itself.

In the case, no doubt, of the living bodies that take one pattern or shape after having borne another, it might be said that there was a change, the variation of shape being made verbally equivalent to a real change: but since Matter is essentially without shape or magnitude, the appearing of shape upon it can by no freedom of phrase be described as a change within it. On this point if one must have "a rule for thick and thin" one may safely say that the underlying Kind contains nothing whatever in the mode commonly supposed.

But if we reject even the idea of its really containing at least the patterns upon it, how is it, in any sense, a recipient?

The answer is that in the metaphor cited we have some reasonably adequate indication of the impassibility of Matter coupled with the presence upon it of what may be described as images of things not present.

But we cannot leave the point of its impassibility without a warning against allowing ourselves to be deluded by sheer custom of speech.

Plato speaks of Matter as becoming dry, wet, inflamed, but we must remember the words that follow: "and taking the shape of air and of water": this blunts the expressions "becoming wet, becoming inflamed"; once we have Matter thus admitting these shapes, we learn that it has not itself become a shaped thing but that the shapes remain distinct as they entered. We see, further, that the expression "becoming inflamed" is not to be taken strictly: it is rather a case of becoming fire. Becoming fire is very different from becoming inflamed which implies an outside agency and, therefore, susceptibility to modification. Matter, being itself a portion of fire, cannot be said to catch fire. To suggest that the fire not merely permeates the matter, but

actually sets it on fire is like saying that a statue permeates its bronze (and “statufies” it).

Further, if what enters must be an Ideal-Principle how could it set Matter aflame? But what if it is a pattern or condition? No: the object set aflame is so in virtue of the combination of Matter and condition.

But how can this follow on the conjunction when no unity has been produced by the two?

Even if such a unity had been produced, it would be a unity of things not mutually sharing experiences but acting upon each other. And the question would then arise whether each was effective upon the other or whether the sole action was not that of one (the form) preventing the other (the Matter) from slipping away?

But (another difficulty) when any material thing is severed, must not the Matter be divided with it? Surely the bodily modification and other experience that have accompanied the sundering, must have occurred, identically, within the Matter?

This reasoning would force the destructibility of Matter upon us: “the body is dissolved; then the Matter is dissolved.” We would have to allow Matter to be a thing of quantity, a magnitude. But since it is not a magnitude it could not have the experiences that belong to magnitude and, on the larger scale, since it is not body it cannot know the experiences of body.

In fact those that declare Matter subject to modification may as well declare it body right out.

13.

Further, they must explain in what sense they hold that Matter tends to slip away from its form (the Idea). Can we conceive it stealing out from stones and rocks or whatever else envelops it?

And of course they cannot pretend that Matter in some cases rebels and sometimes not. For if once it makes away of its own will, why should it not always escape? If it is fixed despite itself, it must be enveloped by some Ideal-Form for good and all. This, however, leaves still the question why a given portion of Matter does not remain constant to any one given form: the reason lies mainly in the fact that the Ideas are constantly passing into it.

In what sense, then, is it said to elude form?

By very nature and for ever?

But does not this precisely mean that it never ceases to be itself, in other words that its one form is an invincible formlessness? In no other sense has Plato’s dictum any value to those that invoke it.

Matter (we read) is “the receptacle and nurse of all generation.”

Now if Matter is such a receptacle and nurse, all generation is distinct from it; and since all the changeable lies in the realm of generation, Matter, existing before all generation, must exist before all change.

“Receptacle” and “nurse”; then it “retains its identity; it is not subject to modification. Similarly if it is” (as again we read) “the ground on which individual things appear and disappear,” and so, too, if it is a “place, a base.” Where Plato describes and identifies it as “a ground to the ideas” he is not attributing any state to it; he is probing after its distinctive manner of being.

And what is that?

This which we think of as a Nature-Kind cannot be included among Existents but must utterly rebel from the Essence of Real Beings and be therefore wholly something other than they—for they are Reason-Principles and possess Authentic Existence—it must inevitably, by virtue of that difference, retain its integrity to the point of being permanently closed against them and, more, of rejecting close participation in any image of them.

Only on these terms can it be completely different: once it took any Idea to hearth and home, it would become a new thing, for it would cease to be the thing apart, the ground of all else, the receptacle of absolutely any and every form. If there is to be a ceaseless coming into it and going out from it, itself must be unmoved and immune in all the come and go. The entrant Idea will enter as an image, the untrue entering the untruth.

But, at least, in a true entry?

No: How could there be a true entry into that which, by being falsity, is banned from ever touching truth?

Is this then a pseudo-entry into a pseudo-entity—something merely brought near, as faces enter the mirror, there to remain just as long as the people look into it?

Yes: if we eliminated the Authentic Existents from this Sphere nothing of all now seen in sense would appear one moment longer.

Here the mirror itself is seen, for it is itself an Ideal-Form of a Kind (has some degree of Real Being); but bare Matter, which is no Idea, is not a visible thing; if it were, it would have been visible in its own character before anything else appeared upon it. The condition of Matter may be illustrated by that of air penetrated by light and remaining, even so, unseen because it is invisible whatever happens.

The reflections in the mirror are not taken to be real, all the less since the appliance on which they appear is seen and remains while the images disappear, but Matter is not seen either with the images or without them. But suppose the reflections on the mirror

remaining and the mirror itself not seen, we would never doubt the solid reality of all that appears.

If, then, there is, really, something in a mirror, we may suppose objects of sense to be in Matter in precisely that way: if in the mirror there is nothing, if there is only a seeming of something, then we may judge that in Matter there is the same delusion and that the seeming is to be traced to the Substantial-Existence of the Real-Beings, that Substantial-Existence in which the Authentic has the real participation while only an unreal participation can belong to the unauthentic since their condition must differ from that which they would know if the parts were reversed, if the Authentic Existents were not and they were.

14.

But would this mean that if there were no Matter nothing would exist?

Precisely as in the absence of a mirror, or something of similar power, there would be no reflection.

A thing whose very nature is to be lodged in something else cannot exist where the base is lacking—and it is the character of a reflection to appear in something not itself.

Of course supposing anything to desert from the Authentic Beings, this would not need an alien base: but these Beings are not subject to flux, and therefore any outside manifestation of them implies something other than themselves, something offering a base to what never enters, something which by its presence, in its insistence, by its cry for help, in its beggarmod, strives as it were by violence to acquire and is always disappointed so that its poverty is enduring, its cry unceasing.

This alien base exists and the myth represents it as a pauper to exhibit its nature, to show that Matter is destitute of The Good. The claimant does not ask for all the Giver's store, but it welcomes whatever it can get; in other words, what appears in Matter is not Reality.

The name, too (Poverty), conveys that Matter's need is never met. The union with Poros, Possession, is designed to show that Matter does not attain to Reality, to Plenitude, but to some bare sufficiency—in point of fact to imaging skill.

It is, of course, impossible that an outside thing belonging in any degree to Real-Being—whose Nature is to engender Real-Beings—should utterly fail of participation in Reality: but here we have something perplexing; we are dealing with utter Non-Being, absolutely without part in Reality; what is this participation by the non-participant, and how does mere neighbouring confer anything on that which by its own nature is precluded from any association?

The answer is that all that impinges upon this Non-Being is flung back as from a repelling substance; we may think of an Echo returned from a repercussive plane

surface; it is precisely because of the lack of retention that the phenomenon is supposed to belong to that particular place and even to arise there.

If Matter were participant and received Reality to the extent which we are apt to imagine, it would be penetrated by a Reality thus sucked into its constitution. But we know that the Entrant is not thus absorbed: Matter remains as it was, taking nothing to itself: it is the check to the forthwelling of Authentic Existence; it is a ground that repels; it is a mere receptacle to the Realities as they take their common path (of emanation) and here meet and mingle. It resembles those reflecting vessels, filled with water, which are often set against the sun to produce fire: the heat rays—prevented, by their contrary within, from being absorbed are flung out as one mass.

It is in this sense and way that Matter becomes the cause of the generated realm; the combinations within it hold together only after some such reflective mode.

15.

Now the objects attracting the sun-rays to themselves—illuminated by a fire of the sense-order—are necessarily of the sense-order; there is perceptibility because there has been a union of things at once external to each other and continuous, contiguous, in direct contact, two extremes in one line. But the Reason-Principle operating upon Matter is external to it only in a very different mode and sense: exteriority in this case is amply supplied by contrariety of essence and can dispense with any opposite ends (any question of lineal position); or, rather, the difference is one that actually debars any local extremity; sheer incongruity of essence, the utter failure in relationship, inhibits admixture (between Matter and any form of Being).

The reason, then, of the immutability of Matter is that the entrant principle neither possesses it nor is possessed by it. Consider, as an example, the mode in which an opinion or representation is present in the mind; there is no admixture; the notion that came goes in its time, still integrally itself alone, taking nothing with it, leaving nothing after it, because it has not been blended with the mind; there is no “outside” in the sense of contact broken, and the distinction between base and entrant is patent not to the senses but to the reason.

In that example, no doubt, the mental representation—though it seems to have a wide and unchecked control—is an image, while the Soul (Mind) is in its nature not an image (but a Reality): none the less the Soul or Mind certainly stands to the concept as Matter, or in some analogous relation. The representation, however, does not cover the Mind over; on the contrary it is often expelled by some activity there; however urgently it presses in, it never effects such an obliteration as to be taken for the Soul; it is confronted there by indwelling powers, by Reason-Principles, which repel all such attack.

Matter—feebler far than the Soul for any exercise of power, and possessing no phase of the Authentic Existents, not even in possession of its own falsity—lacks the very means of manifesting itself, utter void as it is; it becomes the means by which other things appear, but it cannot announce its own presence. Penetrating thought may

arrive at it, discriminating it from Authentic Existence; then, it is discerned as something abandoned by all that really is, by even the dimmest semblants of being, as a thing dragged towards every shape and property and appearing to follow—yet in fact not even following.

16.

An Ideal-Principle approaches and leads Matter towards some desired dimension, investing this non-existent underlie with a magnitude from itself which never becomes incorporate—for Matter, if it really incorporated magnitude, would be a mass.

Eliminate this Ideal-Form and the substratum ceases to be a thing of magnitude, or to appear so: the mass produced by the Idea was, let us suppose, a man or a horse; the horse-magnitude came upon the Matter when a horse was produced upon it; when the horse ceases to exist upon the Matter, the magnitude of the horse departs also. If we are told that the horse implies a certain determined bulk and that this bulk is a permanent thing, we answer that what is permanent in this case is not the magnitude of the horse but the magnitude of mass in general. That same Magnitude might be fire or earth; on their disappearance their particular magnitudes would disappear with them. Matter, then, can never take to itself either pattern or magnitude; if it did, it would no longer be able to turn from being fire, let us say, into being something else; it would become and be fire once for all.

In a word, though Matter is far extended—so vastly as to appear co-extensive with all this sense-known Universe—yet if the Heavens and their content came to an end, all magnitude would simultaneously pass from Matter with, beyond a doubt, all its other properties; it would be abandoned to its own Kind, retaining nothing of all that which, in its own peculiar mode, it had hitherto exhibited.

Where an entrant force can effect modification it will inevitably leave some trace upon its withdrawal; but where there can be no modification, nothing can be retained; light comes and goes, and the air is as it always was.

That a thing essentially devoid of magnitude should come to a certain size is no more astonishing than that a thing essentially devoid of heat should become warm: Matter's essential existence is quite separate from its existing in bulk, since, of course, magnitude is an immaterial principle as pattern is. Besides, if we are not to reduce Matter to nothing, it must be all things by way of participation, and Magnitude is one of those all things.

In bodies, necessarily compounds, Magnitude—though not a determined Magnitude—must be present as one of the constituents; it is implied in the very notion of body; but Matter—not a Body—excludes even undetermined Magnitude.

17.

Nor can we, on the other hand, think that matter is simply Absolute Magnitude.

Magnitude is not, like Matter, a receptacle; it is an Ideal-Principle: it is a thing standing apart to itself, not some definite Mass. The fact is that the self-gathered content of the Intellectual Principle or of the All-Soul, desires expansion (and thereby engenders secondaries): in its images— aspiring and moving towards it and eagerly imitating its act—is vested a similar power of reproducing their states in their own derivatives. The Magnitude latent in the expansive tendency of the Igemaking phase (of Intellect or All-Soul) runs forth into the Absolute Magnitude of the Universe; this in turn enlists into the process the spurious magnitude of Matter: the content of the Supreme, thus, in virtue of its own prior extension enables Matter—which never possesses a content—to exhibit the appearance of Magnitude. It must be understood that spurious Magnitude consists in the fact that a thing (Matter) not possessing actual Magnitude strains towards it and has the extension of that straining. All that is Real Being gives forth a reflection of itself upon all else; every Reality, therefore, has Magnitude which by this process is communicated to the Universe.

The Magnitude inherent in each Ideal-Principle—that of a horse or of anything else—combines with Magnitude the Absolute with the result that, irradiated by that Absolute, Matter entire takes Magnitude and every particle of it becomes a mass; in this way, by virtue at once of the totality of Idea with its inherent magnitude and of each several specific Idea, all things appear under mass; Matter takes on what we conceive as extension; it is compelled to assume a relation to the All and, gathered under this Idea and under Mass, to be all things—in the degree in which the operating power can lead the really nothing to become all.

By the conditions of Manifestation, colour rises from non-colour (=from the colourless prototype of colour in the Ideal Realm). Quality, known by the one name with its parallel in the sphere of Primals, rises, similarly, from non-quality: in precisely the same mode, the Magnitude appearing upon Matter rises from non-Magnitude or from that Primal which is known to us by the same name; so that material things become visible through standing midway between bare underlie and Pure Idea. All is perceptible by virtue of this origin in the Intellectual Sphere but all is falsity since the base in which the manifestation takes place is a non-existent.

Particular entities thus attain their Magnitude through being drawn out by the power of the Existents which mirror themselves and make space for themselves in them. And no violence is required to draw them into all the diversity of Shapes and Kinds because the phenomenal All exists by Matter (by Matter's essential all-receptivity) and because each several Idea, moreover, draws Matter its own way by the power stored within itself, the power it holds from the Intellectual Realm. Matter is manifested in this sphere as Mass by the fact that it mirrors the Absolute Magnitude; Magnitude here is the reflection in the mirror. The Ideas meet all of necessity in Matter (the Ultimate of the emanatory progress): and Matter, both as one total thing and in its entire scope, must submit itself, since (by definition) it is the Material of the

entire Here, not of any one determined thing: what is, in its own character, no determined thing may become determined by an outside force—though, in becoming thus determined, it does not become the definite thing in question, for thus it would lose its own characteristic indetermination.

18.

The Ideal Principle possessing the Intellection (=Idea, Noesis) of Magnitude—assuming that this Intellection is of such power as not merely to subsist within itself but to be urged outward as it were by the intensity of its life—will necessarily realise itself in a Kind (=Matter) not having its being in the Intellective Principle, not previously possessing the Idea of Magnitude or any trace of that Idea or any other.

What then will it produce (in this Matter) by virtue of that power?

Not horse or cow: these are the product of other Ideas.

No: this Principle comes from the source of Magnitude (= is primal “Magnitude”) and therefore Matter can have no extension, in which to harbour the Magnitude of the Principle, but can take in only its reflected appearance.

To the thing which does not enjoy Magnitude in the sense of having mass-extension in its own substance and parts, the only possibility is that it present some partial semblance of Magnitude, such as being continuous, not here and there and everywhere, that its parts be related within it and ungapped. An adequate reflection of a great mass cannot be produced in a small space—mere size prevents—but the greater, pursuing the hope of that full self-presentation, makes progress towards it and brings about a nearer approach to adequate mirroring in the parallel from which it can never withhold its radiation: thus it confers Magnitude upon that (=Matter) which has none and cannot even muster up the appearance of having any, and the visible resultant exhibits the Magnitude of mass.

Matter, then, wears Magnitude as a dress thrown about it by its association with that Absolute Magnitude to whose movement it must answer; but it does not, for that, change its Kind; if the Idea which has clothed it were to withdraw, it would once again be what it permanently is, what it is by its own strength, or it would have precisely the Magnitude lent to it by any other form that happens to be present in it.

The (Universal) Soul—containing the Ideal Principles of Real-Beings, and itself an Ideal Principle—includes all in concentration within itself, just as the Ideal Principle of each particular entity is complete and self-contained: it, therefore, sees these principles of sensible things because they are turned, as it were, towards it and advancing to it: but it cannot harbour them in their plurality, for it cannot depart from its Kind; it sees them, therefore, stripped of Mass. Matter, on the contrary, destitute of resisting power since it has no Act of its own and is a mere shadow, can but accept all that an active power may choose to send. In what is thus sent, from the Reason-Principle in the Intellectual Realm, there is already contained a degree of the partial

object that is to be formed: in the image-making impulse within the Reason-Principle there is already a step (towards the lower manifestation) or we may put it that the downward movement from the Reason-Principle is a first form of the partial: utter absence of partition would mean no movement but (sterile) repose. Matter cannot be the home of all things in concentration as the Soul is: if it were so, it would belong to the Intellective Sphere. It must be (like the Soul) all-recipient but not in that partless mode. It is to be the Place of all things, and it must therefore extend universally, offer itself to all things, serve to all interval: thus it will be a thing unconfined to any moment (of space or time) but laid out in submission to all that is to be.

But would we not expect that some one particularised form should occupy Matter (at once) and so exclude such others as are not able to enter into combination?

No: for there is no first Idea—except the Ideal Principle of the Universe—and, by this Idea, Matter is (the seat of) all things at once and of the particular thing in its parts—for the Matter of a living being is disparted according to the specific parts of the organism: if there were no such partition nothing would exist but the Reason-Principle.

19.

The Ideal Principles entering into Matter as to a Mother (to be “born into the Universe”) affect it neither for better nor for worse.

Their action is not upon Matter but upon each other; these powers conflict with their opponent principles, not with their substrata—which it would be foolish to confuse with the entrant forms—Heat (the Principle) annuls Cold, and Blackness annuls Whiteness; or, the opponents blend to form an intermediate quality. Only that is affected which enters into combinations: being affected is losing something of self-identity.

In beings of soul and body, the affection occurs in the body, modified according to the qualities and powers presiding at the act of change: in all such dissolution of constituent parts, in the new combinations, in all variation from the original structure, the affection is bodily, the Soul or Mind having no more than an accompanying knowledge of the more drastic changes, or perhaps not even that. (Body is modified: Mind knows) but the Matter concerned remains unaffected; heat enters, cold leaves it, and it is unchanged because neither Principle is associated with it as friend or enemy.

So the appellation “Recipient and Nurse” is the better description: Matter is the mother only in the sense indicated; it has no begetting power. But probably the term Mother is used by those who think of a Mother as Matter to the offspring, as a container only, giving nothing to them, the entire bodily frame of the child being formed out of food. But if this Mother (Matter) does give anything to the offspring it does so not in its quality as Matter but as being (in some degree) an Ideal-Form; for only the Idea is generative; the contrary Kind is sterile.

This, I think, is why the doctors of old, teaching through symbols and mystic representations, exhibit the ancient Hermes with the generative organ always in active posture; this is to convey that the generator of things of sense is the Intellectual Reason Principle: the sterility of Matter, eternally unmoved, is indicated by the eunuchs surrounding it in its representation as the All-Mother.

This too exalting title is conferred upon it in order to indicate that it is the source of things in the sense of being their underlie: it is an approximate name chosen for a general conception; there is no intention of suggesting a complete parallel with motherhood to those not satisfied with a surface impression but needing a precisely true presentment; by a remote symbolism, the nearest they could find, they indicate that Matter is sterile, not female to full effect, female in receptivity only, not in pregnancy: this they accomplish by exhibiting Matter as approached by what is neither female nor effectively male, but castrated of that impregnating power which belongs only to the unchangeably masculine.

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SEVENTH TRACTATE

Time And Eternity

1.

Eternity and Time; two entirely separate things, we explain “the one having its being in the everlasting Kind, the other in the realm of Process, in our own Universe”; and, by continually using the words and assigning every phenomenon to the one or the other category, we come to think that, both by instinct and by the more detailed attack of thought, we hold an adequate experience of them in our minds without more ado.

When, perhaps, we make the effort to clarify our ideas and close into the heart of the matter we are at once unsettled: our doubts throw us back upon ancient explanations; we choose among the various theories, or among the various interpretations of some one theory, and so we come to rest, satisfied, if only we can counter a question with an approved answer, and glad to be absolved from further enquiry.

Now, we must believe that some of the venerable philosophers of old discovered the truth; but it is important to examine which of them really hit the mark and by what guiding principle we can ourselves attain to certitude.

What, then, does Eternity really mean to those who (thus casually) describe it as something different from Time? We begin with Eternity, since when the standing Exemplar is known, its representation in image—which Time is understood to be—will be clearly apprehended—though it is of course equally true, admitting this relationship of Time as image to Eternity the original, that if we chose to begin by identifying Time we could thence proceed upwards by Recognition (the Platonic Anamnesis) and become aware of the Kind which it images.

2.

What definition are we to give of Eternity?

Can it be identified with the (divine or) Intellectual Substance itself?

This would be like identifying Time with the Universe of Heavens and Earth—an opinion, it is true, which appears to have had its adherents. No doubt we conceive, we know, Eternity as something most august; most august, too, is the Intellectual Kind; and there is no possibility of saying that the one is more majestic than the other, since no such degrees can be asserted in the Above-World; there is therefore a certain excuse for the identification—all the more since the Intellectual Substance and Eternity have the one scope and content.

Still; by the fact of representing the one as contained within the other, by making Eternity a predicate to the Intellectual Existents—"the Nature of the Exemplar," we read, "is eternal"—we cancel the identification; Eternity becomes a separate thing, something surrounding that Nature or lying within it or present to it. And the majestic quality of both does not prove them identical: it might be transmitted from the one to the other. So, too, Eternity and the Divine Nature envelop the same entities, yes; but not in the same way: the Divine may be thought of as enveloping parts, Eternity as embracing its content in an unbroken whole, with no implication of part, but merely from the fact that all eternal things are so by conforming to it.

May we, perhaps, identify Eternity with Repose-There as Time has been identified with Movement-Here?

This would bring on the counter-question whether Eternity is presented to us as Repose in the general sense or as the Repose that envelops the Intellectual Essence.

On the first supposition we can no more talk of Repose being eternal than of Eternity being eternal: to be eternal is to participate in an outside thing, Eternity.

Further, if Eternity is Repose, what becomes of Eternal Movement, which, by this identification, would become a thing of Repose?

Again, the conception of Repose scarcely seems to include that of perpetuity—I am speaking of course not of perpetuity in the time-order (which might follow on absence of movement) but of that which we have in mind when we speak of Eternity.

If, on the other hand, Eternity is identified with the Repose of the divine Essence, all species outside of the divine are put outside of Eternity.

Besides, the conception of Eternity requires not merely Repose but also unity—and, in order to keep it distinct from Time, a unity including interval—but neither that unity nor that absence of interval enters into the conception of Repose as such.

Lastly, this unchangeable Repose in unity is a predicate asserted of Eternity, which, therefore, is not itself Repose, the absolute, but a participant in Repose.

3.

What, then, can this be, this something in virtue of which we declare the entire divine Realm to be Eternal, everlasting? We must come to some understanding of this perpetuity with which Eternity is either identical or in conformity.

It must at once, be at once something in the nature of unity and yet a notion compact of diversity, or (more exactly) a Kind, a Nature, that waits upon the Existents of that Other World, either associated with them or known in and upon them, they collectively being this Nature which, with all its unity, is yet diverse in power and essence. Considering this multifarious power, we declare it to be Essence in its relation to this sphere which is substratum or underlie to it; where we see life we think

of it as Movement; where all is unvaried self-identity we call it Repose; and we know it as, at once, Difference and Identity when we recognise that all is unity with variety.

Then we reconstruct; we sum all into a collected unity once more, a sole Life in the Supreme; we concentrate Diversity and all the endless production of act: thus we know Identity, a concept or, rather, a Life never varying, not becoming what previously it was not, the thing immutably itself, broken by no interval; and knowing this, we know Eternity.

We know it as a Life changelessly motionless and ever holding the Universal content (time, space and phenomena) in actual presence; not this now and now that other, but always all; not existing now in one mode and now in another, but a consummation without part or interval. All its content is in immediate concentration as at one point; nothing in it ever knows development: all remains identical within itself, knowing nothing of change, for ever in a Now since nothing of it has passed away or will come into being, but what it is now, that it is ever.

Eternity, therefore—while not the Substratum (not the essential foundation of the Divine or Intellectual Principle)—may be considered as the radiation of this Substratum: it exists as the announcement of the Identity in the Divine, of that state—of being thus and not otherwise—which characterises what has no futurity but eternally is.

What future, in fact, could bring to that Being anything which it now does not possess; and could it come to be anything which it is not once for all?

There exists no source or ground from which anything could make its way into that standing present; any imagined entrant will prove to be not alien but already integral. And as it can never come to be anything at present outside it, so, necessarily, it cannot include any past; what can there be that once was in it and now is gone? Futurity, similarly, is banned; nothing could be yet to come to it. Thus no ground is left for its existence but that it be what it is.

That which neither has been nor will be, but simply possesses being; that which enjoys stable existence as neither in process of change nor having ever changed—that is Eternity. Thus we come to the definition: the Life—instantaneously entire, complete, at no point broken into period or part—which belongs to the Authentic Existent by its very existence, this is the thing we were probing for—this is Eternity.

4.

We must, however, avoid thinking of it as an accidental from outside grafted upon that Nature: it is native to it, integral to it.

It is discerned as present essentially in that Nature like everything else that we can predicate There—all immanent, springing from that Essence and inherent to that Essence. For whatsoever has primal Being must be immanent to the Firsts and be a

First—Eternity equally with The Good that is among them and of them and equally with the truth that is among them.

In one aspect, no doubt, Eternity resides in a partial phase of the All-Being; but in another aspect it is inherent in the All taken as a totality, since that Authentic All is not a thing patched up out of external parts, but is authentically an all because its parts are engendered by itself. It is like the truthfulness in the Supreme which is not an agreement with some outside fact or being but is inherent in each member about which it is the truth. To an authentic All it is not enough that it be everything that exists: it must possess all-ness in the full sense that nothing whatever is absent from it. Then nothing is in store for it: if anything were to come, that thing must have been lacking to it, and it was, therefore, not All. And what, of a Nature contrary to its own, could enter into it when it is (the Supreme and therefore) immune? Since nothing can accrue to it, it cannot seek change or be changed or ever have made its way into Being.

Engendered things are in continuous process of acquisition; eliminate futurity, therefore, and at once they lose their being; if the non-engendered are made amenable to futurity they are thrown down from the seat of their existence, for, clearly, existence is not theirs by their nature if it appears only as a being about to be, a becoming, an advancing from stage to stage.

The essential existence of generated things seems to lie in their existing from the time of their generation to the ultimate of time after which they cease to be: but such an existence is compact of futurity, and the annulment of that futurity means the stopping of the life and therefore of the essential existence.

Such a stoppage would be true, also, of the (generated) All in so far as it is a thing of process and change: for this reason it keeps hastening towards its future, dreading to rest, seeking to draw Being to itself by a perpetual variety of production and action and by its circling in a sort of ambition after Essential Existence.

And here we have, incidentally, lighted upon the cause of the Circuit of the All; it is a movement which seeks perpetuity by way of futurity.

The Primals, on the contrary, in their state of blessedness have no such aspiration towards anything to come: they are the whole, now; what life may be thought of as their due, they possess entire; they, therefore, seek nothing, since there is nothing future to them, nothing external to them in which any futurity could find lodgement.

Thus the perfect and all-comprehensive essence of the Authentic Existent does not consist merely in the completeness inherent in its members; its essence includes, further, its established immunity from all lack with the exclusion, also, of all that is without Being—for not only must all things be contained in the All and Whole, but it can contain nothing that is, or was ever non-existent—and this State and Nature of the Authentic Existent is Eternity: in our very word, Eternity means Ever-Being (aion=aeion).

5.

This Ever-Being is realised when upon examination of an object I am able to say—or rather, to know—that in its very Nature it is incapable of increment or change; anything that fails by that test is no Ever-Existent or, at least, no Ever-All-Existent.

But is perpetuity enough in itself to constitute an Eternal?

No: the object must, farther, include such a Nature-Principle as to give the assurance that the actual state excludes all future change, so that it is found at every observation as it always was.

Imagine, then, the state of a being which cannot fall away from the vision of this but is for ever caught to it, held by the spell of its grandeur, kept to it by virtue of a nature itself unailing—or even the state of one that must labour towards Eternity by directed effort, but then to rest in it, immoveable at any point, assimilated to it, co-eternal with it, contemplating Eternity and the Eternal by what is Eternal within the self.

Accepting this as a true account of an eternal, a perdurable Existent—one which never turns to any Kind outside itself, that possesses life complete once for all, that has never received any accession, that is now receiving none and will never receive any—we have, with the statement of a perduring Being, the statement also of perdurance and of Eternity: perdurance is the corresponding state arising from the (divine) substratum and inherent in it; Eternity (the Principle as distinguished from the property of everlastingness) is that substratum carrying that state in manifestation.

Eternity, thus, is of the order of the supremely great; it proves on investigation to be identical with God: it may fitly be described as God made manifest, as God declaring what He is, as existence without jolt or change, and therefore as also the firmly living.

And it should be no shock that we find plurality in it; each of the Beings of the Supreme is multiple by virtue of unlimited force; for to be limitless implies failing at no point, and Eternity is pre-eminently the limitless since (having no past or future) it spends nothing of its own substance.

Thus a close enough definition of Eternity would be that it is a life limitless in the full sense of being all the life there is and a life which, knowing nothing of past or future to shatter its completeness, possesses itself intact for ever. To the notion of a Life (a Living-Principle) all-comprehensive add that it never spends itself, and we have the statement of a Life instantaneously infinite.

6.

Now the Principle this stated, all good and beauty, and everlasting, is centred in The One, sprung from It, and pointed towards It, never straying from It, but ever holding about It and in It and living by Its law; and it is in this reference, as I judge, that Plato—finely, and by no means inadvertently but with profound intention—wrote

those words of his “Eternity stable in Unity”; he wishes to convey that Eternity is not merely something circling on its traces into a final unity but has (instantaneous) Being about The One as the unchanging Life of the Authentic Existent. This is certainly what we have been seeking: this Principle, at rest within the One, is Eternity; possessing this stable quality, being itself at once the absolute self-identical and none the less the active manifestation of an unchanging Life set towards the Divine and dwelling within It, untrue, therefore, neither on the side of Being nor on the side of Life—this will be Eternity (the Real-Being we have sought).

Truly to be comports never lacking existence and never knowing variety in the mode of existence: Being is, therefore, self-identical throughout, and, therefore, again is one undistinguishable thing. Being can have no this and that; it cannot be treated in terms of intervals, unfoldings, progression, extension; there is no grasping any first or last in it.

If, then, there is no first or last in this Principle, if existence is its most authentic possession and its very self, and this in the sense that its existence is Essence or Life—then, once again, we meet here what we have been discussing, Eternity.

Observe that such words as “always, never, sometimes” must be taken as mere conveniences of exposition: thus “always”—used in the sense not of time but of incorruptibility and endlessly complete scope—might set up the false notion of stage and interval. We might perhaps prefer to speak of “Being,” without any attribute; but since this term is applicable to Essence and some writers have used the word Essence for things of process, we cannot convey our meaning to them without introducing some word carrying the notion of perdurance.

There is, of course, no difference between Being and Everlasting Being; just as there is none between a philosopher and a true philosopher: the attribute “true” came into use because there arose what masqueraded as philosophy; and for similar reasons “everlasting” was adjoined to “Being,” and “Being” to “everlasting,” and we have (the tautology of) “Everlasting Being.” We must take this “Everlasting” as expressing no more than Authentic Being: it is merely a partial expression of a potency which ignores all interval or term and can look forward to nothing by way of addition to the All which it possesses. The Principle of which this is the statement will be the All-Existent, and, as being all, can have no failing or deficiency, cannot be at some one point complete and at some other lacking.

Things and Beings in the Time order—even when to all appearance complete, as a body is when fit to harbour a soul—are still bound to sequence; they are deficient to the extent of that thing, Time, which they need: let them have it, present to them and running side by side with them, and they are by that very fact incomplete; completeness is attributed to them only by an accident of language.

But the conception of Eternity demands something which is in its nature complete without sequence; it is not satisfied by something measured out to any remoter time or even by something limitless, but, in its limitless reach, still having the progression of futurity: it requires something immediately possessed of the due fullness of Being,

something whose Being does not depend upon any quantity (such as instalments of time) but subsists before all quantity.

Itself having no quantity, it can have no contact with anything quantitative since its Life cannot be made a thing of fragments, in contradiction to the partlessness which is its character; it must be without parts in the Life as in the essence.

The phrase “He was good” (used by Plato of the Demiurge) refers to the Idea of the All; and its very indefiniteness signifies the utter absence of relation to Time: so that even this Universe has had no temporal beginning; and if we speak of something “before” it, that is only in the sense of the Cause from which it takes its Eternal Existence. Plato used the word merely for the convenience of exposition, and immediately corrects it as inappropriate to the order vested with the Eternity he conceives and affirms.

7.

Now comes the question whether, in all this discussion, we are not merely helping to make out a case for some other order of Beings and talking of matters alien to ourselves.

But how could that be? What understanding can there be failing some point of contact? And what contact could there be with the utterly alien?

We must then have, ourselves, some part or share in Eternity.

Still, how is this possible to us who exist in Time?

The whole question turns on the distinction between being in Time and being in Eternity, and this will be best realised by probing to the Nature of Time. We must, therefore, descend from Eternity to the investigation of Time, to the realm of Time: till now we have been taking the upward way; we must now take the downward—not to the lowest levels but within the degree in which Time itself is a descent from Eternity.

If the venerable sages of former days had not treated of Time, our method would be to begin by linking to (the idea of) Eternity (the idea of) its Next (its inevitable downward or outgoing subsequent in the same order), then setting forth the probable nature of such a Next and proceeding to show how the conception thus formed tallies with our own doctrine.

But, as things are, our best beginning is to range over the most noteworthy of the ancient opinions and see whether any of them accord with ours.

Existing explanations of Time seem to fall into three classes:—

Time is variously identified with what we know as Movement, with a moved object, and with some phenomenon of Movement: obviously it cannot be Rest or a resting

object or any phenomenon of rest, since, in its characteristic idea, it is concerned with change.

Of those that explain it as Movement, some identify it with Absolute Movement (or with the total of Movement), others with that of the All. Those that make it a moved object would identify it with the orb of the All. Those that conceive it as some phenomenon, or some period, of Movement treat it, severally, either as a standard of measure or as something inevitably accompanying Movement, abstract or definite.

8.

Movement Time cannot be—whether a definite act of moving is meant or a united total made up of all such acts—since movement, in either sense, takes place in Time. And, of course, if there is any movement not in Time, the identification with Time becomes all the less tenable.

In a word, Movement must be distinct from the medium in which it takes place.

And, with all that has been said or is still said, one consideration is decisive: Movement can come to rest, can be intermittent; Time is continuous.

We will be told that the Movement of the All is continuous (and so may be identical with Time).

But, if the reference is to the Circuit of the heavenly system (it is not strictly continuous, or equable, since) the time taken in the return path is not that of the outgoing movement; the one is twice as long as the other: this Movement of the All proceeds, therefore, by two different degrees; the rate of the entire journey is not that of the first half.

Further, the fact that we hear of the Movement of the outermost sphere being the swiftest confirms our theory. Obviously, it is the swiftest of movements by taking the lesser time to traverse the greater space—the very greatest—all other moving things are slower by taking a longer time to traverse a mere segment of the same extension: in other words, Time is not this movement.

And, if Time is not even the movement of the Kosmic Sphere much less is it the sphere itself though that has been identified with Time on the ground of its being in motion.

Is it, then, some phenomenon or connection of Movement?

Let us, tentatively, suppose it to be extent, or duration, of Movement.

Now, to begin with, Movement, even continuous, has no unchanging extent (as Time the equable has), since, even in space, it may be faster or slower; there must, therefore, be some unit of standard outside it, by which these differences are measurable, and this outside standard would more properly be called Time. And

failing such a measure, which extent would be Time, that of the fast or of the slow—or rather which of them all, since these speed-differences are limitless?

Is it the extent of the subordinate Movement (=movement of things of earth)?

Again, this gives us no unit since the movement is infinitely variable: we would have, thus, not Time but Times.

The extent of the Movement of the All, then?

The Celestial Circuit may, no doubt, be thought of in terms of quantity. It answers to measure—in two ways. First there is space; the movement is commensurate with the area it passes through, and this area is its extent. But this gives us, still, space only, not Time. Secondly, the circuit, considered apart from distance traversed, has the extent of its continuity, of its tendency not to stop but to proceed indefinitely: but this is merely amplitude of Movement; search it, tell its vastness, and, still, Time has no more appeared, no more enters into the matter, than when one certifies a high pitch of heat; all we have discovered is Motion in ceaseless succession, like water flowing ceaselessly, motion and extent of motion.

Succession or repetition gives us Number—dyad, triad, etc.—and the extent traversed is a matter of Magnitude; thus we have Quantity of Movement—in the form of number, dyad, triad, decade, or in the form of extent apprehended in what we may call the amount of the Movement: but, the idea of Time we have not. That definite Quantity is (not Time but) merely something occurring within Time, for, otherwise Time is not everywhere but is something belonging to Movement which thus would be its substratum or basic-stuff: once more, then, we would be making Time identical with Movement; for the extent of Movement is not something outside it but is simply its continuousness, and we need not halt upon the difference between the momentary and the continuous, which is simply one of manner and degree. The extended movement and its extent are not Time; they are in Time. Those that explain Time as extent of Movement must mean not the extent of the movement itself but something which determines its extension, something with which the movement keeps pace in its course. But what this something is, we are not told; yet it is, clearly, Time, that in which all Movement proceeds. This is what our discussion has aimed at from the first: “What, essentially, is Time?” It comes to this: we ask “What is Time?” and we are answered, “Time is the extension of Movement in Time!”

On the one hand Time is said to be an extension apart from and outside that of Movement; and we are left to guess what this extension may be: on the other hand, it is represented as the extension of Movement; and this leaves the difficulty what to make of the extension of Rest—though one thing may continue as long in repose as another in motion, so that we are obliged to think of one thing Time that covers both Rest and Movements, and, therefore, stands distinct from either.

What then is this thing of extension? To what order of beings does it belong?

It obviously is not spatial, for place, too, is something outside it.

9.

“A Number, a Measure, belonging to Movement?”

This, at least, is plausible since Movement is a continuous thing; but let us consider.

To begin with, we have the doubt which met us when we probed its identification with extent of Movement: is Time the measure of any and every Movement?

Have we any means of calculating disconnected and lawless Movement? What number or measure would apply? What would be the principle of such a Measure?

One Measure for movement slow and fast, for any and every movement: then that number and measure would be like the decade, by which we reckon horses and cows, or like some common standard for liquids and solids. If Time is this Kind of Measure, we learn, no doubt, of what objects it is a Measure—of Movements—but we are no nearer understanding what it is in itself.

Or: we may take the decade and think of it, apart from the horses or cows, as a pure number; this gives us a measure which, even though not actually applied, has a definite nature. Is Time, perhaps, a Measure in this sense?

No: to tell us no more of Time in itself than that it is such a number is merely to bring us back to the decade we have already rejected, or to some similar collective figure.

If, on the other hand, Time is (not such an abstraction but) a Measure possessing a continuous extent of its own, it must have quantity, like a foot-rule; it must have magnitude; it will, clearly, be in the nature of a line traversing the path of Movement. But, itself thus sharing in the movement, how can it be a Measure of Movement? Why should the one of the two be the measure rather than the other? Besides an accompanying measure is more plausibly considered as a measure of the particular movement it accompanies than of Movement in general. Further, this entire discussion assumes continuous movement, since the accompanying principle, Time, is itself unbroken (but a full explanation implies justification of Time in repose).

The fact is that we are not to think of a measure outside and apart, but of a combined thing, a measured Movement, and we are to discover what measures it.

Given a Movement measured, are we to suppose the measure to be a magnitude?

If so, which of these two would be Time, the measured movement or the measuring magnitude? For Time (as measure) must be either the movement measured by magnitude, or the measuring magnitude itself or something using the magnitude like a yard-stick to appraise the movement. In all three cases, as we have indicated, the application is scarcely plausible except where continuous movement is assumed; unless the Movement proceeds smoothly, and even unintermittently and as embracing the entire content of the moving object, great difficulties arise in the identification of Time with any kind of measure.

Let us, then, suppose Time to be this “measured Movement,” measured by quantity. Now the Movement if it is to be measured requires a measure outside itself; this was the only reason for raising the question of the accompanying measure. In exactly the same way the measuring magnitude, in turn, will require a measure, because only when the standard shows such and such an extension can the degree of movement be appraised. Time then will be, not the magnitude accompanying the Movement, but that numerical value by which the magnitude accompanying the Movement is estimated. But that number can be only the abstract figure which represents the magnitude, and it is difficult to see how an abstract figure can perform the act of measuring.

And, supposing that we discover a way in which it can, we still have not Time, the measure, but a particular quantity of Time, not at all the same thing: Time means something very different from any definite period: before all question as to quantity is the question as to the thing of which a certain quantity is present.

Time, we are told, is the number outside Movement and measuring it, like the tens applied to the reckoning of the horses and cows but not inherent in them: we are not told what this Number is; yet, applied or not, it must, like that decade, have some nature of its own.

Or “it is that which accompanies a Movement and measures it by its successive stages”; but we are still left asking what this thing recording the stages may be.

In any case, once a thing—whether by point or standard or any other means—measures succession, it must measure according to time: this number appraising movement degree by degree must, therefore, if it is to serve as a measure at all, be something dependent upon time and in contact with it: for, either, degree is spatial, merely—the beginning and end of the Stadium, for example—or in the only alternative, it is a pure matter of Time: the succession of early and late is stage of Time, Time ending upon a certain Now or Time beginning from a Now.

Time, therefore, is something other than the mere number measuring Movement, whether Movement in general or any particular tract of Movement.

Further:—Why should the mere presence of a number give us Time—a number measuring or measured; for the same number may be either—if Time is not given us by the fact of Movement itself, the movement which inevitably contains in itself a succession of stages? To make the number essential to Time is like saying that magnitude has not its full quantity unless we can estimate that quantity.

Again, if Time is, admittedly, endless, how can number apply to it?

Are we to take some portion of Time and find its numerical statement? That simply means that Time existed before number was applied to it.

We may, therefore, very well think that it existed before the Soul or Mind that estimates it—if, indeed, it is not to be thought to take its origin from the Soul—for no

measurement by anything is necessary to its existence; measured or not, it has the full extent of its being.

And suppose it to be true that the Soul is the appraiser, using Magnitude as the measuring standard, how does this help us to the conception of Time?

10.

Time, again, has been described as some sort of a sequence upon Movement, but we learn nothing from this, nothing is said, until we know what it is that produces this sequential thing; probably the cause and not the result would turn out to be Time.

And, admitting such a thing, there would still remain the question whether it came into being before the movement, with it, or after it; and, whether we say before or with or after, we are speaking of order in Time: and thus our definition is “Time is a sequence upon movement *in Time!*”

Enough. Our main purpose is to show what Time is, not to refute false definition. To traverse point by point the many opinions of our many predecessors would mean a history rather than an identification; we have treated the various theories as fully as is possible in a cursory review: and, notice, that which makes Time the Measure of the All-Movement is refuted by our entire discussion and, especially, by the observations upon the Measurement of Movement in general, for all the argument—except, of course, that from irregularity—applies to the All as much as to particular Movement.

We are, thus, at the stage where we are to state what Time really is.

11.

To this end we must go back to the state we affirmed of Eternity, unwavering Life, undivided totality, limitless, knowing no divagation, at rest in unity and intent upon it. Time was not yet: or at least it did not exist for the Eternal Beings, though its being was implicit in the Idea and Principle of progressive derivation.

But from the Divine Beings thus at rest within themselves, how did this Time first emerge?

We can scarcely call upon the Muses to recount its origin since they were not in existence then—perhaps not even if they had been. The engendered thing, Time, itself, can best tell us how it rose and became manifest; something thus its story would run:

Time at first—in reality before that “first” was produced by desire of succession—Time lay, self-concentrated, at rest within the Authentic Existent: it was not yet Time; it was merged in the Authentic and motionless with it. But there was an active principle there, one set on governing itself and realising itself (=the All-Soul), and it chose to aim at something more than its present: it stirred from its rest, and

Time stirred with it. And we (i.e. human Souls as summed in the principle of developing Life, the All-Soul?) we, stirring to a ceaseless succession, to a next, to the discrimination of identity and the establishment of ever new difference, traversed a portion of the outgoing path and produced an image of Eternity, produced Time.

For the Soul contained an unquiet faculty, always desirous of translating elsewhere what it saw in the Authentic Realm, and it could not bear to retain within itself all the dense fullness of its possession.

A Seed is at rest; the nature-principle within, uncoiling outwards, makes way towards what seems to it a large life; but by that partition it loses; it was a unity self-gathered, and now, in going forth from itself, it fritters its unity away; it advances into a weaker greatness. It is so with this faculty of the Soul, when it produces the Kosmos known to sense—the mimic of the Divine Sphere, moving not in the very movement of the Divine but in its similitude, in an effort to reproduce that of the Divine. To bring this Kosmos into being, the Soul first laid aside its eternity and clothed itself with Time; this world of its fashioning it then gave over to be a servant to Time, making it at every point a thing of Time, setting all its progressions within the bournes of Time. For the Kosmos moves only in Soul—the only Space within the range of the All open to it to move in—and therefore its Movement has always been in the Time which inheres in Soul.

Putting forth its energy in act after act, in a constant progress of novelty, the Soul produces succession as well as act; taking up new purposes added to the old it brings thus into being what had not existed in that former period when its purpose was still dormant and its life was not as it since became: the life is changed and that change carries with it a change of Time. Time, then, is contained in differentiation of Life; the ceaseless forward movement of Life brings with it unending Time; and Life as it achieves its stages constitutes past Time.

Would it, then, be sound to define Time as the Life of the Soul in movement as it passes from one stage of act or experience to another?

Yes; for Eternity, we have said, is Life in repose, unchanging, self-identical, always endlessly complete; and there is to be an image of Eternity—Time—such an image as this lower All presents of the Higher Sphere. Therefore over against that higher life there must be another life, known by the same name as the more veritable life of the Soul; over against that movement of the Intellectual Soul there must be the movement of some partial phase; over against that identity, unchangeableness and stability there must be that which is not constant in the one hold but puts forth multitudinous acts; over against that oneness without extent or interval there must be an image of oneness, a unity of link and succession; over against the immediately infinite and all-comprehending, that which tends, yes, to infinity but by tending to a perpetual futurity; over against the Whole in concentration, there must be that which is to be a Whole by stages never final. The lesser must always be working towards the increase of its Being, this will be its imitation of what is immediately complete, self-realised, endless without stage: only thus can its Being reproduce that of the Higher.

Time, however, is not to be conceived as outside of Soul; Eternity is not outside of the Authentic Existent: nor is it to be taken as a sequence or succession to Soul, any more than Eternity is to the Divine. It is a thing seen upon Soul, inherent, coeval to it, as Eternity to the Intellectual Realm.

12.

We are brought thus to the conception of a Natural-Principle—Time—a certain expanse (a quantitative phase) of the Life of the Soul, a principle moving forward by smooth and uniform changes following silently upon each other—a Principle, then, whose Act is (not one like that of the Supreme but) sequent.

But let us conceive this power of the Soul to turn back and withdraw from the life-course which it now maintains, from the continuous and unending activity of an ever-existent soul not self-contained or self-intent but concerned about doing and engendering: imagine it no longer accomplishing any Act, setting a pause to this work it has inaugurated; let this outgoing phase of the Soul become once more, equally with the rest, turned to the Supreme, to Eternal Being, to the tranquilly stable.

What would then exist but Eternity?

All would remain in unity; how could there be any diversity of things? What Earlier or Later would there be, what long-lasting or short-lasting? What ground would lie ready to the Soul's operation but the Supreme in which it has its Being? Or, indeed, what operative tendency could it have even to That since a prior separation is the necessary condition of tendency?

The very sphere of the Universe would not exist; for it cannot antedate Time: it, too, has its Being and its Movement in Time; and if it ceased to move, the Soul-Act (which is the essence of Time) continuing, we could measure the period of its Repose by that standard outside it.

If, then, the Soul withdrew, sinking itself again into its primal unity, Time would disappear: the origin of Time, clearly, is to be traced to the first stir of the Soul's tendency towards the production of the sensible universe with the consecutive act ensuing. This is how "Time"—as we read—"came into Being simultaneously" with this All: the Soul begot at once the Universe and Time; in that activity of the Soul this Universe sprang into being; the activity is Time, the Universe is a content of Time. No doubt it will be urged that we read also of "the orbit of the Stars being Times": but do not forget what follows; "the stars exist," we are told, "for the display and delimitation of Time," and "that there may be a manifest Measure." No indication of Time could be derived from (observation of) the Soul; no portion of it can be seen or handled, so it could not be measured in itself, especially when there was as yet no knowledge of counting; therefore the Soul brings into being night and day; in their difference is given Duality—from which, we read, arises the concept of Number.

We observe the tract between a sunrise and its return and, as the movement is uniform, we thus obtain a Time-interval upon which to support ourselves, and we use

this as a standard. We have thus a measure of Time. Time itself is not a measure. How would it set to work? And what kind of thing is there of which it could say, "I find the extent of this equal to such and such a stretch of my own extent?" What is this "I"? Obviously something by which measurement is known. Time, then, serves towards measurement but is not itself the Measure: the Movement of the All will be measured according to Time, but Time will not, of its own Nature, be a Measure of Movement: primarily a Kind to itself, it will incidentally exhibit the magnitudes of that movement.

And the reiterated observation of Movement—the same extent found to be traversed in such and such a period—will lead to the conception of a definite quantity of Time past.

This brings us to the fact that, in a certain sense, the Movement, the orbit of the universe, may legitimately be said to measure Time—in so far as that is possible at all—since any definite stretch of that circuit occupies a certain quantity of Time, and this is the only grasp we have of Time, our only understanding of it: what that circuit measures—by indication, that is—will be Time, manifested by the Movement but not brought into being by it.

This means that the measure of the Spheric Movement has itself been measured by a definite stretch of that Movement and therefore is something different; as measure, it is one thing and, as the measured, it is another; (its being measure or) its being measured cannot be of its essence.

We are no nearer knowledge than if we said that the foot-rule measures Magnitude while we left the concept Magnitude undefined; or, again, we might as well define Movement—whose limitlessness puts it out of our reach—as the thing measured by Space; the definition would be parallel since we can mark off a certain space which the Movement has traversed and say the one is equivalent to the other.

13.

The Spherical Circuit, then, performed in Time, indicates it: but when we come to Time itself there is no question of its being "within" something else: it must be primary, a thing "within itself." It is that in which all the rest happens, in which all movement and rest exist smoothly and under order; something following a definite order is necessary to exhibit it and to make it a subject of knowledge—though not to produce it—it is known by order whether in rest or in motion; in motion especially, for Movement better moves Time into our ken than rest can, and it is easier to estimate distance traversed than repose maintained.

This last fact has led to Time being called a measure of Movement when it should have been described as something measured by Movement and then defined in its essential nature; it is an error to define it by a mere accidental concomitant and so to reverse the actual order of things. Possibly, however, this reversal was not intended by the authors of the explanation: but, at any rate, we do not understand them; they plainly apply the term Measure to what is in reality the measured and leave us unable

to grasp their meaning: our perplexity may be due to the fact that their writings—addressed to disciples acquainted with their teaching—do not explain what this thing, measure, or measured object, is in itself.

Plato does not make the essence of Time consist in its being either a measure or a thing measured by something else.

Upon the point of the means by which it is known, he remarks that the Circuit advances an infinitesimal distance for every infinitesimal segment of Time so that from that observation it is possible to estimate what the Time is, how much it amounts to: but when his purpose is to explain its essential nature he tells us that it sprang into Being simultaneously with the Heavenly system, a reproduction of Eternity, its image in motion, Time necessarily unresting as the Life with which it must keep pace: and “coeval with the Heavens” because it is this same Life (of the Divine Soul) which brings the Heavens also into being; Time and the Heavens are the work of the one Life.

Suppose that Life, then, to revert—an impossibility—to perfect unity: Time, whose existence is in that Life, and the Heavens, no longer maintained by that Life, would end at once.

It is the height of absurdity to fasten on the succession of earlier and later occurring in the life and movement of this sphere of ours, to declare that it must be some definite thing and to call it Time, while denying the reality of the more truly existent Movement, that of the Soul, which has also its earlier and later: it cannot be reasonable to recognise succession in the case of the Soulless Movement—and so to associate Time with that—while ignoring succession and the reality of Time in the Movement from which the other takes its imitative existence; to ignore, that is, the very Movement in which succession first appears, a self-actuated movement which, engendering its own every operation, is the source of all that follows upon itself, to all which, it is the cause of existence, at once, and of every consequent.

But:—we treat the Kosmic Movement as overarched by that of the Soul and bring it under Time; yet we do not set under Time that Soul-Movement itself with all its endless progression: what is our explanation of this paradox?

Simply, that the Soul-Movement has for its Prior (not Time but) Eternity which knows neither its progression nor its extension. The descent towards Time begins with this Soul-Movement; it made Time and harbours Time as a concomitant to its Act.

And this is how Time is omnipresent: that Soul is absent from no fragment of the Kosmos just as our Soul is absent from no particle of ourselves. As for those who pronounce Time a thing of no substantial existence, of no reality, they clearly belie God Himself whenever they say “He was” or “He will be”: for the existence indicated by the “was and will be” can have only such reality as belongs to that in which it is said to be situated:—but this school demands another style of argument.

Meanwhile we have a supplementary observation to make.

Take a man walking and observe the advance he has made; that advance gives you the quantity of movement he is employing: and when you know that quantity—represented by the ground traversed by his feet, for, of course, we are supposing the bodily movement to correspond with the pace he has set within himself—you know also the movement that exists in the man himself before the feet move.

You must relate the body, carried forward during a given period of Time, to a certain quantity of Movement causing the progress and to the Time it takes, and that again to the Movement, equal in extension, within the man's soul.

But the Movement within the Soul—to what are you to (relate) refer that?

Let your choice fall where it may, from this point there is nothing but the unextended: and this is the primarily existent, the container to all else, having itself no container, brooking none.

And, as with Man's Soul, so with the Soul of the All.

“Is Time, then, within ourselves as well?”

Time is in every Soul of the order of the All-Soul, present in like form in all; for all the Souls are the one Soul.

And this is why Time can never be broken apart, any more than Eternity which, similarly, under diverse manifestations, has its Being as an integral constituent of all the eternal Existences.

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EIGHTH TRACTATE

Nature Contemplation And The One

1.

Supposing we played a little before entering upon our serious concern and maintained that all things are striving after Contemplation, looking to Vision as their one end—and this, not merely beings endowed with reason but even the unreasoning animals, the Principle that rules in growing things, and the Earth that produces these—and that all achieve their purpose in the measure possible to their kind, each attaining Vision and possessing itself of the End in its own way and degree, some things in entire reality, others in mimicry and in image—we would scarcely find anyone to endure so strange a thesis. But in a discussion entirely among ourselves there is no risk in a light handling of our own ideas.

Well—in the play of this very moment am I engaged in the act of Contemplation?

Yes; I and all that enter this play are in Contemplation: our play aims at Vision; and there is every reason to believe that child or man, in sport or earnest, is playing or working only towards Vision, that every act is an effort towards Vision; the compulsory act, which tends rather to bring the Vision down to outward things, and the act thought of as voluntary, less concerned with the outer, originate alike in the effort towards Vision.

The case of Man will be treated later on: let us speak, first, of the earth and of the trees and vegetation in general, asking ourselves what is the nature of Contemplation in them, how we relate to any Contemplative activity the labour and productiveness of the earth, how Nature, held to be devoid of reason and even of conscious representation, can either harbour Contemplation or produce by means of the Contemplation which it does not possess.

2.

There is, obviously, no question here of hands or feet, of any implement borrowed or inherent: Nature needs simply the Matter which it is to work upon and bring under Form; its productivity cannot depend upon mechanical operation. What driving or hoisting goes to produce all that variety of colour and pattern?

The wax-workers, whose methods have been cited as parallel to the creative act of Nature, are unable to make colours; all they can do is to impose upon their handicraft colours taken from elsewhere. None the less there is a parallel which demands attention: in the case of workers in such arts there must be something locked up within themselves, an efficacy not going out from them and yet guiding their hands in

all their creation; and this observation should have indicated a similar phenomenon in Nature; it should be clear that this indwelling efficacy, which makes without hands, must exist in Nature, no less in the craftsman—but, there, as a thing completely inbound. Nature need possess no outgoing force as against that remaining within; the only moved thing is Matter; there can be no moved phase in this Nature-Principle; any such moved phase could not be the primal mover; this Nature-Principle is no such moved entity; it is the unmoved Principle operating in the Kosmos.

We may be answered that the Reason-Principle is, no doubt, unmoved, but that the Nature-Principle, another being, operates by motion.

But, if Nature entire is in question here, it is identical with the Reason-Principle; and any part of it that is unmoved is the Reason-Principle. The Nature-Principle must be an Ideal-Form, not a compound of Form and Matter; there is no need for it to possess (such a changeable element as) Matter, hot and cold: the Matter that underlies it, on which it exercises its creative act, brings all that with it, or, natively without quality, becomes hot and cold, and all the rest, when brought under Reason: Matter, to become fire, demands the approach not of fire but of a Reason-Principle.

This is no slight evidence that in the animal and vegetable realms the Reason-Principles are the makers and that Nature is a Reason-Principle producing a second Reason-Principle, its offspring, which, in turn, while itself, still, remaining intact, communicates something to the underlie, Matter.

The Reason-Principle presiding over visible Shape is the very ultimate of its order, a dead thing unable to produce further: that which produces in the created realm is the living Reason-Principle—brother, no doubt, to that which gives mere shape, but having life-giving power.

3.

But if this Reason-Principle (Nature) is in act—and produces by the process indicated—how can it have any part in Contemplation?

To begin with, since in all its production it is stationary and intact, a Reason-Principle self-indwelling, it is in its own nature a Contemplative act. All doing must be guided by an Idea, and will therefore be distinct from that Idea: the Reason-Principle then, as accompanying and guiding the work, will be distinct from the work; not being action but Reason-Principle it is, necessarily, Contemplation. Taking the Reason-Principle, the Logos, in all its phases, the lowest and last springs from a mental act (in the higher Logos) and is itself a contemplation, though only in the sense of being contemplated (i.e. of being the conscious product of a Contemplation?), but above it stands the total Logos with its two distinguishable phases, first, that identified not as Nature but as All-Soul and, next, that operating in Nature and being itself the Nature-Principle.

And does this Reason-Principle, Nature, spring from a contemplation?

Wholly and solely?

From self-contemplation, then? Or what are we to think? It derives from a Contemplation and some contemplating Being; how are we to suppose it to have Contemplation itself?

The Contemplation springing from the reasoning faculty—that, I mean, of planning its own content, it does not possess.

But why not, since it is a phase of Life, a Reason-Principle and a creative Power?

Because to plan for a thing is to lack it: Nature does not lack; it creates because it possesses. Its creative act is simply its possession of its own characteristic Essence; now its Essence, since it is a Reason-Principle, is to be at once an act of contemplation and an object of contemplation. In other words, the Nature-Principle produces by virtue of being an act of contemplation, an object of contemplation and a Reason-Principle; on this triple character depends its creative efficacy.

Thus the act of production is seen to be in Nature an act of contemplation, for creation is the outcome of a contemplation which never becomes anything else, which never does anything else, but creates by simply being a contemplation.

4.

And Nature, asked why it brings forth its works, might answer if it cared to listen and to speak:—

“It would have been more becoming to put no question but to learn in silence just as I myself am silent and make no habit of talking. And what is your lesson? This; that whatsoever comes into being is my vision, seen in my silence, the vision that belongs to my character who, sprung from vision, am vision-loving and create vision by the vision-seeing faculty within me. The mathematicians from their vision draw their figures: but I draw nothing: I gaze and the figures of the material world take being as if they fell from my contemplation. As with my Mother (the All-Soul) and the Beings that begot me so it is with me: they are born of a Contemplation and my birth is from them, not by their Act but by their Being; they are the loftier Reason-Principles, they contemplate themselves and I am born.”

Now what does this tell us?

It tells: that what we know as Nature is a Soul, offspring of a yet earlier Soul of more powerful life; that it possesses, therefore, in its repose, a vision within itself; that it has no tendency upward nor even downward but is at peace, steadfast, in its own Essence; that, in this immutability accompanied by what may be called Self-Consciousness, it possesses—within the measure of its possibility—a knowledge of the realm of subsequent things perceived in virtue of that understanding and consciousness; and, achieving thus a resplendent and delicious spectacle, has no further aim.

Of course, while it may be convenient to speak of “understanding” or “perception” in the Nature-Principle, this is not in the full sense applicable to other beings; we are applying to sleep a word borrowed from the wake.

For the Vision on which Nature broods, inactive, is a self-intuition, a spectacle laid before it by virtue of its unaccompanied self-concentration and by the fact that in itself it belongs to the order of intuition. It is a Vision silent but somewhat blurred, for there exists another a clearer of which Nature is the image: hence all that Nature produces is weak; the weaker act of intuition produces the weaker object.

In the same way, human beings, when weak on the side of contemplation, find in action their trace of vision and of reason: their spiritual feebleness unfits them for contemplation; they are left with a void, because they cannot adequately seize the vision; yet they long for it; they are hurried into action as their way to the vision which they cannot attain by intellection. They act from the desire of seeing their action, and of making it visible and sensible to others when the result shall prove fairly well equal to the plan. Everywhere, doing and making will be found to be either an attenuation or a complement of vision—attenuation if the doer was aiming only at the thing done; complement if he is to possess something nobler to gaze upon than the mere work produced.

Given the power to contemplate the Authentic, who would run, of choice, after its image?

The relation of action to contemplation is indicated in the way duller children, inapt to study and speculation, take to crafts and manual labour.

5.

This discussion of Nature has shown us how the origin of things is a Contemplation: we may now take the matter up to the higher Soul; we find that the Contemplation pursued by this, its instinct towards knowing and enquiring, the birth pangs set up by the knowledge it attains, its teeming fullness, have caused it—in itself, all one object of Vision—to produce another Vision (that of the Kosmos): it is just as a given science, complete in itself, becomes the source and cause of what might be called a minor science in the student who attains to some partial knowledge of all its divisions. But the visible objects and the objects of intellectual contemplation of this later creation are dim and helpless by the side of the content of the Soul.

The primal phase of the Soul—inhabitant of the Supreme and, by its participation in the Supreme, filled and illuminated—remains unchangeably There; but in virtue of that first participation, that of the primal participant, a secondary phase also participates in the Supreme, and this secondary goes forth ceaselessly as Life streaming from Life; for energy runs through the Universe and there is no extremity at which it dwindles out. But, travel as far as it may, it never draws that first part of itself from the place whence the outgoing began: if it did, it would no longer be everywhere (its continuous Being would be broken and) it would be present at the end, only, of its course.

None the less that which goes forth cannot be equal to that which remains.

In sum, then:—

The Soul is to extend throughout the Universe, no spot void of its energy: but, a prior is always different from its secondary, and energy is a secondary, rising as it must from contemplation or act; act, however, is not at this stage existent since it depends upon contemplation: therefore the Soul while its phases differ must, in all of them, remain a contemplation and what seems to be an act done under contemplation must be in reality that weakened contemplation of which we have spoken: the engendered must respect the Kind, but in weaker form, dwindled in the descent.

All goes softly since nothing here demands the parade of thought or act upon external things: it is a Soul in vision and, by this vision, creating its own subsequent—this Principle (of Nature), itself also contemplative but in the feebler degree since it lies further away and cannot reproduce the quality or experiences of its prior—a Vision creates the Vision.

(Such creative contemplation is not inexplicable) for no limit exists either to contemplation or to its possible objects, and this explains how the Soul is universal: where can this thing fail to be, which is one identical thing in every Soul? Vision is not cabined within the bournes of magnitude.

This, of course, does not mean that the Soul is present at the same strength in each and every place and thing—any more than that it is at the same strength in each of its own phases.

The Charioteer (the Leading Principle of the Soul, in the Phædrus Myth) gives the two horses (its two dissonant faculties) what he has seen and they, taking that gift, showed that they were hungry for what made that vision; there was something lacking to them: if in their desire they acted, their action aimed at what they craved for—and that was vision, and an object of vision.

6.

Action, thus, is set towards contemplation and an object of contemplation, so that even those whose life is in doing have seeing as their object; what they have not been able to achieve by the direct path, they hope to come at by the circuit.

Further: suppose they succeed; they desired a certain thing to come about, not in order to be unaware of it but to know it, to see it present before the mind: their success is the laying up of a vision. We act for the sake of some good; this means not for something to remain outside ourselves, not in order that we may possess nothing but that we may hold the good of the action. And hold it, where? Where but in the mind?

Thus once more, action is brought back to contemplation: for (mind or) Soul is a Reason-Principle and anything that one lays up in the Soul can be no other than a

Reason-Principle, a silent thing, the more certainly such a principle as the impression made is the deeper.

This vision achieved, the acting instinct pauses; the mind is satisfied and seeks nothing further; the contemplation, in one so conditioned, remains absorbed within as having acquired certainty to rest upon. The brighter the certainty, the more tranquil is the contemplation as having acquired the more perfect unity; and—for now we come to the serious treatment of the subject—

In proportion to the truth with which the knowing faculty knows, it comes to identification with the object of its knowledge.

As long as duality persists, the two lie apart, parallel as it were to each other; there is a pair in which the two elements remain strange to one another, as when Ideal-Principles laid up in the mind or Soul remain idle.

Hence the Idea must not be left to lie outside but must be made one identical thing with the soul of the novice so that he finds it really his own.

The Soul, once domiciled within that Idea and brought to likeness with it, becomes productive, active; what it always held by its primary nature it now grasps with knowledge and applies in deed, so becoming, as it were, a new thing and, informed as it now is by the purely intellectual, it sees (in its outgoing act) as a stranger looking upon a strange world. It was, no doubt, essentially a Reason-Principle, even an Intellectual Principle; but its function is to see a (lower) realm which these do not see.

For, it is not a complete thing: it has a lack; it is incomplete in regard to its Prior; yet it, also, has a tranquil vision of what it produces. What it has once brought into being it produces no more, for all its productiveness is determined by this lack: it produces for the purpose of Contemplation, in the desire of knowing all its content: when there is question of practical things it adapts its content to the outside order.

The Soul has a greater content than Nature has and therefore it is more tranquil; it is more nearly complete and therefore more contemplative. It is, however, not perfect, and is all the more eager to penetrate the object of contemplation, and it seeks the vision that comes by observation. It leaves its native realm and busies itself elsewhere; then it returns, and it possesses its vision by means of that phase of itself from which it had parted. The self-indwelling Soul inclines less to such experiences.

The Sage, then, is the man made over into a Reason-Principle: to others he shows his act but in himself he is Vision: such a man is already set, not merely in regard to exterior things but also within himself, towards what is one and at rest: all his faculty and life are inward-bent.

7.

Certain Principles, then, we may take to be established—some self-evident, others brought out by our treatment above:—

All the forms of Authentic Existence spring from vision and are a vision. Everything that springs from these Authentic Existences in their vision is an object of vision—manifest to sensation or to true knowledge or to surface-awareness. All act aims at this knowing; all impulse is towards knowledge, all that springs from vision exists to produce Ideal-Form, that is a fresh object of vision, so that universally, as images of their engendering principles, they all produce objects of vision, Ideal-forms. In the engendering of these sub-existences, imitations of the Authentic, it is made manifest that the creating powers operate not for the sake of creation and action but in order to produce an object of vision. This same vision is the ultimate purpose of all the acts of the mind and, even further downward, of all sensation, since sensation also is an effort towards knowledge; lower still, Nature, producing similarly its subsequent principle, brings into being the vision and Idea that we know in it. It is certain, also, that as the Firsts exist in vision all other things must be straining towards the same condition; the starting point is, universally, the goal.

When living things reproduce their Kind, it is that the Reason-Principles within stir them; the procreative act is the expression of a contemplation, a travail towards the creation of many forms, many objects of contemplation, so that the universe may be filled full with Reason-Principles and that contemplation may be, as nearly as possible, endless: to bring anything into being is to produce an Idea-Form and that again is to enrich the universe with contemplation: all the failures, alike in being and in doing, are but the swerving of visionaries from the object of vision: in the end the sorriest craftsman is still a maker of forms, ungracefully. So Love, too, is vision with the pursuit of Ideal-Form.

8.

From this basis we proceed:—

In the advancing stages of Contemplation rising from that in Nature, to that in the Soul and thence again to that in the Intellectual-Principle itself—the object contemplated becomes progressively a more and more intimate possession of the Contemplating Beings, more and more one thing with them; and in the advanced Soul the objects of knowledge, well on the way towards the Intellectual-Principle, are close to identity with their container.

Hence we may conclude that, in the Intellectual-Principle Itself, there is complete identity of Knower and Known, and this not by way of domiciliation, as in the case of even the highest soul, but by Essence, by the fact that, there, no distinction exists between Being and Knowing; we cannot stop at a principle containing separate parts; there must always be a yet higher, a principle above all such diversity.

The Supreme must be an entity in which the two are one; it will, therefore, be a Seeing that lives, not an object of vision like things existing in something other than themselves: what exists in an outside element is some mode of living-thing; it is not the Self-Living.

Now admitting the existence of a living thing that is at once a Thought and its object, it must be a Life distinct from the vegetative or sensitive life or any other life determined by Soul.

In a certain sense no doubt all lives are thoughts—but qualified as thought vegetative, thought sensitive and thought psychic.

What, then, makes them thoughts?

The fact that they are Reason-Principles. Every life is some form of thought, but of a dwindling clearness like the degrees of life itself. The first and clearest Life and the first Intelligence are one Being. The First Life, then, is an Intellection and the next form of Life is the next Intellection and the last form of Life is the last form of Intellection. Thus every Life, of the order strictly so called, is an Intellection.

But while men may recognise grades in life they reject grade in thought; to them there are thoughts (full and perfect) and anything else is no thought.

This is simply because they do not seek to establish what Life is.

The essential is to observe that, here again, all reasoning shows that whatever exists is a by-work of visioning: if, then, the truest Life is such by virtue of an Intellection and is identical with the truest Intellection, then the truest Intellection is a living being; Contemplation and its object constitute a living thing, a Life, two inextricably one.

The duality, thus, is a unity; but how is this unity also a plurality?

The explanation is that in a unity there can be no seeing (a pure unity has no room for vision and an object); and in its Contemplation the One is not acting as a Unity; if it were, the Intellectual-Principle cannot exist. The Highest began as a unity but did not remain as it began; all unknown to itself, it became manifold; it grew, as it were, pregnant: desiring universal possession, it flung itself outward, though it were better had it never known the desire by which a Secondary came into being: it is like a Circle (in the Idea) which in projection becomes a figure, a surface, a circumference, a centre, a system of radii, of upper and lower segments. The Whence is the better; the Whither is less good: the Whence is not the same as the Whence-followed-by-a-Whither; the Whence all alone is greater than with the Whither added to it.

The Intellectual-Principle on the other hand was never merely the Principle of an inviolable unity; it was a universal as well and, being so, was the Intellectual-Principle of all things. Being, thus, all things and the Principle of all, it must essentially include this part of itself (this element-of-plurality) which is universal and is all things: otherwise, it contains a part which is not Intellectual-Principle: it will be a juxtaposition of non-Intellectuals, a huddled heap waiting to be made over from the mass of things into the Intellectual-Principle!

We conclude that this Being is limitless and, that in all the outflow from it there is no lessening either in its emanation since this also is the entire universe, nor in itself, the starting point, since it is no assemblage of parts (to be diminished by any outgo).

9.

Clearly a Being of this nature is not the primal existent; there must exist that which transcends it, that Being (the Absolute), to which all our discussion has been leading.

In the first place, Plurality is later than Unity. The Intellectual-Principle is a number (=the expression of a plurality); and number derives from unity: the source of a number such as this must be the authentically One. Further, it is the sum of an Intellectual-Being with the object of its Intellection, so that it is a duality; and, given this duality, we must find what exists before it.

What is this?

The Intellectual-Principle taken separately, perhaps?

No: an Intellect is always inseparable from an intelligible object; eliminate the intelligible, and the Intellectual-Principle disappears with it. If, then, what we are seeking cannot be the Intellectual-Principle but must be something that rejects the duality there present, then the Prior demanded by that duality must be something on the further side of the Intellectual-Principle.

But might it not be the Intelligible object itself?

No: for the Intelligible makes an equally inseparable duality with the Intellectual-Principle.

If, then, neither the Intellectual-Principle nor the Intelligible Object can be the First Existent, what is?

Our answer can only be:—

The source of both.

What will This be; under what character can we picture It?

(We will be told that) It must be either Intellective or without Intellection: if Intellective it is the Intellectual-Principle; if not, it will be without even knowledge of itself—so that, either way, what is there so august about it?

If we define it as The Good and the wholly simplex, we will, no doubt, be telling the truth, but we will not be giving any certain and lucid account of it as long as we have in mind no entity in which to lodge the conception by which we define it.

Yet: our knowledge of everything else comes by way of our intelligence; our power is that of knowing the intelligible by means of the intelligence: but this Entity transcends all of the intellectual nature; by what direct intuition, then, can it be brought within our grasp?

To this question the answer is that we can know it only in the degree of human faculty: we indicate it by virtue of what in ourselves is like it.

For in us, also, there is something of that Being; nay, nothing, ripe for that participation, can be void of it.

Wherever you be, you have only to range over against this omnipresent Being that in you which is capable of drawing from It, and you have your share in it: imagine a voice sounding over a vast waste of land, and not only over the emptiness alone but over human beings; wherever you be in that great space you have but to listen and you take the voice entire—entire though yet with a difference.

And what do we take when we thus point the Intelligence?

The Intellectual-Principle in us must mount to its origins: essentially a thing facing two ways, it must deliver itself over to those powers within it which tend upward; if it seeks the vision of that Being, it must become something more than Intellect.

For the Intellectual-Principle is the earliest form of Life: it is the Activity presiding over the outflowing of the universal Order—the outflow, that is, of the first moment, not that of the continuous process.

In its character as Life, as emanation, as containing all things in their precise forms and not merely in the agglomerate mass—for this would be to contain them (against its specific character) imperfectly and inarticulately—it must of necessity derive from some other Being, from one that does not emanate but is the Principle of Emanation, of Life, of Intellect and of the Universe.

For the Universe is not a Principle and Source: it springs from a source, and that source cannot be the All or anything belonging to the All since it is to generate the All, and must be not a plurality but the Source of plurality since universally a begetting power is less complex than the begotten. Thus the Being that has engendered the Intellectual-Principle must be more simplex than the Intellectual-Principle.

We may be told that this engendering Principle is the One-and-All.

But, at that, it must be either each separate entity from among all or it will be all things in the one mass.

Now if it were the massed total of all, it must be of later origin than any of the things of which it is the sum; if it precedes the total, it differs from the things that make up the total and they from it: if it and the total of things constitute a co-existence, it is not

a Source. But what we are probing for must be a Source; it must exist before all, that all may be fashioned as sequel to it.

As for the notion that it may be each separate entity of the All, this would make a self-Identity into a what you like, where you like, indifferently, and would, besides, abolish all distinction in things themselves.

Once more we see that this can be no thing among things but must be prior to all things.

10.

And what will such a Principle essentially be?

The potentiality of the Universe: the potentiality whose non-existence would mean the non-existence of all the Universe and even of the Intellectual-Principle which is the primal Life and all Life.

This Principle on the thither side of Life is the cause of Life—for that Manifestation of Life which is the Universe of things is not the First Activity; it is itself poured forth, so to speak, like water from a spring.

Imagine a spring that has no source outside itself; it gives itself to all the rivers, yet is never exhausted by what they take, but remains always integrally as it was; the tides that proceed from it are at one within it before they run their several ways, yet all, in some sense, know beforehand down what channels they will pour their streams.

Or:—think of the Life coursing throughout some mighty tree while yet it is the stationary Principle of the whole, in no sense scattered over all that extent but, as it were, vested in the root: it is the giver of the entire and manifold life of the tree, but remains unmoved itself, not manifold but the Principle of that manifold life.

And this surprises no one: though it is in fact astonishing how all that varied vitality springs from the unvarying, and how that very manifoldness could not be unless before the multiplicity there were something all singleness; for, the Principle is not broken into parts to make the total; on the contrary, such partition would destroy both; nothing would come into being if its cause, thus broken up, changed character.

Thus we are always brought back to The One.

Every particular thing has a One of its own to which it may be traced; the All has its One, its Prior but not yet the Absolute One; through this we reach that Absolute One, where all such reference comes to an end.

Now when we reach a One—the stationary Principle—in the tree, in the animal, in Soul, in the All—we have in every case the most powerful, the precious element: when we come to the One in the Authentically Existent Beings—their Principle and source and potentiality—shall we lose confidence and suspect it of being—nothing?

Certainly this Absolute is none of the things of which it is the source—its nature is that nothing can be affirmed of it—not existence, not essence, not life—since it is That which transcends all these. But possess yourself of it by the very elimination of Being and you hold a marvel. Thrusting forward to This, attaining, and resting in its content, seek to grasp it more and more—understanding it by that intuitive thrust alone, but knowing its greatness by the Beings that follow upon it and exist by its power.

Another approach:—

The Intellectual-Principle is a Seeing, and a Seeing which itself sees; therefore it is a potentiality which has become effective.

This implies the distinction of Matter and Form in it—as there must be in all actual seeing—the Matter in this case being the Intelligibles which the Intellectual-Principle contains and sees. All actual seeing implies duality; before the seeing takes place there is the pure unity (of the power of seeing). That unity (of principle) acquires duality (in the act of seeing), and the duality is (always to be traced back to) a unity.

Now as our sight requires the world of sense for its satisfaction and realisation, so the vision in the Intellectual-Principle demands, for its completion, The Good.

It cannot be, itself, The Good, since then it would not need to see or to perform any other Act; for The Good is the centre of all else, and it is by means of The Good that every thing has Act, while the Good is in need of nothing and therefore possesses nothing beyond itself.

Once you have uttered “The Good,” add no further thought: by any addition, and in proportion to that addition, you introduce a deficiency.

Do not even say that it has Intellection; you would be dividing it; it would become a duality, Intellect and the Good. The Good has no need of the Intellectual-Principle which, on the contrary, needs it, and, attaining it, is shaped into Goodness and becomes perfect by it: the Form thus received, sprung from the Good, brings it to likeness with the Good.

Thus the traces of the Good discerned upon it must be taken as indication of the nature of that Archetype: we form a conception of its Authentic Being from its image playing upon the Intellectual-Principle. This image of itself, it has communicated to the Intellect that contemplates it: thus all the striving is on the side of the Intellect, which is the eternal striver and eternally the attainer. The Being beyond neither strives, since it feels no lack, nor attains, since it has no striving. And this marks it off from the Intellectual-Principle, to which characteristically belongs the striving, the concentrated strain towards its Form.

Yet: The Intellectual-Principle; beautiful; the most beautiful of all; lying lapped in pure light and in clear radiance; circumscribing the Nature of the Authentic Existents; the original of which this beautiful world is a shadow and an image; tranquil in the fullness of glory since in it there is nothing devoid of intellect, nothing dark or out of

rule; a living thing in a life of blessedness: this, too, must overwhelm with awe any that has seen it, and penetrated it, to become a unit of its Being.

But:—As one that looks up to the heavens and sees the splendour of the stars thinks of the Maker and searches, so whoever has contemplated the Intellectual Universe and known it and wondered for it must search after its Maker too. What Being has raised so noble a fabric? And where? And how? Who has begotten such a child, this Intellectual-Principle, this lovely abundance so abundantly endowed?

The Source of all this cannot be an Intellect; nor can it be an abundant power: it must have been before Intellect and abundance were; these are later and things of lack; abundance had to be made abundant and Intellection needed to know.

These are very near to the un-needing, to that which has no need of Knowing, they have abundance and intellection authentically, as being the first to possess. But, there is That before them which neither needs nor possesses anything, since, needing or possessing anything else, it would not be what it is—The Good.

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NINTH TRACTATE

Detached Considerations

1.

“The Intellectual-Principle” (=the Divine Mind)—we read (in the *Timæus*)—“looks upon the Ideas indwelling in that Being which is the Essentially Living (=according to Plotinus, the Intellectual Realm), and then”—the text proceeds—“the Creator judged that all the content of that essentially living Being must find place in this lower universe also.”

Are we meant to gather that the Ideas came into being before the Intellectual-Principle so that it “sees them” as previously existent?

The first step is to make sure whether the “Living Being” of the text is to be distinguished from the Intellectual-Principle as another thing than it.

It might be argued that the Intellectual-Principle is the Contemplator and therefore that the Living-Being contemplated is not the Intellectual-Principle but must be described as the Intellectual Object so that the Intellectual-Principle must possess the Ideal realm as something outside of itself.

But this would mean that it possesses images and not the realities, since the realities are in the Intellectual Realm which it contemplates: Reality—we read—is in the Authentic Existent which contains the essential form of particular things.

No: even though the Intellectual-Principle and the Intellectual Object are distinct, they are not apart except for just that distinction.

Nothing in the statement cited is inconsistent with the conception that these two constitute one substance—though, in a unity, admitting that distinction, of the intellectual act (as against passivity), without which there can be no question of an Intellectual-Principle and an Intellectual Object: what is meant is not that the contemplatory Being possesses its vision as in some other principle, but that it contains the Intellectual Realm within itself.

The Intelligible Object is the Intellectual-Principle itself in its repose, unity, immobility: the Intellectual-Principle, contemplator of that object—of the Intellectual-Principle thus in repose—is an active manifestation of the same Being, an Act which contemplates its unmoved phase and, as thus contemplating, stands as Intellectual-Principle to that of which it has the intellection: it is Intellectual-Principle in virtue of having that intellection, and at the same time is Intellectual Object, by assimilation.

This, then, is the Being which planned to create in the lower Universe what it saw existing in the Supreme, the four orders of living beings.

No doubt the passage (of the *Timæus*) seems to imply tacitly that this planning Principle is distinct from the other two: but the three—the Essentially-Living, the Intellectual-Principle and this planning Principle—will, to others, be manifestly one: the truth is that, by a common accident, a particular trend of thought has occasioned the discrimination.

We have dealt with the first two; but the third—this Principle which decides to work upon the objects (the Ideas) contemplated by the Intellectual-Principle within the Essentially-Living, to create them, to establish them in their partial existence—what is this third?

It is possible that in one aspect the Intellectual-Principle is the principle of partial existence, while in another aspect it is not.

The entities thus particularised from the unity are products of the Intellectual-Principle which thus would be, to that extent, the separating agent. On the other hand it remains in itself, indivisible; division begins with its offspring which, of course, means with Souls: and thus a Soul—with its particular Souls—may be the separative principle.

This is what is conveyed where we are told that the separation is the work of the third Principle and begins within the Third: for to this Third belongs the discursive reasoning which is no function of the Intellectual-Principle but characteristic of its secondary, of Soul, to which precisely, divided by its own Kind, belongs the Act of division.

2.

. . . For in any one science the reduction of the total of knowledge into its separate propositions does not shatter its unity, chipping it into unrelated fragments; in each distinct item is latent the entire body of the science, an integral thing in its highest Principle and its last detail: and similarly a man must so discipline himself that the first Principles of his Being are also his completions, are totals, that all be pointed towards the loftiest phase of the Nature: when a man has become this unity in the best, he is in that other realm; for it is by this highest within himself, made his own, that he holds to the Supreme.

At no point did the All-Soul come into Being: it never arrived, for it never knew place; what happens is that body, neighbouring with it, participates in it: hence Plato does not place Soul in body but body in Soul. The others, the secondary Souls, have a point of departure—they come from the All-Soul—and they have a place into which to descend and in which to change to and fro, a place, therefore, from which to ascend: but this All-Soul is for ever Above, resting in that Being in which it holds its existence as Soul and followed, as next, by the Universe or, at least, by all beneath the sun.

The partial Soul is illuminated by moving towards the Soul above it; for on that path it meets Authentic Existence. Movement towards the lower is towards non-Being: and this is the step it takes when it is set on self; for by willing towards itself it produces its lower, an image of itself—a non-Being—and so is wandering, as it were, into the void, stripping itself of its own determined form. And this image, this undetermined thing, is blank darkness, for it is utterly without reason, untouched by the Intellectual-Principle, far removed from Authentic Being.

As long as it remains at the mid-stage it is in its own peculiar region; but when, by a sort of inferior orientation, it looks downward, it shapes that lower image and flings itself joyfully thither.

3.

(A) . . . How, then, does Unity give rise to Multiplicity?

By its omnipresence: there is nowhere where it is not; it occupies, therefore, all that is; at once, it is manifold—or, rather, it is all things.

If it were simply and solely everywhere all would be this one thing alone: but it is, also, in no place, and this gives in the final result that while all exists by means of it, in virtue of its omnipresence, all is distinct from it in virtue of its being nowhere.

But why is it not merely present everywhere but in addition nowhere-present?

Because, universality demands a previous unity. It must, therefore, pervade all things and make all, but not be the universe which it makes.

(B) The Soul itself must exist as Seeing—with the Intellectual-Principle as the object of its vision—it is undetermined before it sees but is naturally apt to see: in other words, Soul is Matter to (its determinant) the Intellectual-Principle.

(C) When we exercise intellection upon ourselves, we are, obviously, observing an intellectual nature, for otherwise we would not be able to have that intellection.

We know, and it is ourselves that we know; therefore we know the reality of a knowing nature: therefore, before that intellection in Act, there is another intellection, one at rest, so to speak.

Similarly, that self-intellection is an act upon a reality and upon a life; therefore, before the Life and Real-Being concerned in the intellection there must be another Being and Life. In a word, intellection is vested in the activities themselves: since, then, the activities of self-intellection are intellectual-forms, We, the Authentic We, are the Intelligibles and self-intellection conveys the Image of the Intellectual Sphere.

(D) The Primal is a potentiality of Movement and of Repose—and so is above and beyond both—its next subsequent has rest and movement about the Primal. Now this subsequent is the Intellectual-Principle—so characterised by having intellection of

something not identical with itself whereas the Primal is without intellection. A knowing principle has duality (that entailed by being the knower of something) and, moreover, it knows itself as deficient since its virtue consists in this knowing and not in its own bare Being.

(E) In the case of everything which has developed from possibility to actuality the actual is that which remains self-identical for its entire duration—and this it is which makes perfection possible even in things of the corporeal order, as for instance in fire—but the actual of this kind cannot be everlasting since (by the fact of their having once existed only in potentiality) Matter has its place in them. In anything, on the contrary, not composite (=never touched by Matter or potentiality) and possessing actuality, that actual existence is eternal. . . . There is, however, the case, also, in which a thing, itself existing in actuality, stands as potentiality to some other form of Being.

(F) . . . But the First is not to be envisaged as made up from Gods of a transcendent order: no; the Authentic Existents constitute the Intellectual-Principle with Which motion and rest begin. The Primal touches nothing, but is the centre round which those other Beings lie in repose and in movement. For Movement is aiming, and the Primal aims at nothing; what could the Summit aspire to?

Has It, even, no Intellection of Itself?

It possesses Itself and therefore is said in general terms to know itself. . . . But intellection does not mean self-ownership; it means turning the gaze towards the Primal: now the act of intellection is itself the Primal Act, and there is therefore no place for any earlier one. The Being projecting this Act transcends the Act so that Intellection is secondary to the Being in which it resides. Intellection is not the transcendently venerable thing—neither Intellection in general nor even the Intellection of The Good. Apart from and over any Intellection stands The Good itself.

The Good therefore needs no consciousness.

What sort of consciousness can be conceived in it?

Consciousness of the Good as existent or non-existent?

If of existent Good, that Good exists before and without any such consciousness: if the act of consciousness produces that Good, then The Good was not previously in existence—and, at once, the very consciousness falls to the ground since it is no longer consciousness of The Good.

But would not all this mean that the First does not even live?

The First cannot be said to live since it is the source of Life.

All that has self-consciousness and self-intellection is derivative; it observes itself in order, by that activity, to become master of its Being: and if it study itself this can

mean only that ignorance inheres in it and that it is of its own nature lacking and to be made perfect by Intellection.

All thinking and knowing must, here, be eliminated: the addition introduces deprivation and deficiency.

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THE SECOND ENNEAD

FIRST TRACTATE

On The Kosmos Or On The Heavenly System

1.

We hold that the ordered universe, in its material mass, has existed for ever and will for ever endure: but simply to refer this perdurance to the Will of God, however true an explanation, is utterly inadequate.

The elements of this sphere change; the living beings of earth pass away; only the Ideal-form (the species) persists: possibly a similar process obtains in the All.

The Will of God is able to cope with the ceaseless flux and escape of body stuff by ceaselessly reintroducing the known forms in new substances, thus ensuring perpetuity not to the particular item but to the unity of idea: now, seeing that objects of this realm possess no more than duration of form, why should celestial objects, and the celestial system itself, be distinguished by duration of the particular entity?

Let us suppose this persistence to be the result of the all-inclusiveness of the celestial and universal—with its consequence, the absence of any outlying matter into which change could take place or which could break in and destroy.

This explanation would, no doubt, safeguard the integrity of the Whole, of the All; but our sun and the individual being of the other heavenly bodies would not on these terms be secured in perpetuity: they are parts; no one of them is in itself the whole, the all; it would still be probable that theirs is no more than that duration in form which belongs to fire and such entities.

This would apply even to the entire ordered universe itself. For it is very possible that this too, though not in process of destruction from outside, might have only formal duration; its parts may be so wearing each other down as to keep it in a continuous decay while, amid the ceaseless flux of the Kind constituting its base, an outside power ceaselessly restores the form: in this way the living All may lie under the same conditions as man and horse and the rest—man and horse persisting but not the individual of the type.

With this, we would have no longer the distinction of one order, the heavenly system, stable for ever, and another, the earthly, in process of decay: all would be alike except in the point of time; the celestial would merely be longer lasting. If, then, we accepted this duration of type alone as a true account of the All equally with its partial members, our difficulties would be eased—or indeed we should have no further

problem—once the Will of God were shown to be capable, under these conditions and by such communication, of sustaining the Universe.

But if we are obliged to allow individual persistence to any definite entity within the Kosmos then, firstly, we must show that the Divine Will is adequate to make it so; secondly, we have to face the question, What accounts for some things having individual persistence and others only the persistence of type? and, thirdly, we ask how the partial entities of the celestial system hold a real duration which would thus appear possible to all partial things.

2.

Supposing we accept this view and hold that, while things below the moon's orb have merely type-persistence, the celestial realm and all its several members possess individual eternity; it remains to show how this strict permanence of the individual identity—the actual item eternally unchangeable—can belong to what is certainly corporeal, seeing that bodily substance is characteristically a thing of flux.

The theory of bodily flux is held by Plato no less than by the other philosophers who have dealt with physical matters, and is applied not only to ordinary bodies but to those, also, of the heavenly sphere.

“How,” he asks, “can these corporeal and visible entities continue eternally unchanged in identity?”—evidently agreeing, in this matter also, with Herakleitos who maintained that even the sun is perpetually coming anew into being. To Aristotle there would be no problem; it is only accepting his theories of a fifth-substance.

But to those who reject Aristotle's Quintessence and hold the material mass of the heavens to consist of the elements underlying the living things of this sphere, how is individual permanence possible? And the difficulty is still greater for the parts (than for the whole), for the sun and the heavenly bodies (than for the celestial sphere as a unit).

Every living thing is a combination of soul and body-kind: the celestial sphere, therefore, if it is to be everlasting as an individual entity must be so in virtue either of both these constituents or of one of them, by the combination of soul and body or by soul only or by body only.

Of course anyone that holds body to be incorruptible secures the desired permanence at once; no need, then, to call on a soul or on any perdurable conjunction to account for the continued maintenance of a living being.

But the case is different when one holds that body is, of itself, perishable and that Soul is the principle of permanence: this view obliges us to the proof that the character of body is not in itself fatal either to the coherence or to the lasting stability which are imperative: it must be shown that the two elements of the union envisaged are not inevitably hostile, but that on the contrary (in the heavens) even Matter must conduce to the scheme of the standing result.

3.

We have to ask, that is, how Matter, this entity of ceaseless flux constituting the physical mass of the universe, could serve towards the immortality of the Kosmos.

And our answer is “Because the flux is not outgoing”: where there is motion within but not outwards and the total remains unchanged, there is neither growth nor decline, and thus the Kosmos never ages.

We have a parallel in our earth, constant from eternity to pattern and to mass; the air, too, never fails; and there is always water: all the changes of these elements leave unchanged the Principle of the total living thing, our world. In our own constitution, again, there is a ceaseless shifting of particles—and that with outgoing loss—and yet the individual persists for a long time: where (as in the case of the All) there is no question of an outside region, the body-principle cannot clash with soul as against the identity and endless duration of the living thing.

Of these material elements—for example—fire, the keen and swift, co-operates by its upward tendency as earth by its lingering below; for we must not imagine that the fire, once it finds itself at the point where its ascent must stop, settles down as in its appropriate place, no longer seeking, like all the rest, to expand in both directions. No: but higher is not possible; lower is repugnant to its Kind; all that remains for it is to be tractable and, answering to a need of its nature, to be drawn by the Soul to the activity of life, and so to move—to move in a glorious place, in the Soul. Anyone that dreads its falling may take heart; the circuit of the Soul provides against any declination, embracing, sustaining; and since fire has of itself no downward tendency it accepts that guiding without resistance. The partial elements constituting our persons do not suffice for their own cohesion; once they are brought to human shape, they must borrow elsewhere if the organism is to be maintained: but in the upper spheres since there can be no loss by flux no such replenishment is needed.

Suppose such loss, suppose fire extinguished there, then a new fire must be kindled; so also if such loss by flux could occur in some of the superiors from which the celestial fire depends, that too must be replaced: but with such transmutations, while there might be something continuously similar, there would be, no longer, a Living All abidingly self-identical.

4.

But matters are involved here which demand specific investigation and cannot be treated as incidental merely to our present problem. We are faced with several questions: Is the heavenly system exposed to any such flux as would occasion the need of some restoration corresponding to nourishment; or do its members, once set in their due places, suffer no loss of substance, permanent by Kind? Does it consist of fire only, or is it mainly of fire with the other elements, as well, taken up and carried in the circuit by the dominant Principle?

(For the present we may say that) Our doctrine of the immortality of the heavenly system rests on the firmest foundation once we have cited the sovereign agent, the soul, and considered, besides, the peculiar excellence of the bodily substance constituting the stars, a material so pure, so entirely the noblest, and chosen by the soul as, in all living beings, the determining principle appropriates to itself the choicest among their characteristic parts. No doubt Aristotle is right in speaking of flame as a turmoil, fire insolently rioting; but the celestial fire is equable, placid, docile to the purposes of the stars.

Still, the great argument remains, the Soul, moving in its marvellous might second only to the very loftiest Existents: how could anything once placed within this Soul break away from it into non-being? No one that understands this principle, the support of all things, can fail to see that, sprung from God, it is a stronger stay than any bonds.

And is it conceivable that the Soul, valid to sustain for a certain space of time, could not so sustain for ever? This would be to assume that it holds things together by violence; that there is a “natural course” at variance with what actually exists in the nature of the universe and in these exquisitely ordered beings; and that there is some power able to storm the established system and destroy its ordered coherence, some kingdom or dominion that may shatter the order founded by the Soul.

Further: The Kosmos has had no beginning—the impossibility has been shown elsewhere—and this is warrant for its continued existence. Why should there be in the future a change that has not yet occurred? The elements there are not worn away like beams and rafters: they hold sound for ever, and so the All holds sound. And even supposing these elements to be in ceaseless transmutation, yet the All persists: the ground of all the change must itself be changeless.

As to any alteration of purpose in the Soul (such as might lead it to bring the Kosmos to an end) we have already shown the emptiness of that fancy: the administration of the universe entails neither labour nor loss; and, even supposing the possibility of annihilating all that is material, the Soul would be no whit the better or the worse.

5.

But how explain the permanence There, while the content of this sphere—its elements and its living things alike—are passing?

The reason is given by Plato: the celestial order is from God, the living things of earth from the gods sprung from God; and it is law that the offspring of God endures.

In other words, the celestial soul—and our souls with it—springs directly next from the Creator, while the animal life of this earth is produced by an image which goes forth from that celestial soul and may be said to flow downwards from it.

A soul, then, of the minor degree—reproducing, indeed, that of the Divine sphere but lacking in power inasmuch as it must exercise its creative act upon inferior stuff in an inferior region—the substances taken up into the fabric being of themselves repugnant

to duration; with such an origin the living things of this realm cannot be of strength to last for ever; the material constituents are not as firmly held and controlled as if they were ruled immediately by a Principle of higher potency.

The heavens, on the contrary, must have persistence as a whole, and this entails the persistence of the parts, of the stars they contain: we could not imagine that whole to endure with the parts in flux—though, of course, we must distinguish things sub-celestial from the heavens themselves whose region does not in fact extend so low as to the moon.

Our own case is different: physically we are formed by that (inferior) soul, given forth (not directly from God but) from the divine beings in the heavens and from the heavens themselves; it is by way of that inferior soul that we are associated with the body (which therefore will not be persistent); for the higher soul which constitutes the We is the principle not of our existence but of our excellence—or, if also of our existence, then only in the sense that, when the body is already constituted, it enters, bringing with it some effluence from the Divine Reason in support of the existence.

6.

We may now consider the question whether fire is the sole element existing in that celestial realm and whether there is any outgoing thence with the consequent need of renewal.

Timæus pronounced the material frame of the All to consist primarily of earth and fire—fire for visibility, earth for solidity—and deduced that the stars must be mainly composed of fire, but not solely since there is no doubt they are solid.

And this is probably a true account. Plato accepts it as indicated by all the appearances. And, in fact, to all our perception—as we see them and derive from them the impression of illumination—the stars appear to be mostly, if not exclusively, fire: but on reasoning into the matter we judge that since solidity cannot exist apart from earth-matter, they must contain earth as well.

But what place could there be for the other elements? It is impossible to imagine water amid so vast a conflagration; and if air were present it would be continually changing into fire.

Admitting (with Timæus; as a logical truth) that two self-contained entities, standing as extremes to each other need for their coherence two intermediaries; we may still question whether this holds good with regard to physical bodies. Certainly water and earth can be mixed without any such intermediate. It might seem valid to object that the intermediaries are already present in the earth and the water; but a possible answer would be, “Yes, but not as agents whose meeting is necessary to the coherence of those extremes.”

None the less we will take it that the coherence of extremes is produced by virtue of each possessing all the intermediates. It is still not proven that fire is necessary to the visibility of earth and earth to the solidarity of fire.

On this principle, nothing possesses an essential-nature of its very own; every several thing is a blend, and its name is merely an indication of the dominant constituent.

Thus we are told that earth cannot have concrete existence without the help of some moist element—the moisture in water being the necessary adhesive—but admitting that we so find it, there is still a contradiction in pretending that any one element has a being of its own and in the same breath denying its self-coherence, making its subsistence depend upon others, and so, in reality, reducing the specific element to nothing. How can we talk of the existence of the definite Kind, earth—earth essential—if there exists no single particle of earth which actually is earth without any need of water to secure its self-cohesion? What has such an adhesive to act upon if there is absolutely no given magnitude of real earth to which it may bind particle after particle in its business of producing the continuous mass? If there is any such given magnitude, large or small, of pure earth, then earth can exist in its own nature, independently of water: if there is no such primary particle of pure earth, then there is nothing whatever for the water to bind. As for air—air unchanged, retaining its distinctive quality—how could it conduce to the subsistence of a dense material like earth?

Similarly with fire. No doubt Timæus speaks of it as necessary not to the existence but to the visibility of earth and the other elements; and certainly light is essential to all visibility—we cannot say that we see darkness, which implies, precisely, that nothing is seen, as silence means nothing being heard.

But all this does not assure us that the earth to be visible must contain fire: light is sufficient: snow, for example, and other extremely cold substances gleam without the presence of fire—though of course it might be said that fire was once there and communicated colour before disappearing.

As to the composition of water, we must leave it an open question whether there can be such a thing as water without a certain proportion of earth.

But how can air, the yielding element, contain earth?

Fire, again: is earth perhaps necessary there since fire is by its own nature devoid of continuity and not a thing of three dimensions?

Supposing it does not possess the solidity of the three dimensions, it has that of its thrust; now, cannot this belong to it by the mere right and fact of its being one of the corporeal entities in nature? Hardness is another matter, a property confined to earth-stuff. Remember that gold—which is water—becomes dense by the accession not of earth but of denseness or consolidation: in the same way fire, with Soul present within it, may consolidate itself upon the power of the Soul; and there are living beings of fire among the Celestials.

But, in sum, do we abandon the teaching that all the elements enter into the composition of every living thing?

For this sphere, no: but to lift clay into the heavens is against nature, contrary to the laws of her ordaining: it is difficult, too, to think of that swiftest of circuits bearing along earthly bodies in its course—nor could such material conduce to the splendour and white glint of the celestial fire.

7.

We can scarcely do better, in fine, than follow Plato.

Thus:—

In the universe as a whole there must necessarily be such a degree of solidity, that is to say, of resistance, as will ensure that the earth, set in the centre, be a sure footing and support to the living beings moving over it, and inevitably communicate something of its own density to them: the earth will possess coherence by its own unaided quality, but visibility by the presence of fire: it will contain water against the dryness which would prevent the cohesion of its particles; it will hold air to lighten its bulky matters; it will be in contact with the celestial fire—not as being a member of the sidereal system but by the simple fact that the fire there and our earth both belong to the ordered universe so that something of the earth is taken up by the fire as something of the fire by the earth and something of everything by everything else.

This borrowing, however, does not mean that the one thing taking-up from the other enters into a composition, becoming an element in a total of both: it is simply a consequence of the kosmic fellowship; the participant retains its own being and takes over not the thing itself but some property of the thing, not air but air's yielding softness, not fire but fire's incandescence: mixing is another process, a complete surrender with a resultant compound not, as in this case, earth—remaining earth, the solidity and density we know—with something of fire's qualities superadded.

We have authority for this where we read:—

“At the second circuit from the earth, God kindled a light”: he is speaking of the sun which, elsewhere, he calls the all-glowing and, again, the all-gleaming: thus he prevents us imagining it to be anything else but fire, though of a peculiar kind; in other words it is light, which he distinguishes from flame as being only modestly warm: this light is a corporeal substance but from it there shines forth that other “light” which, though it carries the same name, we pronounce incorporeal, given forth from the first as its flower and radiance, the veritable “incandescent body.” Plato's word “earthy” is commonly taken in too depreciatory a sense: he is thinking of earth as the principle of solidity; we are apt to ignore his distinctions and think of the concrete clay.

Fire of this order, giving forth this purest light, belongs to the upper realm, and there its seat is fixed by nature; but we must not, on that account, suppose the flame of earth to be associated with the beings of that higher sphere.

No: the flame of this world, once it has attained a certain height, is extinguished by the currents of air opposed to it. Moreover, as it carries an earthy element on its upward path, it is weighed downwards and cannot reach those loftier regions. It comes to a stand somewhere below the moon—making the air at that point subtler—and its flame, if any flame can persist, is subdued and softened, and no longer retains its first intensity, but gives out only what radiance it reflects from the light above.

And it is that loftier light—falling variously upon the stars; to each in a certain proportion—that gives them their characteristic differences, as well in magnitude as in colour; just such light constitutes also the still higher heavenly bodies which, however, like clear air, are invisible because of the subtle texture and unresisting transparency of their material substance and also by their very distance.

8.

Now: given a light of this degree, remaining in the upper sphere at its appointed station, pure light in purest place, what mode of outflow from it can be conceived possible?

Such a Kind is not so constituted as to flow downwards of its own accord; and there exists in those regions no power to force it down. Again, body in contact with soul must always be very different from body left to itself; the bodily substance of the heavens has that contact and will show that difference.

Besides, the corporeal substance nearest to the heavens would be air or fire: air has no destructive quality; fire would be powerless there since it could not enter into effective contact: in its very rush it would change before its attack could be felt; and, apart from that, it is of the lesser order, no match for what it would be opposing in those higher regions.

Again, fire acts by imparting heat: now it cannot be the source of heat to what is already hot by nature; and anything it is to destroy must as a first condition be heated by it, must be brought to a pitch of heat fatal to the nature concerned.

In sum, then, no outside body is necessary to the heavens to ensure their permanence—or to produce their circular movement, for it has never been shown that their natural path would be the straight line; on the contrary the heavens, by their nature, will either be motionless or move by circle; all other movement indicates outside compulsion. We cannot think, therefore, that the heavenly bodies stand in need of replenishment; we must not argue from earthly frames to those of the celestial system whose sustaining soul is not the same, whose space is not the same, whose conditions are not those which make restoration necessary in this realm of composite bodies always in flux: we must recognise that the changes that take place in bodies

here represent a slipping-away from the being (a phenomenon not incident to the celestial sphere) and take place at the dictate of a Principle not dwelling in the higher regions, one not powerful enough to ensure the permanence of the existences in which it is exhibited, one which in its coming into being and in its generative act is but an imitation of an antecedent Kind, and, as we have shown, cannot at every point possess the unchangeable identity of the Intellectual Realm.

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SECOND TRACTATE

The Heavenly Circuit

1.

But whence that circular movement?

In imitation of the Intellectual-Principle.

And does this movement belong to the material part or to the Soul? Can we account for it on the ground that the Soul has itself at once for centre and for the goal to which it must be ceaselessly moving; or that, being self-centred it is not of unlimited extension (and consequently must move ceaselessly to be omnipresent), and that its revolution carries the material mass with it?

If the Soul had been the moving power (by any such semi-physical action) it would be so no longer; it would have accomplished the act of moving and have brought the universe to rest; there would be an end of this endless revolution.

In fact the Soul must be in repose or at least cannot have spatial movement; how then, having itself a movement of quite another order, could it communicate spatial movement?

But perhaps the circular movement (of the Kosmos as soul and body) is not spatial or is spatial not primarily but only incidentally.

What, by this explanation, would be the essential movement of the kosmic soul?

A movement towards itself, the movement of self-awareness, of self-intellection, of the living of its life, the movement of its reaching to all things so that nothing shall lie outside of it, nothing anywhere but within its scope.

The dominant in a living thing is what compasses it entirely and makes it a unity.

If the Soul has no motion of any kind, it would not vitally compass the Kosmos nor would the Kosmos, a thing of body, keep its content alive, for the life of body is movement.

Any spatial motion there is will be limited; it will be not that of Soul untrammelled but that of a material frame ensouled, an animated organism; the movement will be partly of body, partly of Soul, the body tending to the straight line which its nature imposes, the Soul restraining it; the resultant will be the compromise movement of a thing at once carried forward and at rest.

But supposing that the circular movement is to be attributed to the body, how is it to be explained, since all body, including fire (which constitutes the heavens) has straightforward motion?

The answer is that forthright movement is maintained only pending arrival at the place for which the moving thing is destined: where a thing is ordained to be, there it seeks, of its nature, to come for its rest; its motion is its tendency to its appointed place.

Then, since the fire of the sidereal system has attained its goal, why does it not stay at rest?

Evidently because the very nature of fire is to be mobile: if it did not take the curve, its straight line would finally fling it outside the universe: the circular course, then, is imperative.

But this would imply an act of providence?

Not quite: rather its own act under providence; attaining to that realm, it must still take the circular course by its indwelling nature; for it seeks the straight path onwards but finds no further space and is driven back so that it recoils on the only course left to it: there is nothing beyond; it has reached the ultimate; it runs its course in the regions it occupies, itself its own sphere, not destined to come to rest there, existing to move.

Further, the centre of a circle (and therefore of the Kosmos) is distinctively a point of rest: if the circumference outside were not in motion, the universe would be no more than one vast centre. And movement around the centre is all the more to be expected in the case of a living thing whose nature binds it within a body. Such motion alone can constitute its impulse towards its centre: it cannot coincide with the centre, for then there would be no circle; since this may not be, it whirls about it; so only can it indulge its tendency.

If, on the other hand, the Kosmic circuit is due to the Soul, we are not to think of a painful driving (wearing it down at last); the soul does not use violence or in any way thwart nature, for "Nature" is no other than the custom the All-Soul has established. Omnipresent in its entirety, incapable of division, the Soul of the universe communicates that quality of universal presence to the heavens, too, in their degree, the degree, that is, of pursuing universality and advancing towards it.

If the Soul halted anywhere, there the Kosmos, too, brought so far, would halt: but the Soul encompasses all, and so the Kosmos moves, seeking everything.

Yet never to attain?

On the contrary this very motion is its eternal attainment.

Or, better; the Soul is ceaselessly leading the Kosmos towards itself: the continuous attraction communicates a continuous movement—not to some outside space but towards the Soul and in the one sphere with it, not in the straight line (which would

ultimately bring the moving body outside and below the Soul), but in the curving course in which the moving body at every stage possesses the Soul that is attracting it and bestowing itself upon it.

If the soul were stationary, that is if (instead of presiding over a Kosmos) it dwelt wholly and solely in the realm in which every member is at rest, motion would be unknown; but, since the Soul is not fixed in some one station There, the Kosmos must travel to every point in quest of it, and never outside it: in a circle, therefore.

2.

And what of lower things? (Why have they not this motion?)

(Their case is very different): the single thing here is not an all but a part and limited to a given segment of space; that other realm is all, is space, so to speak, and is subject to no hindrance or control, for in itself it is all that is.

And men?

As a self, each is a personal whole, no doubt; but as member of the universe, each is a partial thing.

But if, wherever the circling body be, it possesses the Soul, what need of the circling?

Because everywhere it finds something else besides the Soul (which it desires to possess alone).

The circular movement would be explained, too, if the Soul's power may be taken as resident at its centre.

Here, however, we must distinguish between a centre in reference to the two different natures, body and Soul.

In body, centre is a point of place; in Soul it is a source, the source of some other nature. The word, which without qualification would mean the midpoint of a spheric mass, may serve in the double reference; and, as in a material mass so in the Soul, there must be a centre, that around which the object, Soul or material mass, revolves.

The Soul exists in revolution around God to whom it clings in love, holding itself to the utmost of its power near to Him as the Being on which all depends; and since it cannot coincide with God it circles about Him.

Why then do not all souls (i.e. the lower, also, as those of men and animals) thus circle about the Godhead?

Every Soul does in its own rank and place.

And why not our very bodies, also?

Because the forward path is characteristic of body and because all the body's impulses are to other ends and because what in us is of this circling nature (the soul) is hampered in its motion by the clay it bears with it, while in the higher realm everything flows on its course, lightly and easily, with nothing to check it, once there is any principle of motion in it at all.

And it may very well be that even in us the Spirit which dwells with the Soul does thus circle about the divinity. For since God is omnipresent the Soul desiring perfect union must take the circular course: God is not stationed.

Similarly Plato attributes to the stars not only the spheric movement belonging to the universe as a whole but also to each a revolution around their common centre; each—not by way of thought but by links of natural necessity—has in its own place taken hold of God and exults.

3.

The truth may be resumed in this way:—

There is a lowest power of the Soul, a nearest to earth, and this is interwoven throughout the entire universe: another phase possesses sensation, while yet another includes the Reason which is concerned with the objects of sensation: this higher phase holds itself to the spheres, poised towards the Above but hovering over the lesser Soul and giving forth to it an effluence which makes it more intensely vital.

The lower Soul is moved by the higher which, besides encircling and supporting it, actually resides in whatsoever part of it has thrust upwards and attained the spheres. The lower then, ringed round by the higher and answering its call, turns and tends towards it; and this upward tension communicates motion to the material frame in which it is involved: for if a single point in a spheric mass is in any degree moved, without being drawn away from the rest, it moves the whole, and the sphere is set in motion. Something of the same kind happens in the case of our bodies: the unspatial movement of the Soul—in happiness, for instance, or at the idea of some pleasant event—sets up a spatial movement in the body: the Soul, attaining in its own region some good which increases its sense of life, moves towards what pleases it; and so, by force of the union established in the order of nature, it moves the body, in the body's region, that is in space.

As for that phase of the Soul in which sensation is vested, it, too, (like the higher) takes its good from the Supreme above itself and moves, rejoicingly, in quest of it: and since the object of its desire is everywhere, it too ranges always through the entire scope of the universe.

The Intellectual-Principle has no such progress in any region; its movement is a stationary act, for it turns upon itself.

And this is why the All, circling as it does, is at the same time at rest.

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THIRD TRACTATE

Are The Stars Causes?

1.

That the circuit of the stars indicates definite events to come but without being the cause direct (as the general opinion holds) of all that happens, has been elsewhere affirmed, and proved by some modicum of argument: but the subject demands more precise and detailed investigation for to take the one view rather than the other is of no small moment.

The belief is that the planets in their courses actually produce not merely such conditions as poverty, wealth, health and sickness but even ugliness and beauty and, gravest of all, vices and virtue and the very acts that spring from these qualities, the definite doings of each moment of virtue or vice. We are to suppose the stars to be annoyed with men—and upon matters in which men, moulded to what they are by the stars themselves, can surely do them no wrong.

They will be distributing what pass for their good gifts, not out of kindness towards the recipients but as they themselves are affected pleasantly or disagreeably at the various points of their course; so that they must be supposed to change their plans as they stand at their zeniths or are declining.

More absurdly still, some of them are supposed to be malicious and others to be helpful, and yet the evil stars will (in certain positions) bestow favours and the benevolent act harshly: further, their action alters as they see each other or not, so that, after all, they possess no definite nature but vary according to their angles of aspect; a star is kindly when it sees one of its fellows but changes at sight of another: and there is even a distinction to be made in the seeing as it occurs in this figure or in that. Lastly, all acting together, the fused influence is different again from that of each single star, just as the blending of distinct fluids gives a mixture unlike any of them.

Since these opinions and others of the same order are prevalent, it will be well to examine them carefully one by one, beginning with the fundamental question:—

2.

Are these planets to be thought of as soulless or unsouled?

Suppose them, first, to be without Soul.

In that case they can purvey only heat or cold—if cold from the stars can be thought of—that is to say, any communication from them will affect only our bodily nature,

since all they have to communicate to us is merely corporeal. This implies that no considerable change can be caused in the bodies affected since emanations merely corporeal cannot differ greatly from star to star, and must, moreover, blend upon earth into one collective resultant: at most the differences would be such as depend upon local position, upon nearness or farness with regard to the centre of influence. This reasoning, of course, is as valid of any cold emanation there may be as of the warm.

Now, what is there in such corporeal action to account for the various classes and kinds of men, learned and illiterate, scholars as against orators, musicians as against people of other professions? Can a power merely physical make rich or poor? Can it bring about such conditions as in no sense depend upon the interaction of corporeal elements? Could it, for example, bring a man such and such a brother, father, son, or wife, give him a stroke of good fortune at a particular moment, or make him generalissimo or king?

Next, suppose the stars to have life and mind and to be effective by deliberate purpose.

In that case, what have they suffered from us that they should, in free will, do us hurt, they who are established in a divine place, themselves divine? There is nothing in their nature of what makes men base, nor can our weal or woe bring them the slightest good or ill.

3.

Possibly, however, they act not by choice but under stress of their several positions and collective figures?

But if position and figure determined their action each several one would necessarily cause identical effects with every other on entering any given place or pattern.

And that raises the question what effect for good or bad can be produced upon any one of them by its transit in the parallel of this or that section of the Zodiac circle—for they are not in the Zodiacal figure itself but considerably beneath it—especially since, whatever point they touch, they are always in the heavens.

It is absurd to think that the particular grouping under which a star passes can modify either its character or its earthward influences. And can we imagine it altered by its own progression as it rises, stands at centre, declines? Exultant when at centre; dejected or enfeebled in declension; some raging as they rise and growing benignant as they set, while declension brings out the best in one among them; surely this cannot be?

We must not forget that invariably every star, considered in itself, is at centre with regard to some one given group and in decline with regard to another and vice versa; and, very certainly, it is not at once happy and sad, angry and kindly. There is no reasonable escape in representing some of them as glad in their setting, others in their rising: they would still be grieving and glad at one and the same time.

Further, why should any distress of theirs work harm to us?

No: we cannot think of them as grieving at all or as being cheerful upon occasions: they must be continuously serene, happy in the good they enjoy and the Vision before them. Each lives its own free life; each finds its Good in its own Act; and this Act is not directed towards us.

Like the birds of augury, the living beings of the heavens, having no lot or part with us, may serve incidentally to foreshow the future, but they have absolutely no main function in our regard.

4.

It is again not in reason that a particular star should be gladdened by seeing this or that other while, in a second couple, such an aspect is distressing: what enmities can affect such beings? what causes of enmity can there be among them?

And why should there be any difference as a given star sees certain others from the corner of a triangle or in opposition or at the angle of a square?

Why, again, should it see its fellow from some one given position and yet, in the next Zodiacal figure, not see it, though the two are actually nearer?

And, the cardinal question; by what conceivable process could they affect what is attributed to them? How explain either the action of any single star independently or, still more perplexing, the effect of their combined intentions?

We cannot think of them entering into compromises, each renouncing something of its efficiency and their final action in our regard amounting to a concerted plan.

No one star would suppress the contribution of another, nor would star yield to star and shape its conduct under suasion.

As for the fancy that while one is glad when it enters another's region, the second is vexed when in its turn it occupies the place of the first, surely this is like starting with the supposition of two friends and then going on to talk of one being attracted to the other who, however, abhors the first.

5.

When they tell us that a certain cold star is more benevolent to us in proportion as it is further away, they clearly make its harmful influence depend upon the coldness of its nature; and yet it ought (by this reasoning) to be beneficent to us when it is in the opposed Zodiacal figures.

When the cold planet, we are told, is in opposition to the cold, both become menacing: but the natural effect would be a compromise.

And we are asked to believe that one of them is happy by day and grows kindly under the warmth, while another, of a fiery nature, is most cheerful by night—as if it were not always day to them, light to them, and as if the first one could be darkened by night at that great distance above the earth's shadow.

Then there is the notion that the moon, in conjunction with a certain star, is softened at her full but is malignant in the same conjunction when her light has waned; yet, if anything of this order could be admitted, the very opposite would be the case. For when she is full to us she must be dark on the further hemisphere, that is to that star which stands above her; and when dark to us she is full to that other star, upon which only then, on the contrary, does she look with her light. To the moon itself, in fact, it can make no difference in what aspect she stands, for she is always lit on the upper or on the under half: to the other star, the warmth from the moon, of which they speak, might make a difference; but that warmth would reach it precisely when the moon is without light to us; at its darkest to us it is full to that other, and therefore (by the theory) beneficent. The darkness of the moon to us is of moment to the earth, but brings no trouble to the planet above. That planet, it is alleged, can give no help on account of its remoteness and therefore seems less well disposed; but the moon at its full suffices to the lower realm so that the distance of the other is of no importance. When the moon, though dark to us, is in aspect with the Fiery Star she is held to be favourable: the reason alleged is that the force of Mars is all-sufficient since it contains more fire than it needs.

The truth is that while the material emanations from the living beings of the heavenly system are of various degrees of warmth—planet differing from planet in this respect—no cold comes from them: the nature of the space in which they have their being is voucher for that.

The star known as Jupiter includes a due measure of fire (and warmth), in this resembling the Morning-star and therefore seeming to be in alliance with it. In aspect with what is known as the Fiery Star, Jupiter is beneficent by virtue of the mixing of influences: in aspect with Saturn unfriendly by dint of distance. Mercury, it would seem, is (in itself) indifferent whatever stars it be in aspect with; for it adopts any and every character.

But (again, the truth is that) all the stars are serviceable to the Universe, and therefore can stand to each other only as the service of the Universe demands, in a harmony like that observed in the members of any one animal form. They exist essentially for the purpose of the Universe, just as the gall exists for the purposes of the body as a whole not less than for its own immediate function: it is to be the inciter of the animal spirits but without allowing the entire organism and its own especial region to run riot. Some such balance of function was indispensable in the All—bitter with sweet. There must be differentiation—eyes and so forth—but all the members will be in sympathy with the entire animal frame to which they belong. Only so can there be a unity and a total harmony.

And in such a total, analogy will make every part a Sign.

6.

But that this same Mars, or Aphrodite, in certain aspects should cause adulteries—as if they could thus, through the agency of human incontinence, satisfy their own mutual desires—is not such a notion the height of unreason? And who could accept the fancy that their happiness comes from their seeing each other in this or that relative position and not from their own settled nature?

Again: countless myriads of living beings are born and continue to be: to minister continuously to every separate one of these; to make them famous, rich, poor, lascivious; to shape the active tendencies of every single one—what kind of life is this for the stars, how could they possibly handle a task so huge?

They are to watch, we must suppose, the rising of each several constellation and upon that signal to act; such a one, they see, has risen by so many degrees, representing so many of the periods of its upward path; they reckon on their fingers at what moment they must take the action which, executed prematurely, would be out of order: and in the sum, there is no One Being controlling the entire scheme; all is made over to the stars singly, as if there were no Sovereign Unity, standing as source of all the forms of Being in subordinate association with it, and delegating to the separate members, in their appropriate Kinds, the task of accomplishing its purposes and bringing its latent potentiality into act.

This is a separatist theory, tenable only by minds ignorant of the nature of a Universe which has a ruling principle and a first cause operative downwards through every member.

7.

But, if the stars announce the future—as we hold of many other things also—what explanation of the cause have we to offer? What explains the purposeful arrangement thus implied? Obviously, unless the particular is included under some general principle of order, there can be no signification.

We may think of the stars as letters perpetually being inscribed on the heavens or inscribed once for all and yet moving as they pursue the other tasks allotted to them: upon these main tasks will follow the quality of signifying, just as the one principle underlying any living unit enables us to reason from member to member, so that for example we may judge of character and even of perils and safeguards by indications in the eyes or in some other part of the body. If these parts of us are members of a whole, so are we: in different ways the one law applies.

All teems with symbol; the wise man is the man who in any one thing can read another, a process familiar to all of us in not a few examples of everyday experience.

But what is the comprehensive principle of co-ordination? Establish this and we have a reasonable basis for the divination, not only by stars but also by birds and other animals, from which we derive guidance in our varied concerns.

All things must be enchained; and the sympathy and correspondence obtaining in any one closely knit organism must exist, first, and most intensely, in the All. There must be one principle constituting this unit of many forms of life and enclosing the several members within the unity, while at the same time, precisely as in each thing of detail the parts too have each a definite function, so in the All (the higher All) each several member must have its own task—but more markedly so since in this case the parts are not merely members but themselves Alls, members of the loftier Kind.

Thus each entity takes its origin from one Principle and, therefore, while executing its own function, works in with every other member of that All from which its distinct task has by no means cut it off: each performs its act, each receives something from the others, every one at its own moment bringing its touch of sweet or bitter. And there is nothing undesigned, nothing of chance, in all the process: all is one scheme of differentiation, starting from the Firsts and working itself out in a continuous progression of Kinds.

8.

Soul, then, in the same way, is intent upon a task of its own; alike in its direct course (its tendency towards the divine?) and in its divagation (its activity towards the lower?) it is the cause of all by its possession of the Thought of the First Principle: thus a Law of Justice goes with all that exists in the Universe which, otherwise, would be dissolved, and is perdurable because the entire fabric is guided as much by the orderliness as by the power of the controlling force. And in this order the stars, as being no minor members of the heavenly system, are co-operators contributing at once to its stately beauty and to its symbolic quality. Their symbolic power extends to the entire realm of sense, their efficacy only to what they patently do.

For our part, nature keeps us upon the work of the Soul as long as we are not wrecked in the multiplicity of the Universe: once thus sunk and held we pay the penalty, which consists both in the fall itself and in the lower rank thus entailed upon us: riches and poverty are caused (not by the stars but) by the combinations of external fact.

And what of virtue and vice?

That question has been amply discussed elsewhere: in a word, virtue is ours by the ancient staple of the Soul; vice is due to the commerce of a Soul with the outer world.

9.

This brings us to the Spindle-destiny, spun according to the ancients by the Fates. To Plato the Spindle represents the co-operation of the moving and the stable elements of

the kosmic circuit: the Fates with Necessity, Mother of the Fates, manipulate it and spin at the birth of every being, so that all comes into existence through Necessity.

In the *Timæus*, the creating God bestows the essential of the Soul, but it is the divinities moving in the kosmos (the stars) that infuse the powerful affections holding from Necessity—our impulse and our desire, our sense of pleasure and of pain—and that lower phase of the Soul in which such experiences originate. By this statement our personality is bound up with the stars, whence our Soul (as total of Principle and affections) takes shape; and we are set under necessity at our very entrance into the world: our temperament will be of the stars' ordering, and so, therefore, the actions which derive from temperament, and all the experiences of a nature shaped to impressions.

What, after all this, remains to stand for the "We"?

The "We" is the actual resultant of a Being whose nature includes, with certain sensibilities, the power of governing them. Cut off as we are by the nature of the body, God has yet given us, in the midst of all this evil, virtue the unconquerable, meaningless in a state of tranquil safety but everything where its absence would be peril of fall.

Our task, then, is to work for our liberation from this sphere, severing ourselves from all that has gathered about us; the total man is to be something better than a body ensouled—the bodily element dominant with a trace of Soul running through it and a resultant life-course mainly of the body—for in such a combination all is, in fact, bodily. There is another life, emancipated, whose quality is progression towards the higher realm, towards the good and divine, towards that Principle which no one possesses except by deliberate usage but so may appropriate, becoming, each personally, the higher, the beautiful, the Godlike, and living, remote, in and by It—unless one choose to go bereaved of that higher Soul and therefore, to live fate-bound, no longer profiting, merely, by the significance of the sidereal system but becoming as it were a part sunken in it and dragged along with the whole thus adopted.

For every human Being is of twofold character; there is that compromise-total and there is the Authentic Man: and it is so with the Kosmos as a whole; it is in the one phase a conjunction of body with a certain form of the Soul bound up in body; in the other phase it is the Universal Soul, that which is not itself embodied but flashes down its rays into the embodied Soul: and the same twofold quality belongs to the Sun and the other members of the heavenly system.

To the remoter Soul, the pure, sun and stars communicate no baseness. In their efficacy upon the (material) All, they act as parts of it, as ensouled bodies within it; and they act only upon what is partial; body is the agent while, at the same time, it becomes the vehicle through which is transmitted something of the star's will and of that authentic Soul in it which is steadfastly in contemplation of the Highest.

But (with every allowance to the lower forces) all follows either upon that Highest or rather upon the Beings about It—we may think of the Divine as a fire whose outgoing warmth pervades the Universe—or upon whatsoever is transmitted by the one Soul (the divine first Soul) to the other, its Kin (the Soul of any particular being). All that is graceless is admixture. For the Universe is in truth a thing of blend, and if we separate from it that separable Soul, the residue is little. The All is a God when the divine Soul is counted in with it; “the rest,” we read, “is a mighty spirit and its ways are subdivine.”

10.

If all this be true, we must at once admit signification, though, neither singly nor collectively, can we ascribe to the stars any efficacy except in what concerns the (material) All and in what is of their own function.

We must admit that the Soul before entering into birth presents itself bearing with it something of its own, for it could never touch body except under stress of a powerful inner impulse; we must admit some element of chance around it from its very entry, since the moment and conditions are determined by the cosmic circuit: and we must admit some effective power in that circuit itself; it is co-operative, and completes of its own act the task that belongs to the All of which everything in the circuit takes the rank and function of a part.

11.

And we must remember that what comes from the supernals does not enter into the recipients as it left the source; fire, for instance, will be duller; the loving instinct will degenerate and issue in ugly forms of the passion; the vital energy in a subject not so balanced as to display the mean of manly courage, will come out as either ferocity or faint-heartedness; and ambition . . . in love . . .; and the instinct towards good sets up the pursuit of semblant beauty; intellectual power at its lowest produces the extreme of wickedness, for wickedness is a miscalculating effort towards Intelligence (=towards the highest principle in the man).

Any such quality, modified at best from its supreme form, deteriorates again within itself: things of any kind that approach from above, altered by merely leaving their source change further still by their blending with bodies, with Matter, with each other.

12.

All that thus proceeds from the supernal combines into a unity (in the subject concerned) and every existing entity takes something from this blended infusion so that the result is the thing itself plus some quality. The effluence does not make the horse but adds something to it; for horse comes by horse, and man by man: the sun plays its part no doubt in the shaping, but the man has his origin in the Human-Principle. Outer things have their effect, sometimes to hurt and sometimes to help;

like a father, they often contribute to good but sometimes also to harm; but they do not wrench the human being from the foundations of its nature; though sometimes Matter is the dominant, and the human principle takes the second place so that there is a failure to achieve perfection; the Ideal has been attenuated.

13.

Of phenomena of this sphere some derive from the Kosmic Circuit and some not: we must take them singly and mark them off, assigning to each its origin.

The gist of the whole matter lies in the consideration that Soul governs this All by the plan contained in the Reason-Principle and plays in the All exactly the part of the particular principle which in every living-thing forms the members of the organism and adjusts them to the unity of which they are portions; the entire force of the Soul is represented in the All but, in the parts, Soul is present only in proportion to the degree of essential reality held by each of such partial objects. Surrounding every separate entity there are other entities, whose approach will sometimes be hostile and sometimes helpful to the purpose of its nature; but to the All taken in its length and breadth each and every separate existent is an adjusted part, holding its own characteristic and yet contributing by its own native tendency to the entire life-history of the Universe.

The soulless parts of the All are merely instruments; all their action is effected, so to speak, under a compulsion from outside themselves.

The ensouled fall into two classes. The one kind has a motion of its own, but haphazard like that of horses between the shafts but before their driver sets the course; they are set right by the whip. In the Living-Being possessed of Reason, the nature-principle includes the driver; where the driver is intelligent, it takes in the main a straight path to a set end. But both classes are members of the All and co-operate towards the general purpose.

The greater and most valuable among them have an important operation over a wide range: their contribution towards the life of the whole consists in acting, not in being acted upon; others, but feebly equipped for action, are almost wholly passive; there is an intermediate order whose members contain within themselves a principle of productivity and activity and make themselves very effective in many spheres or ways and yet serve also by their passivity.

Thus the All stands as one all-complete Life, whose members, to the measure in which each contains within itself the Highest, effect all that is high and noble: and the entire scheme must be subordinate to its Dirigeant as an army to its general, “following upon Zeus”—it has been said—“as he proceeds towards the Intelligible Kind.”

Secondary in the All are those of its parts which possess a less exalted nature just as in us the members rank lower than the Soul; and so all through, there is a general

analogy between the things of the All and our own members—none of quite equal rank.

All living things, then—all in the heavens and all elsewhere—fall under the general Reason-Principle of the All—they have been made parts with a view to the whole: not one of these parts, however exalted, has power to effect any alteration of these Reason-Principles or of things shaped by them and to them; some modification one part may work upon another, whether for better or for worse; but there is no power that can wrest anything outside of its distinct nature.

The part effecting such a modification for the worse may act in several ways.

It may set up some weakness restricted to the material frame. Or it may carry the weakness through to the sympathetic Soul which by the medium of the material frame, become a power to debasement, has been delivered over, though never in its essence, to the inferior order of being. Or, in the case of a material frame ill-organised, it may check all such action (of the Soul) upon the material frame as demands a certain collaboration in the part acted upon: thus a lyre may be so ill-strung as to be incapable of the melodic exactitude necessary to musical effect.

14.

What of poverty and riches, glory and power?

In the case of inherited fortune, the stars merely announce a rich man, exactly as they announce the high social standing of the child born to a distinguished house.

Wealth may be due to personal activity: in this case if the body has contributed, part of the effect is due to whatever has contributed towards the physical powers, first the parents and then, if place has had its influence, sky and earth; if the body has borne no part of the burden, then the success, and all the splendid accompaniments added by the Recompensers, must be attributed to virtue exclusively. If fortune has come by gift from the good then the source of the wealth is, again, virtue: if by gift from the evil, but to a meritorious recipient, then the credit must be given to the action of the best in them: if the recipient is himself unprincipled, the wealth must be attributed primarily to the very wickedness and to whatsoever is responsible for the wickedness, while the givers bear an equal share in the wrong.

When the success is due to labour, tillage for example, it must be put down to the tiller, with all his environment as contributory. In the case of treasure trove, something from the All has entered into action; and if this be so, it will be foreshown—since all things make a chain, so that we can speak of things universally. Money is lost: if by robbery, the blame lies with the robber and the native principle guiding him: if by shipwreck, the cause is the chain of events. As for good fame, it is either deserved and then is due to the services done and to the merit of those appraising them, or it is undeserved, and then must be attributed to the injustice of those making the award. And the same principle holds as regards power—for this also may be rightly or unrightly placed—it depends either upon the merit of the dispensers

of place or upon the man himself who has effected his purpose by the organisation of supporters or in many other possible ways. Marriages, similarly, are brought about either by choice or by chance interplay of circumstance. And births are determined by marriages: the child is moulded true to type when all goes well; otherwise it is marred by some inner detriment, something due to the mother personally or to an environment unfavourable to that particular conception.

15.

According to Plato lots and choice play a part (in the determination of human conditions) before the Spindle of Necessity is turned; that once done, only the Spindle-destiny is valid; it fixes the chosen conditions irretrievably since the elected guardian-spirit becomes accessory to their accomplishment.

But what is the significance of the Lots?

By the Lots (implying the unchosen element) we are to understand birth into the conditions actually existent in the All at the particular moment of each entry into body, birth into such and such a physical frame, from such and such parents, in this or that place, and generally all that in our phraseology is the External.

For Particulars and Universals alike it is established that to the first of those known as the Fates, to Clotho the Spinner, must be due the unity and as it were interweaving of all that exists: Lachesis (the Apportioner) presides over the Lots: to Atropos (the Inflexible) must necessarily belong the conduct of mundane events.

Of men, some enter into life as fragments of the All, bound to that which is external to themselves: they are victims of a sort of fascination, and are hardly, or not at all, themselves: but others mastering all this—straining, so to speak, by the head towards the Higher, to what is outside even the Soul—preserve still the nobility and the ancient privilege of the Soul's essential being.

For certainly we cannot think of the Soul as a thing whose nature is just a sum of impressions from outside—as if it, alone, of all that exists, had no native character.

No: much more than all else, the Soul, possessing the Idea which belongs to a Principle, must have as its native wealth many powers serving to the activities of its Kind. It is an Essential-Existent and with this Existence must go desire and act and the tendency towards some good.

While body and soul stand one combined thing, there is a joint nature, a definite entity having definite functions and employments; but as soon as any Soul is detached, its employments are kept apart, its very own: it ceases to take the body's concerns to itself: it has vision now: body and soul stand widely apart.

16.

The question arises what phase of the Soul enters into the union for the period of embodiment and what phase remains distinct, what is separable and what necessarily interlinked, and in general what the Living-Being is.

On all this there has been a conflict of teaching: the matter must be examined later on from quite other considerations than occupy us here. For the present let us explain in what sense we have described the All as the expressed idea of the Governing Soul.

One theory might be that the Soul creates the particular entities in succession—man followed by horse and other animals domestic or wild: fire and earth, though, first of all—that it watches these creations acting upon each other whether to help or to harm, observes, and no more, the tangled web formed of all these strands, and their unflinching sequences; and that it makes no concern of the result beyond securing the reproduction of the primal living-beings, leaving them for the rest to act upon each other according to their definite natures.

Another view makes the soul answerable for all that thus comes about, since its first creations have set up the entire enchainment.

No doubt the Reason-Principle (conveyed by the Soul) covers all the action and experience of this realm: nothing happens, even here, by any form of haphazard; all follows a necessary order.

Is everything, then, to be attributed to the act of the Reason-Principles?

To their existence, no doubt, but not to their effective action; they exist and they know; or better, the Soul, which contains the engendering Reason-Principle, knows the results of all it has brought to pass. For whenever similar factors meet and act in relation to each other, similar consequences must inevitably ensue: the Soul adopting or foreplanning the given conditions accomplishes the due outcome and links all into a total.

All, then, is antecedent and resultant, each sequent becoming in turn an antecedent once it has taken its place among things. And perhaps this is a cause of progressive deterioration: men, for instance, are not as they were of old; by dint of interval and of the inevitable law, the Reason-Principles (constituting man) have ceded something to the characteristics of the Matter.

But:—

The Soul watches the ceaselessly changing universe and follows all the fate of all its works: this is its life, and it knows no respite from this care, but is ever labouring to bring about perfection, planning to lead all to an unending state of excellence—like a farmer, first sowing and planting and then constantly setting to rights where rainstorms and long frosts and high gales have played havoc.

If such a conception of Soul be rejected as untenable we are obliged to think that the Reason-Principles themselves foreknew or even contained the ruin and all the consequences of flaw.

But then we would be imputing the creation of evil to the Reason-Principles, though (we ought to be saved from this by reflecting that) the arts and their guiding principle do not include blundering, do not cover the inartistic, the destruction of the work of art.

And here it will be objected that in All there is nothing contrary to nature, nothing evil.

Still, by the side of the better there exists also what is less good.

Well, perhaps even the less good has its contributory value in the All. Perhaps there is no need that everything be good. Contraries may co-operate; and without opposites there could be no ordered Universe: all living-beings of the partial realm include contraries. The better elements are compelled into existence and moulded to their function by the Reason-Principle directly; the less good are potentially present in the Reason-Principles, actually present in the phenomena themselves; the Soul's power had reached its limit, and failed to bring the Reason-Principles into complete actuality since, amid the clash of these antecedent Principles, Matter had already from its own stock produced the less good.

Yet, with all this, Matter is continuously overruled towards the better; so that out of the total of things—modified by Soul on the one hand and by Matter on the other hand, and on neither hand as sound as in the Reason-Principles—there is, in the end, a Unity.

17.

But these Reason-Principles, contained in the Soul, are they Thoughts?

And if so, by what process does the Soul create in accordance with these Thoughts?

It is upon Matter that this act of the Reason is exercised; and what acts physically is not an intellectual operation or a vision, but a power modifying matter, not conscious of it but merely acting upon it: the Reason-Principle, in other words, acts much like a force producing a figure or pattern upon water—that of a circle, suppose, where the formation of the ring is conditioned by something distinct from that force itself (i.e. by the existence and nature of the water).

If this is so, the prior puissance of the Soul (that which conveys the Reason-Principles) must act (not directly but) by manipulating the other Soul, that which is united with Matter and has the generative function.

But is this handling the result of calculation?

Calculation implies reference. Reference, then, to something outside or to something contained within itself? If to its own content, there is no need of reasoning, which could not itself perform the act of creation; creation is the operation of that phase of the Soul which contains Ideal-Principles; for that is its stronger puissance, its creative part.

It creates, then, on the model of the Ideas; for, what it has received from the Intellectual-Principle it must pass on in turn.

In sum, then, the Intellectual-Principle gives from itself to the Soul of the All which follows immediately upon it: this again gives forth from itself to its next, illuminated and imprinted by it; and that secondary Soul at once begins to create, as under order, unhindered in some of its creations, striving in others against the repugnance of Matter.

It has a creative power, derived; it is stored with Reason-Principles not the very originals: therefore it creates, but not in full accordance with the Principles from which it has been endowed: something enters from itself; and, plainly, this is inferior. The issue then is something living, yes; but imperfect, hindering its own life, something very poor and reluctant and crude, formed in a Matter that is the fallen sediment of the Higher Order, bitter and embittering. This is the Soul's contribution to the All.

18.

Are the evils in the Universe necessary because it is of later origin than the Higher Sphere?

Perhaps rather because without evil the All would be incomplete. For most or even all forms of evil serve the Universe—much as the poisonous snake has its use—though in most cases their function is unknown. Vice itself has many useful sides: it brings about much that is beautiful, in artistic creations for example, and it stirs us to thoughtful living, not allowing us to drowse in security.

If all this is so, then (the secret of creation is that) the Soul of the All abides in contemplation of the Highest and Best, ceaselessly striving towards the Intelligible Kind and towards God: but, thus absorbing and filled full, it overflows—so to speak—and the image it gives forth, its last utterance towards the lower, will be the creative puissance.

This ultimate phase, then, is the Maker, secondary to that aspect of the Soul which is primarily saturated from the Divine Intelligence. But the Creator above all is the Intellectual-Principle, as giver, to the Soul that follows it, of those gifts whose traces exist in the Third Kind.

Rightly, therefore, is this Kosmos described as an image continuously being imaged, the First and the Second Principles immobile, the Third, too, immobile essentially, but, accidentally and in Matter, having motion.

For as long as divine Mind and Soul exist, the divine Thought-Forms will pour forth into that phase of the Soul: as long as there is a sun all that streams from it will be some form of Light.

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FOURTH TRACTATE

Matter In Its Two Kinds

1.

By common agreement of all that have arrived at the conception of such a Kind, what is known as Matter is understood to be a certain base, a recipient of Form-Ideas. Thus far all go the same way. But departure begins with the attempt to establish what this basic Kind is in itself, and how it is a recipient and of what.

To a certain school, body-forms exclusively are the Real Beings; existence is limited to bodies; there is one only Matter, the stuff underlying the primal-constituents of the Universe: existence is nothing but this Matter: everything is some modification of this; the elements of the Universe are simply this Matter in a certain condition.

The school has even the audacity to foist Matter upon the divine beings so that, finally, God himself becomes a mode of Matter—and this though they make it corporeal, describing it as a body void of quality, but a magnitude.

Another school makes it incorporeal: among these, not all hold the theory of one only Matter; some of them while they maintain the one Matter, in which the first school believes, the foundation of bodily forms, admit another, a prior, existing in the divine-sphere, the base of the Ideas there and of the unembodied Beings.

2.

We are obliged, therefore, at the start, both to establish the existence of this other Kind and to examine its nature and the mode of its Being.

Now (it will be reasoned) if Matter must characteristically be undetermined, void of shape, while in that sphere of the Highest there can be nothing that lacks determination, nothing shapeless, there can be no Matter there. Further, if all that order is simplex, there can be no need of Matter, whose function is to join with some other element to form a compound: it will be found of necessity in things of derived existence and shifting nature—the signs which lead us to the notion of Matter—but it is unnecessary to the primal.

And again, where (it will be asked) could it have come from? whence did it take its being? If it is derived, it has a source: if it is eternal, then the Primal-Principles are more numerous than we thought, the Firsts are a meeting-ground. Lastly, if that Matter has been entered by Idea, the union constitutes a body; and, so, there is Body in the Supreme.

3.

Now it may be observed, first of all, that we cannot hold utterly cheap either the indeterminate, or even a Kind whose very idea implies absence of form, provided only that it offer itself to its Priors and (through them) to the Highest Beings. We have the parallel of the Soul itself in its relation to the Intellectual-Principle and the Divine Reason, taking shape by these and led so to a nobler principle of form.

Further, a compound in the Intellectual order is not to be confounded with a compound in the realm of Matter; the Divine Reasons are compounds and their Act is to produce a compound, namely that (lower) Nature which works towards Idea. And there is not only a difference of function; there is a still more notable difference of source. Then, too, the Matter of the realm of process ceaselessly changes its form: in the eternal, Matter is immutably one and the same, so that the two are diametrically opposites. The Matter of this realm is all things in turn, a new entity in every separate case, so that nothing is permanent and one thing ceaselessly pushes another out of being: Matter has no identity here. In the Intellectual it is all things at once: and therefore has nothing to change into: it already and ever contains all. This means that not even in its own Sphere is the Matter there at any moment shapeless: no doubt that is true of the Matter here as well; but shape is held by a very different right in the two orders of Matter.

As to whether Matter is eternal or a thing of process, this will be clear when we are sure of its precise nature.

4.

The present existence of the Ideal-Forms has been demonstrated elsewhere: we take up our argument from that point.

If, then, there is more than one of such forming Ideas, there must of necessity be some character common to all and equally some peculiar character in each keeping them distinct.

This peculiar characteristic, this distinguishing difference, is the individual shape. But if shape, then there is the shaped, that in which the difference is lodged.

There is, therefore, a Matter accepting the shape, a permanent substratum.

Further, admitting that there is an Intelligible Realm beyond, of which this world is an image, then, since this world-compound is based on Matter, there must be Matter there also.

And how can you predicate an ordered system without thinking of form, and how think of form apart from the notion of something in which the form is lodged?

No doubt that Realm is, in the strict fact, utterly without parts, but in some sense there is part there too. And in so far as these parts are really separate from each other, any such division and difference can be no other than a condition of Matter, of a something divided and differentiated: in so far as that realm, though without parts, yet consists of a variety of entities, these diverse entities, residing in a unity of which they are variations, reside in a Matter; for this unity, since it is also a diversity, must be conceived of as varied and multiform; it must have been shapeless before it took the form in which variation occurs. For if we abstract from the Intellectual-Principle the variety and the particular shapes, the Reason-Principles and the Thoughts, what precedes these was something shapeless and undetermined, nothing of what is actually present there.

5.

It may be objected that the Intellectual-Principle possesses its content in an eternal conjunction so that the two make a perfect unity, and that thus there is no Matter there.

But that argument would equally cancel the Matter present in the bodily forms of this realm: body without shape has never existed, always body achieved and yet always the two constituents. We discover these two—Matter and Idea—by sheer force of our reasoning which distinguishes continually in pursuit of the simplex, the irreducible, working on, until it can go no further, towards the ultimate in the subject of enquiry. And the ultimate of every partial-thing is its Matter, which, therefore, must be all darkness since light is a Reason-Principle. The Mind, too, as also a Reason-Principle, sees only in each particular object the Reason-Principle lodging there; anything lying below that it declares to lie below the light, to be therefore a thing of darkness, just as the eye, a thing of light, seeks light and colours which are modes of light, and dismisses all that is below the colours and hidden by them, as belonging to the order of the darkness, which is the order of Matter.

The dark element in the Intelligible, however, differs from that in the sense-world: so therefore does the Matter—as much as the forming-Idea presiding in each of the two realms. The Divine Matter, though (like the Matter here) it is the object of determination has, of its own nature, a life defined and intellectual; the Matter of this sphere while it does accept determination is not living or intellective, but a dead thing decorated: any shape it takes is an image, exactly as the Base is an image. There on the contrary the shape is a real-existent as is the Base. Those that ascribe Real Being to Matter must be admitted to be right as long as they keep to the Matter of the Intelligible Realm: for the Base there is Being, or even, taken as an entirety with the higher that accompanies it, is illuminated Being.

But does this Base, of the Intellectual Realm, possess eternal existence?

The solution of that question is the same as for the Ideas.

Both are engendered, in the sense that they have had a beginning, but unengendered in that this beginning is not in Time: they have a derived being but by an eternal

derivation: they are not, like the Kosmos, always in process but, in the character of the Supernal, have their Being permanently. For that differentiation within the Intelligible which produces Matter has always existed and it is this cleavage which produces the Matter there: it is the first movement; and movement and differentiation are convertible terms since the two things arose as one: this motion, this cleavage, away from the first is indetermination (=Matter), needing The First to its determination which it achieves by its Return, remaining, until then, an Alienism, still lacking good; unlit by the Supernal. It is from the Divine that all light comes, and, until this be absorbed, no light in any recipient of light can be authentic; any light from elsewhere is of another order than the true.

6.

We are led thus to the question of receptivity in things of body.

An additional proof that bodies must have some substratum different from themselves, is found in the changing of the basic-constituents into one another. Notice that the destruction of the elements passing over is not complete—if it were we would have a Principle of Being wrecked in Non-being—nor does an engendered thing pass from utter non-being into Being: what happens is that a new form takes the place of an old. There is, then, a stable element, that which puts off one form to receive the form of the incoming entity.

The same fact is clearly established by decay, a process implying a compound object; where there is decay there is a distinction between Matter and Form.

And the reasoning which shows the destructible to be a compound is borne out by practical examples of reduction: a drinking vessel is reduced to its gold, the gold to liquid; analogy forces us to believe that the liquid too is reducible.

The basic-constituents of things must be either their Form-Idea or that Primal Matter (of the Intelligible) or a compound of the Form and Matter.

Form-Idea, pure and simple, they cannot be: for without Matter how could things stand in their mass and magnitude?

Neither can they be that Primal Matter for they are not indestructible.

They must, therefore, consist of Matter and Form-Idea—Form for quality and shape, Matter for the base, indeterminate as being other than Idea.

7.

Empedokles in identifying his “elements” with Matter is refuted by their decay.

Anaxagoras, in identifying his “primal-combination” with Matter—to which he allots no mere aptness to any and every nature or quality but the effective possession of

all—withdraws in this way the very Intellectual-Principle he had introduced; for this Mind is not to him the bestower of shape, of Forming Idea; and it is co-æval with Matter, not its prior. But this simultaneous existence is impossible: for if the combination derives Being by participation, Being is the prior; if both are Authentic Existents, then an additional Principle, a third, is imperative (a ground of unification). And if this Creator, Mind, must pre-exist, why need Matter contain the Forming-Ideas parcelwise for the Mind, with unending labour, to assort and allot? Surely the undetermined could be brought to quality and pattern in the one comprehensive act?

As for the notion (of Anaxagoras) that all is in all, this clearly is impossible.

Those who (with Anaximander) make the base to be “the infinite” must define the term.

If this “infinite” means “of endless extension” there is no infinite among beings; there is neither an infinity-in-itself (Infinity Abstract) nor an infinity as an attribute to some body; for in the first case every part of that infinity would be infinite and in the second an object in which the infinity was present as an attribute could not be infinite apart from that attribute, could not be simplex, could not therefore be Matter.

Atoms again (Democritus) cannot meet the need of a base.

There are no atoms; all body is divisible endlessly: besides neither the continuity nor the ductility of corporeal things is explicable apart from Mind, or apart from the Soul which cannot be made up of atoms; and, again, out of atoms creation could produce nothing but atoms: a creative power could produce nothing from a material devoid of continuity. Any number of reasons might be brought, and have been brought, against this hypothesis and it need detain us no longer.

8.

What, then, is this Kind, this Matter, described as one stuff, continuous and without quality?

Clearly since it is without quality it is incorporeal; bodiliness would be quality.

It must be the basic stuff of all the entities of the sense-world and not merely base to some while being to others achieved form.

Clay, for example, is matter to the potter but is not Matter pure and simple. Nothing of this sort is our object: we are seeking the stuff which underlies all alike. We must therefore refuse to it all that we find in things of sense—not merely such attributes as colour, heat or cold, but weight or weightlessness, thickness or thinness, shape and therefore magnitude; though notice that to be present within magnitude and shape is very different from possessing these qualities.

It cannot be a compound, it must be a simplex, one distinct thing in its nature; only so can it be void of all quality. The Principle which gives it form gives this as something

alien: so with magnitude and all really-existent things bestowed upon it. If, for example, it possessed a magnitude of its own, the Principle giving it form would be at the mercy of that magnitude and must produce not at will, but only within the limit of the Matter's capacity: to imagine that Will keeping step with its material is fantastic.

The Matter must be of later origin than the forming-power, and therefore must be at its disposition throughout, ready to become anything, ready therefore to any bulk; besides, if it possessed magnitude, it would necessarily possess shape also: it would be doubly inductile.

No: all that ever appears upon it is brought in by the Idea: the Idea alone possesses: to it belongs the magnitude and all else that goes with the Reason-Principle or follows upon it. Quantity is given with the Ideal-Form in all the particular species—man, bird, and particular kind of bird.

The imaging of Quantity upon Matter by an outside power is not more surprising than the imaging of Quality; Quality is no doubt a Reason-Principle, but Quantity also—being measure, number—is equally so.

9.

But how can we conceive a thing having existence without having magnitude?

We have only to think of things whose identity does not depend on their quantity—for certainly magnitude can be distinguished from existence as can many other forms and attributes.

In a word, every unembodied Kind must be classed as without quantity, and Matter is unembodied.

Besides quantitateness itself (the Absolute-Principle) does not possess quantity, which belongs only to things participating in it, a consideration which shows that Quantitateness is an Idea-Principle. A white object becomes white by the presence of whiteness; what makes an organism white or of any other variety of colour is not itself a specific colour but, so to speak, a specific Reason-Principle: in the same way what gives an organism a certain bulk is not itself a thing of magnitude but is Magnitude itself, the abstract Absolute, or the Reason-Principle.

This Magnitude-Absolute, then, enters and beats the Matter out into Magnitude?

Not at all: the Matter was not previously shrunken small: there was no littleness or bigness: the Idea gives Magnitude exactly as it gives every quality not previously present.

10.

But how can I form the conception of the sizelessness of Matter?

How do you form the concept of any absence of quality? What is the Act of the Intellect, what is the mental approach, in such a case?

The secret is Indetermination.

Likeness knows its like: the indeterminate knows the indeterminate. Around this indefinite a definite conception will be realised, but the way lies through indefiniteness.

All knowledge comes by Reason and the Intellectual Act; in this case Reason conveys information in any account it gives, but the act which aims at being intellectual is, here, not intellection but rather its failure: therefore (in this crippled approach) the representation of Matter must be spurious, unreal, something sprung of the Alien, of the unreal, and bound up with the alien reason.

This is Plato's meaning where he says that Matter is apprehended by a sort of spurious reasoning.

What, then, is this indetermination in the Soul? Does it amount to an utter absence of Knowledge, as if the Soul or Mind had withdrawn?

No: the indeterminate has some footing in the sphere of affirmation. The eye is aware of darkness as a base capable of receiving any colour not yet seen against it: so the Mind, putting aside all attributes perceptible to sense—all that corresponds to light—comes upon a residuum which it cannot bring under determination: it is thus in the state of the eye which, when directed towards darkness, has become in some way identical with the object of its spurious vision.

There is vision, then, in this approach of the Mind towards Matter?

Some vision, yes; of shapelessness, of colourlessness, of the unlit, and therefore of the sizeless. More than this would mean that the Soul is already bestowing Form.

But is not such a void precisely what the Soul experiences when it has no intellection whatever?

No: in that case it affirms nothing, or rather has no experience: but in knowing Matter, it has an experience, what may be described as the impact of the shapeless; for in its very consciousness of objects that have taken shape and size it knows them as compounds (i.e. as possessing with these forms a formless base) for they appear as things that have accepted colour and other quality.

It knows, therefore, a whole which includes two components; it has a clear Knowledge or perception of the overlie (the Ideas) but only a dim awareness of the underlie, the shapeless which is not an Ideal-Principle.

With what is perceptible to it there is presented something else: what it can directly apprehend it sets on one side as its own; but the something else which Reason rejects,

this, the dim, it knows dimly, this, the dark, it knows darkly, this it knows in a sort of non-knowing.

And just as even Matter itself is not stably shapeless but, in things, is always shaped, the Soul also is eager to throw over it the thing-form; for the Soul recoils from the indefinite, dreads, almost, to be outside of reality, does not endure to linger about Non-Being.

11.

“But, given Magnitude and the properties we know, what else can be necessary to the existence of body?”

Some base to be the container of all the rest.

“A certain mass then; and if mass, then Magnitude? Obviously if your Base has no Magnitude it offers no footing to any entrant. And suppose it sizeless; then, what end does it serve? It never helped Idea or quality; now it ceases to account for differentiation or for magnitude, though the last, wheresoever it resides, seems to find its way into embodied entities by way of Matter.”

“Or, taking a larger view, observe that actions, productive operations, periods of time, movements, none of these have any such substratum and yet are real things; in the same way the most elementary body has no need of Matter; things may be, all, what they are, each after its own kind, in their great variety, deriving the coherence of their being from the blending of the various Ideal-Forms. This Matter with its sizelessness seems, then, to be a name without a content.”

Now, to begin with: extension is not an imperative condition of being a recipient; it is necessary only where it happens to be a property inherent to the recipient's peculiar mode of being. The Soul, for example, contains all things but holds them all in an unextended unity; if magnitude were one of its attributes it would contain things in extension. Matter does actually contain in spatial extension what it takes in; but this is because itself is a potential recipient of spatial extension: animals and plants, in the same way, as they increase in size, take quality in parallel development with quantity, and they lose in the one as the other lessens.

No doubt in the case of things as we know them there is a certain mass lying ready beforehand to the shaping power: but that is no reason for expecting bulk in Matter strictly so called; for in such cases Matter is not the absolute; it is that of some definite object; the Absolute Matter must take its magnitude, as every other property, from outside itself.

A thing then need not have magnitude in order to receive form: it may receive mass with everything else that comes to it at the moment of becoming what it is to be: a phantasm of mass is enough, a primary aptness for extension, a magnitude of no content—whence the identification that has been made of Matter with The Void.

But I prefer to use the word phantasm as hinting the indefiniteness into which the Soul spills itself when it seeks to communicate with Matter, finding no possibility of delimiting it, neither encompassing it nor able to penetrate to any fixed point of it, either of which achievements would be an act of delimitation.

In other words we have something which is to be described not as small or great but as the great-and-small: for it is at once a mass and a thing without magnitude, in the sense that it is the Matter on which Mass is based and that, as it changes from great to small and small to great, it traverses magnitude. Its very undeterminateness is a mass in the same sense—that of being a recipient of Magnitude—though of course only in the visible object.

In the order of things without Mass, all that is Ideal-Principle possesses delimitation, each entity for itself, so that the conception of Mass has no place in them: Matter, not delimited, having in its own nature no stability, swept into any or every form by turns, ready to go here, there and everywhere, becomes a thing of multiplicity: driven into all shapes, becoming all things, it has that much of the character of mass.

12.

It is the corporeal, then, that demands magnitude: the Ideal-Forms of body are Ideas installed in Mass.

But these Ideas enter, not into Magnitude itself but into some subject that has been brought to Magnitude. For to suppose them entering into Magnitude—and not into Matter—is to represent them as being either without Magnitude and without Real-Existence (and therefore undistinguishable from the Matter) or not Ideal-Forms (apt to body) but Reason-Principles (utterly removed) whose sphere could only be Soul; at this, there would be no such thing as body (i.e. instead of Ideal-Forms shaping Matter and so producing body, there would be merely Reason-Principles dwelling remote in Soul.)

The multiplicity here must be based upon some unity which, since it has been brought to Magnitude, must be, itself, distinct from Magnitude. Matter is the base of Identity to all that is composite: once each of the constituents comes bringing its own Matter with it, there is no need of any other base. No doubt there must be a container, as it were a place, to receive what is to enter, but Matter and even body precede place and space; the primal necessity, in order to the existence of body, is Matter.

There is no force in the suggestion that since production and act are immaterial, corporeal entities also must be immaterial.

Bodies are compound, actions not. Further, Matter does in some sense underlie action; it supplies the substratum to the doer: it is permanently within him though it does not enter as a constituent into the act where, indeed, it would be a hindrance. Doubtless, one act does not change into another—as would be the case if there were a specific Matter of actions—but the doer directs himself from one act to another so that he is the Matter, himself, to his varying actions.

Matter, in sum, is necessary to quality and to quantity, and, therefore, to body.

It is, thus, no name void of content; we know there is such a base, invisible and without bulk though it be.

If we reject it, we must by the same reasoning reject qualities and mass: for quality, or mass, or any such entity, taken by itself apart, might be said not to exist. But these do exist, though in an obscure existence: there is much less ground for rejecting Matter, however it lurk, discerned by none of the senses.

It eludes the eye, for it is utterly outside of colour: it is not heard, for it is no sound: it is no flavour or savour for nostrils or palate: can it, perhaps, be known to touch? No: for neither is it corporeal; and touch deals with body, which is known by being solid, fragile, soft, hard, moist, dry—all properties utterly lacking in Matter.

It is grasped only by a mental process, though that not an act of the intellective mind but a reasoning that finds no subject; and so it stands revealed as the spurious thing it has been called. No bodiliness belongs to it; bodiliness is itself a phase of Reason-Principle and so is something different from Matter, as Matter, therefore, from it: bodiliness already operative and so to speak made concrete would be body manifest and not Matter unelaborated.

13.

Are we asked to accept as the substratum some attribute or quality present to all the elements in common?

Then, first, we must be told what precise attribute this is and, next, how an attribute can be a substratum.

The elements are sizeless, and how conceive an attribute where there is neither base nor bulk?

Again, if the quality possesses determination, it is not Matter the undetermined; and anything without determination is not a quality but is the substratum—the very Matter we are seeking.

It may be suggested that perhaps this absence of quality means simply that, of its own nature, it has no participation in any of the set and familiar properties, but takes quality by this very non-participation, holding thus an absolutely individual character, marked off from everything else, being as it were the negation of those others. Deprivation we will be told comports quality: a blind man has the quality of his lack of sight. If then—it will be urged—Matter exhibits such a negation, surely it has a quality, all the more so, assuming any deprivation to be a quality, in that here the deprivation is all comprehensive.

But this notion reduces all existence to qualified things or qualities: Quantity itself becomes a Quality and so does even Existence. Now this cannot be: if such things as

Quantity and Existence are qualified, they are, by that very fact, not qualities: Quality is an addition to them; we must not commit the absurdity of giving the name Quality to something distinguishable from Quality, something therefore that is not Quality.

Is it suggested that its mere Alienism is a quality in Matter?

If this Alienism is difference-absolute (the abstract entity) it possesses no Quality: absolute Quality cannot be itself a qualified thing.

If the Alienism is to be understood as meaning only that Matter is differentiated, then it is different not by itself (since it is certainly not an absolute) but by this Difference, just as all identical objects are so (not by themselves but) by virtue of Identicalness (the Absolute principle of Identity).

An absence is neither a Quality nor a qualified entity; it is the negation of a Quality or of something else, as noiselessness is the negation of noise and so on. A lack is negative; Quality demands something positive. The distinctive character of Matter is unshape, the lack of qualification and of form; surely then it is absurd to pretend that it has Quality in not being qualified; that is like saying that sizelessness constitutes a certain size.

The distinctive character of Matter, then, is simply its manner of being—not something definite inserted in it but, rather a relation towards other things, the relation of being distinct from them.

Other things possess something besides this relation of Alienism: their form makes each an entity. Matter may with propriety be described as merely alien; perhaps, even, we might describe it as “The Aliens,” for the singular suggests a certain definiteness while the plural would indicate the absence of any determination.

14.

But is Absence this privation itself, or something in which this Privation is lodged?

Anyone maintaining that Matter and Privation are one and the same in substratum but stand separable in reason cannot be excused from assigning to each the precise principle which distinguishes it in reason from the other: that which defines Matter must be kept quite apart from that defining the Privation and vice versa.

There are three possibilities: Matter is not in Privation and Privation is not in Matter; or each is in each; or each is in itself alone.

Now if they should stand quite apart, neither calling for the other, they are two distinct things: Matter is something other than Privation even though Privation always goes with it: into the principle of the one, the other cannot enter even potentially.

If their relation to each other is that of a snubnose to snubness, here also there is a double concept; we have two things.

If they stand to each other as fire to heat—heat in fire, but fire not included in the concept of heat—if Matter is Privation in the way in which fire is heat, then the Privation is a form under which Matter appears but there remains a base distinct from the Privation and this base must be the Matter. Here, too, they are not one thing.

Perhaps the identity in substance with differentiation in reason will be defended on the ground that Privation does not point to something present but precisely to an absence, to something absent, to the negation or lack of Real-being: the case would be like that of the affirmation of non-existence, where there is no real predication but simply a denial.

Is, then, this Privation simply a non-existence?

If a non-existence in the sense that it is not a thing of Real-being, but belongs to some other Kind of existent, we have still two Principles, one referring directly to the substratum, the other merely exhibiting the relation of the Privation to other things (as their potentiality).

Or we might say that the one concept defines the relation of substratum to what is not substratum (but realised entity) while that of Privation, in bringing out the indeterminateness of Matter, applies to the Matter in itself (and not in its relationships): but this still makes Privation and Matter two in reason though one in substratum.

Now if Matter possesses an identity—though only the identity of being indeterminate, unfixed and without quality—how can we bring it so under two principles?

15.

The further question, therefore, is raised whether boundlessness and indetermination are things lodging in something other than themselves as a sort of attribute and whether Privation (or Negation of quality) is also an attribute residing in some separate substratum.

Now all that is Number and Reason-Principle is outside of boundlessness (is fully delimited): these (Number and Reason) bestow bound and settlement and order in general upon all else: neither anything that has been brought under order nor any Order-Absolute (apart from themselves) is needed to bring them under order. The thing that has to be brought under order (e.g. Matter) is other than the Ordering Principle which is Limit and Definiteness and Reason-Principle. Therefore, necessarily, the thing to be brought under order and to definiteness must be in itself a thing lacking delimitation.

Now Matter is a thing that is brought under order—like all that shares its nature by participation or by possessing the same principle—therefore, necessarily, Matter is The Undelimited (the Absolute, the “thing” Indefiniteness) and not merely the recipient of a non-essential quality of Indefiniteness entering as an attribute.

For, first, any attribute to any subject must be a Reason-Principle; and Indefiniteness is not a Reason-Principle.

Secondly, what must a thing be to take Indefiniteness as an attribute? Obviously it must, beforehand, be either Definiteness (the Principle) or a defined thing. But Matter is neither.

Then again Indefiniteness entering as an attribute into the definite must cease to be indefinite: but (since Matter remains true to its Kind, i.e. is indefinite as long as it is Matter) Indefiniteness has not entered as an attribute into Matter: that is, Matter is essentially Indefiniteness.

The Matter even of the Intellectual Realm is the Indefinite, (the undelimited); it must be a thing generated by the undefined nature, the illimitable nature, of the Eternal Being, The One—an illimitableness, however, not possessing native existence There (not inherent) but engendered by The One.

But how can Matter be common to both spheres, be here and be There?

Because even Indefiniteness has two phases.

But what difference can there be between phase and phase of Indefiniteness?

The difference of archetype and image.

So that Matter here (as only an image of Indefiniteness) would be less indefinite?

On the contrary, more indefinite as an Image-thing remote from true being. Indefiniteness is the greater in the less ordered object; the less deep in good, the deeper in evil. The Indeterminate in the Intellectual Realm, where there is truer being, might almost be called merely an Image of Indefiniteness: in this lower Sphere where there is less Being, where there is a refusal of the Authentic, and an adoption of the Image-Kind, Indefiniteness is more authentically indefinite.

But this argument seems to make no difference between the indefinite object and Indefiniteness-essential. Is there none?

In any object in which Reason and Matter co-exist we distinguish between Indeterminateness and the Indeterminate subject: but where Matter stands alone we make them identical, or, better, we would say right out that in that case essential Indeterminateness is not present; for it is a Reason-Principle and could not lodge in the indeterminate object without at once annulling the indeterminateness.

Matter, then, must be described as Indefinite of itself, by its natural opposition to Reason-Principle. Reason is Reason and nothing else; just so Matter, opposed by its indeterminateness to Reason, is Indeterminateness and nothing else.

16.

Then Matter is simply Alienism (the Principle of Difference)?

No: it is merely that part of Alienism which stands in contradiction with the Authentic Existents which are Reason-Principles. So understood, this non-existent has a certain measure of existence; for it is identical with Privation, which also is a thing standing in opposition to the things that exist in Reason.

But must not Privation cease to have existence, when what has been lacking is present at last?

By no means: the recipient of a state or character is not a state but the (negation or) Privation of the state; and that into which determination enters is neither a determined object nor determination itself, but simply the wholly or partly undetermined.

Still, must not the nature of this Undetermined be annulled by the entry of Determination, especially where (as in Matter) this is no mere attribute (but the very nature of the recipient)?

No doubt to introduce quantitative determination into an undetermined object would annul the original state; but in the particular case, the introduction of determination only confirms the original state, bringing it into actuality, into full effect, as sowing brings out the natural quality of land or as a female organism impregnated by the male is not defeminised but becomes more decidedly of its sex; the thing becomes more emphatically itself.

But on this reasoning must not Matter owe its evil to having in some degree participated in good?

No: its evil is in its first lack: it was not a possessor (as the land or the female organism are, of some specific character).

To lack one thing and to possess another, in something like equal proportions, is to hold a middle state of good and evil: but whatsoever (like this substratum) possesses nothing and so is in destitution—and especially what is essentially destitution—must be evil in its own Kind.

For in Matter we have no mere absence of means or of strength; it is utter destitution—of sense, of virtue, of beauty, of pattern, of Ideal principle, of quality. This is surely ugliness, utter disgracefulness, unredeemed evil.

The Matter in the Intellectual Realm is an Existent, for there is nothing previous to it except the Beyond-Existence; but what precedes the Matter of this sphere is Existence; by its alienism in regard to the beauty and good of Existence, Matter is therefore a non-existent.

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FIFTH TRACTATE

On Potentiality And Actuality

1.

A distinction is made between things existing actually and things existing potentially; a certain Actuality, also, is spoken of as a really existent entity. We must consider what content there is in these terms.

Can we distinguish between Actuality (an absolute, abstract Principle) and the state of being-in-act? And if there is such an Actuality, is this itself in Act, or are the two quite distinct so that this actually existent thing need not be, itself, an Act?

It is indubitable that Potentiality exists in the Realm of Sense: but does the Intellectual Realm similarly include the potential or only the actual? and if the potential exists there, does it remain merely potential for ever? And, if so, is this resistance to actualisation due to its being precluded (as a member of the Divine or Intellectual world) from time-processes?

First we must make clear what potentiality is.

We cannot think of potentiality as standing by itself; there can be no potentiality apart from something which a given thing may be or become. Thus bronze is the potentiality of a statue: but if nothing could be made out of the bronze, nothing wrought upon it, if it could never be anything as a future to what it has been, if it rejected all change, it would be bronze and nothing else: its own character it holds already as a present thing, and that would be the full of its capacity: it would be destitute of potentiality. Whatsoever has a potentiality must first have a (definite) character of its own; and its potentiality will consist in its having a reach beyond that character to some other.

Sometimes after it has turned its potentiality into actuality it will remain what it was; sometimes it will sink itself to the fullest extent in the new form and itself disappear: these two different modes are exemplified in (1) bronze as potentially a statue and (2) water (=primalliquid) as potentially bronze or, again, air as potentially fire.

But if this be the significance of potentiality, may we describe it as a Power towards the thing that is to be? Is the Bronze a power towards a statue?

Not in the sense of an effectively productive force: such a power could not be called a potentiality. Of course Potentiality may be a power, as, for instance, when we are referring not merely to a thing which may be brought into actualisation but to Actuality itself (the Principle or Abstract in which potentiality and the power of realising potentiality may be thought of as identical): but it is better, as more

conducive to clarity, to use “Potentiality” in regard to the process of Actualisation and “Power” in regard to the Principle, Actuality.

Potentiality may be thought of as a Substratum to states and shapes and forms which are to be received, which it welcomes by its nature and even strives for—sometimes in gain but sometimes, also, to loss, to the annulling of some distinctive manner of Being already actually achieved.

2.

Then the question rises whether Matter—potentially what it becomes by receiving shape—is actually something else or whether it has no actuality at all. In general terms: When a potentiality has taken a definite form, does it retain its being? Is the potentiality, itself, in actualisation? The alternative is that, when we speak of the “Actual Statue” and of the “Potential Statue,” the Actuality is not predicated of the same subject as the “Potentiality.” If we have really two different subjects, then the potential does not really become the actual: all that happens is that an actual entity takes the place of a potential.

The actualised entity is not the Matter (the Potentiality, merely) but a combination, including the Form-Idea upon the Matter.

This is certainly the case when a quite different thing results from the actualisation—the statue, for example, the combination, is distinctly different from the bronze, the base; where the resultant is something quite new, the Potentiality has clearly not, itself, become what is now actualised. But take the case where a person with a capacity for education becomes in fact educated: is not potentiality, here, identical with actualisation? Is not the potentially wise Socrates the same man as the Socrates actually wise?

But is an ignorant man a being of knowledge because he is so potentially? Is he, in virtue of his non-essential ignorance, potentially an instructed being?

It is not because of his accidental ignorance that he is a being of Knowledge: it is because, ignorant though he be by accident, his mind, apt to knowledge, is the potentiality through which he may become so. Thus, in the case of the potentially instructed who have become so in fact, the potentiality is taken up into the actual; or, if we prefer to put it so, there is on the one side the potentiality while, on the other, there is the power in actual possession of the form.

If, then, the Potentiality is the Substratum while the thing in actualisation—the Statue for example—is a combination, how are we to describe the form that has entered the bronze?

There will be nothing unsound in describing this shape, this Form which has brought the entity from potentiality to actuality, as the actualisation; but of course as the actualisation of the definite particular entity, not as Actuality the abstract: we must not confuse it with the other actualisation, strictly so called, that which is contrasted with

the power producing actualisation. The potential is led out into realisation by something other than itself; power accomplishes, of itself, what is within its scope, but by virtue of Actuality (the abstract): the relation is that existing between a temperament and its expression in act, between courage and courageous conduct. So far so good:—

3.

We come now to the purpose of all this discussion; to make clear in what sense or to what degree Actualisation is predicable in the Intellectual Realm and whether all is in Actualisation there, each and every member of that realm being an Act, or whether Potentiality also has place there.

Now: if there is no Matter there to harbour potentiality: if nothing there has any future apart from its actual mode: if nothing there generates, whether by changes or in the permanence of its identity; if nothing goes outside of itself to give being to what is other than itself; then, potentiality has no place there: the Beings there possess actuality as belonging to eternity, not to time.

Those, however, who (with us) assert Matter in the Intellectual Realm will be asked whether the existence of that Matter does not imply the potential there too; for even if Matter there exists in another mode than here, every Being there will have its Matter, its form and the union of the two (and therefore the potential, separable from the actual). What answer is to be made?

Simply, that even the Matter there is Idea, just as the Soul, an Idea, is Matter to another (a higher) Being.

But relatively to that higher, the Soul is a potentiality?

No: for the Idea (to which it is Matter) is integral to the Soul and does not look to a future; the distinction between the Soul and its Idea is purely mental: the Idea and the Matter it includes are conceived as a conjunction but are essentially one Kind: remember that Aristotle makes his Fifth Body immaterial.

But surely Potentiality exists in the Soul? Surely the Soul is potentially the living-being of this world before it has become so? Is it not potentially musical, and everything else that it has not been and becomes? Does not this imply potentiality even in the Intellectual Existences?

No: the Soul is not potentially these things; it is a Power towards them.

But after what mode does Actualisation exist in the Intellectual Realm?

Is it the Actualisation of a statue, where the combination is realised because the Form-Idea has mastered each separate constituent of the total?

No: it is that every constituent there is a Form-Idea and, thus, is perfect in its Being.

There is in the Intellectual Principle no progression from some power capable of intellection to the Actuality of intellection: such a progression would send us in search of a Prior Principle not progressing from Power to Act; there all stands ever realised. Potentiality requires an intervention from outside itself to bring it to the actualisation which otherwise cannot be; but what possesses, of itself, identity unchangeable for ever is an actualisation: all the Firsts then are actualisations, simply because eternally and of themselves they possess all that is necessary to their completion.

This applies equally to the Soul, not to that in Matter but to that in the Intellectual Sphere; and even that in Matter, the Soul of Growth, is an actualisation in its difference; it possesses actually (and not, like material things, merely in image) the Being that belongs to it.

Then, everything, in the intellectual is in actualisation and so all There is Actuality?

Why not? If that Nature is rightly said to be “Sleepless,” and to be Life and the noblest mode of Life, the noblest Activities must be there; all then is actualisation there, everything is an Actuality, for everything is a Life, and all Place there is the Place of Life, in the true sense the ground and spring of Soul and of the Intellectual Principle.

4.

Now, in general anything that has a potentiality is actually something else, and this potentiality of the future mode of being is an existing mode.

But what we think of as Matter, what we assert to be the potentiality of all things, cannot be said to be actually any one being among beings: if it were of itself any definite being, it could not be potentially all.

If, then, it is not among existences, it must necessarily be without existence.

How, therefore, can it be actually anything?

The answer is that while Matter can not be any of the things which are founded upon it, it may quite well be something else, admitting that all existences are not rooted in Matter.

But once more, if it is excluded from the entities founded upon it and all these are Beings, it must itself be a Non-Being.

It is, further, by definition, formless and therefore not an Idea: it cannot then be classed among things of the Intellectual Realm, and so is, once more, a Non-Being. Falling, as regards both worlds, under Non-Being, it is all the more decidedly the Non-Being.

It has eluded the Nature of the Authentic Existences; it has even failed to come up with the things to which a spurious existence can be attributed—for it is not even a

phantasm of Reason as these are—how is it possible to include it under any mode of Being?

And if it falls under no mode of Being, what can it actually be?

5.

How can we talk of it? How can it be the Matter of real things?

It is talked of, and it serves, precisely, as a Potentiality.

And, as being a Potentiality, it is not of the order of the thing it is to become: its existence is no more than an announcement of a future, as it were a thrust forward to what is to come into existence.

As Potentiality then, it is not any definite thing but the potentiality of everything: being nothing in itself—beyond what being Matter amounts to—it is not in actualisation. For if it were actually something, that actualised something would not be Matter, or at least not Matter out and out, but merely Matter in the limited sense in which bronze is the matter of the statue.

And its Non-Being must be no mere difference from Being.

Motion, for example, is different from Being, but plays about it, springing from it and living within it: Matter is, so to speak, the outcast of Being, it is utterly removed, irredeemably what it was from the beginning: in origin it was Non-Being and so it remains.

Nor are we to imagine that, standing away at the very beginning from the universal circle of Beings, it was thus necessarily an active Something or that it became a Something. It has never been able to annex for itself even a visible outline from all the forms under which it has sought to creep: it has always pursued something other than itself; it was never more than a Potentiality towards its next: where all the circle of Being ends, there only is it manifest; discerned underneath things produced after it, it is remoter (from Real-Being) even than they.

Grasped, then, as an underlie in each order of Being, it can be no actualisation of either: all that is allowed to it is to be a Potentiality, a weak and blurred phantasm, a thing incapable of a Shape of its own.

Its actuality is that of being a phantasm, the actuality of being a falsity; and the false in actualisation is the veritably false, which again is Authentic Non-Existence.

So that Matter, as the Actualisation of Non-Being, is all the more decidedly Non-Being, is Authentic Non-Existence.

Thus, since the very reality of its Nature is situated in Non-Being, it is in no degree the Actualisation of any definite Being.

If it is to be present at all, it cannot be an Actualisation, for then it would not be the stray from Authentic Being which it is, the thing having its Being in Non-Beingness: for, note, in the case of things whose Being is a falsity, to take away the falsity is to take away what Being they have, and if we introduce actualisation into things whose Being and Essence is Potentiality, we destroy the foundation of their nature since their Being is Potentiality.

If Matter is to be kept as the unchanging substratum, we must keep it as Matter: that means—does it not?—that we must define it as a Potentiality and nothing more—or refute these considerations.

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SIXTH TRACTATE

Quality And Form-Idea

1.

Are not Being and Reality (τὸ [Editor: illegible character]n and ἡ ο[Editor: illegible character]σία) distinct; must we not envisage Being as the substance stripped of all else, while Reality is this same thing, Being, accompanied by the others—Movement, Rest, Identity, Difference—so that these are the specific constituents of Reality?

The universal fabric, then, is Reality in which Being, Movement, and so on are separate constituents.

Now Movement has Being (not essentially but) as an accident and therefore should have Reality as an accident; or is it something serving to the completion of Reality?

No: Movement is a Reality; everything in the Supreme is a Reality.

Why, then, does not Reality reside, equally, in this sphere?

In the Supreme there is Reality because all things are one; ours is the sphere of images whose separation produces grades of difference. Thus in the spermatic unity all the human members are present undistinguishably; there is no separation of head and hand: their distinct existence begins in the life here, whose content is image, not Authentic Existence.

And are the distinct Qualities in the Authentic Realm to be explained in the same way? Are they differing Realities centred in one Reality or gathered round Being—differences which constitute Realities distinct from each other within the common fact of Reality?

This is sound enough; but it does not apply to all the qualities of this sphere, some of which, no doubt, are differentiations of Reality—such as the quality of two-footedness or four-footedness—but others are not such differentiations of Reality and, because they are not so, must be called qualities and nothing more.

On the other hand, one and the same thing may be sometimes a differentiation of Reality and sometimes not—a differentiation when it is a constitutive element, and no differentiation in some other thing, where it is not a constitutive element but an accidental. The distinction may be seen in the (constitutive) whiteness of a swan or of ceruse and the whiteness which in a man is an accidental.

Where whiteness belongs to the very Reason-Form of the thing it is a constitutive element and not a quality; where it is a superficial appearance it is a quality.

In other words, qualification may be distinguished. We may think of a qualification that is of the very substance of the thing, something exclusively belonging to it. And there is a qualifying that is nothing more (not constituting but simply) giving some particular character to the real thing; in this second case the qualification does not produce any alteration towards Reality or away from it; the Reality has existed fully constituted before the incoming of the qualification which—whether in soul or body—merely introduces some state from outside, and by this addition elaborates the Reality into the particular thing.

But what if (the superficial appearance such as) the visible whiteness in ceruse is constitutive? In the swan the whiteness is not constitutive since a swan need not be white: it is constitutive in ceruse, just as warmth is constitutive of the Reality, fire.

No doubt we may be told that the Reality in fire is (not warmth but) fieriness and in ceruse an analogous abstraction: yet the fact remains that in visible fire warmth or fieriness is constitutive and in the ceruse whiteness.

Thus the same entities (warmness, whiteness and fieriness) are represented at once as being not qualities but constituents of Reality and not constituents but qualities.

Now it is absurd to talk as if one identical thing—(warmth, whiteness or the like) changed its own nature according to whether it is present as a constituent or as an accidental.

The truth is that while the Reason-Principles producing these entities contain nothing but what is of the nature of Reality, yet only in the Intellectual Realm do the produced things possess real existence: here they are not real; they are qualified.

And this is the starting-point of an error we constantly make: in our enquiries into things we let realities escape us and fasten on what is mere quality. Thus fire is not the thing we so name from the observation of certain qualities present; fire is a Reality (not a combination of material phenomena); the phenomena observed here and leading us to name fire call us away from the authentic thing; a quality is erected into the very matter of definition—a procedure, however, reasonable enough in regard to things of the realm of sense which are in no case realities but accidents of Reality.

And this raises the question how Reality can ever spring from what are not Realities.

It has been shown that a thing coming into being cannot be identical with its origins: it must here be added that nothing thus coming into being (no “thing of process”) can be a Reality.

Then how do we assert the rising in the Supreme of what we have called Reality from what is not Reality (i.e. from the pure Being which is above Reality)?

The Reality there—possessing Authentic Being in the strictest sense, with the least admixture—is Reality (not so much by being produced as) by existing among the differentiations of the Authentic Being; or, better, Reality is affirmed in the sense that with the existence of the Supreme is included its Act so that Reality seems to be a

perfectionment of the Authentic Being, though in the truth it is a diminution; the produced thing is deficient by the very addition, by being less simplex, by standing one step away from the Authentic.

2.

But we must enquire into Quality in itself: to know its nature is certainly the way to settle our general question.

The first point is to assure ourselves whether or not one and the same thing may be held to be sometimes a mere qualification and sometimes a constituent of Reality—not staying on the point that qualification could not be constitutive of a Reality but of a qualified Reality only.

Now in a Reality possessing a determined quality, the Reality and the fact of existence precede the qualified Reality.

What, then, in the case of fire is the Reality which precedes the qualified Reality?

Its mere body, perhaps? If so, body being the Reality, fire is a warmed body; and the total thing is not the Reality; and the fire has warmth (not essentially but) as a man might have a snub nose.

Rejecting its warmth, its glow, its lightness—all which certainly do seem to be qualities—and its resistance, there is left only its extension by three dimensions: in other words, its Matter is its Reality.

But that cannot be held: surely the form is much more likely than the Matter to be the Reality.

But is not the Form a Quality (and not therefore a Reality)?

No, the Form is not a Quality: it is a Reason-Principle.

And the outcome of this Reason-Principle entering into the underlying Matter, what is that?

Certainly not what is seen and burns, for that is the something in which these qualities inhere.

We might define the burning as an Act springing from the Reason-Principle: then the warming and lighting and other effects of fire will be its Acts and we still have found no foothold for its quality.

Such completions of a Reality cannot be called qualities since they are its Acts emanating from the Reason-Principles and from the essential powers. A quality is something persistently outside Reality; it cannot appear as Reality in one place after having figured in another as quality; its function is to bring in the something more

after the Reality is established, such additions as virtue, vice, ugliness, beauty, health, a certain shape. On this last, however, it may be remarked that triangularity and quadrangularity are not in themselves qualities, but there is quality when a thing is triangular by having been brought to that shape; the quality is not the triangularity but the patterning to it. The case is the same with the arts and avocations (by which human beings take the quality of being instructed, etc.).

Thus: Quality is a condition superadded to a Reality whose existence does not depend upon it, whether this something more be a later acquirement or an accompaniment from the first; it is something in whose absence the Reality would still be complete. It will sometimes come and go, sometimes be inextricably attached, so that there are two forms of Quality, the moveable and the fixed.

3.

The Whiteness, therefore, in a human being is, clearly, to be classed not as a quality but as an activity—the act of a power which can make white; and similarly what we think of as qualities in the Intellectual Realm should be known as activities; they are activities which to our minds take the appearance of quality from the fact that, differing in character among themselves, each of them is a particularity which, so to speak, distinguishes those Realities from each other.

What, then, distinguishes Quality in the Intellectual Realm from that here, if both are Acts?

The difference is that these (“Quality-Activities”) in the Supreme do not indicate the very nature of the Reality (as do the corresponding Activities here) nor do they indicate variations of substance or of (essential) character; they merely indicate what we think of as Quality but in the Intellectual Realm must still be Activity.

In other words this thing, considered in its aspect as possessing the characteristic property of Reality is by that alone recognised as no mere Quality. But when our reason separates what is distinctive in these (“Quality-Activities”)—not in the sense of abolishing them but rather as taking them to itself and making something new of them—this new something is Quality: reason has, so to speak, appropriated a portion of Reality, that portion manifest to it on the surface.

By this analogy, warmth, as a concomitant of the specific nature of fire, may very well be no quality in fire but an Idea-Form belonging to it, one of its activities, while being merely a Quality in other things than fire: as it is manifested in any warm object, it is not a mode of Reality but merely a trace, a shadow, an image, something that has gone forth from its own Reality—where it was an Act—and in the warm object is a quality.

All, then, that is accident and not Act; all but what is Idea-form of the Reality; all that merely confers pattern; all this is Quality: qualities are characteristics and modes other than those constituting the substratum of a thing.

But the Archetypes of all such qualities, the foundation in which they exist primarily, these are (not qualities but) Activities of the Intellectual Beings.

And; one and the same thing cannot be both Quality and non-quality: the thing void of Real-Existence is Quality; but the thing accompanying Reality is either Form or Activity: there is no longer self-identity when, from having its being in itself, anything comes to be in something else with a fall from its standing as Form and Activity.

Finally, anything which is never Form but always accidental to something else is Quality unmixed and nothing more.

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SEVENTH TRACTATE

On Complete Transfusion

1.

Some enquiry must be made into what is known as the complete transfusion of material substances.

Is it possible that fluid be blended with fluid in such a way that each penetrate the other through and through? or—a difference of no importance if any such penetration occurs—that one of them pass completely through the other?

Those that admit only contact need not detain us. They are dealing with mixture, not with the coalescence which makes the total a thing of like parts, each minutest particle being composed of all the combined elements.

But there are those who, admitting coalescence, confine it to the qualities: to them the material substances of two bodies are in contact merely, but in this contact of the matter they find footing for the qualities of each.

Their view is plausible because it rejects the notion of total admixture and because it recognises that the masses of the mixing bodies must be whittled away if there is to be mixture without any gap, if, that is to say, each substance must be divided within itself through and through for complete interpenetration with the other. Their theory is confirmed by the cases in which two mixed substances occupy a greater space than either singly, especially a space equal to the conjoined extent of each: for, as they point out, in an absolute interpenetration the infusion of the one into the other would leave the occupied space exactly what it was before and, where the space occupied is not increased by the juxtaposition, they explain that some expulsion of air has made room for the incoming substance. They ask further, how a minor quantity of one substance can be spread out so as to interpenetrate (speck by speck or drop by drop) a major quantity of another. In fact they have a multitude of arguments.

Those, on the other hand, that accept “complete transfusion,” might object that it does not require the reduction of the mixed things to fragments, a certain cleavage being sufficient: thus, for instance, sweat does not split up the body or even pierce holes in it. And if it is answered that this may well be a special decree of Nature to allow of the sweat exuding, there is the case of those manufactured articles, slender but without puncture, in which we can see a liquid wetting them through and through so that it runs down from the upper to the under surface. How can this fact be explained, since both the liquid and the solid are bodily substances? Interpenetration without disintegration is difficult to conceive, and if there is such mutual disintegration the two must obviously destroy each other.

When they urge that often there is a mixing without augmentation their adversaries can counter at once with the exit of air.

When there is an increase in the space occupied, nothing refutes the explanation—however unsatisfying—that this is a necessary consequence of two bodies bringing to a common stock their magnitude equally with their other attributes: size is as permanent as any other property; and, exactly as from the blending of qualities there results a new form of thing, the combination of the two, so we find a new magnitude; the blending gives us a magnitude representing each of the two. But at this point the others will answer, “If you mean that substance lies side by side with substance and mass with mass, each carrying its quantum of magnitude, you are at one with us: if there were complete transfusion, one substance sinking its original magnitude in the other, we would have no longer the case of two lines joined end to end by their terminal points and thus producing an increased extension; we would have line superimposed upon line with, therefore, no increase.”

But a lesser quantity permeates the entire extent of a larger; the smallest is sunk in the greatest; transfusion is exhibited unmistakably. In certain cases it is possible to pretend that there is no total penetration but there are manifest examples leaving no room for the pretence. In what they say of the spreading out of masses they cannot be thought very plausible; the extension would have to be considerable indeed in the case of a very small quantity (to be in true mixture with a very large mass); for they do not suggest any such extension by change as that of water into air.

2.

This, however, raises a problem deserving investigation in itself: what has happened when a definite magnitude of water becomes air, and how do we explain the increase of volume? But for the present we must be content with the matter thus far discussed out of all the varied controversy accumulated on either side.

It remains for us to make out on our own account the true explanation of the phenomenon of mixing, without regard to the agreement or disagreement of that theory with any of the current opinions mentioned.

When water runs through wool or when papyrus-pulp gives up its moisture why is not the moist content expressed to the very last drop or even, without question of outflow, how can we possibly think that in a mixture the relation of matter with matter, mass with mass, is contact and that only the qualities are fused? The pulp is not merely in touch with water outside it or even in its pores; it is wet through and through so that every particle of its matter is drenched in that quality. Now if the matter is soaked all through with the quality, then the water is everywhere in the pulp.

“Not the water; the quality of the water.”

But then, where is the water? and (if only a quality has entered) why is there a change of volume? The pulp has been expanded by the addition: that is to say it has received magnitude from the incoming substance—but if it has received the magnitude,

magnitude has been added; and a magnitude added has not been absorbed; therefore the combined matter must occupy two several places. And as the two mixing substances communicate quality and receive matter in mutual give and take so they may give and take magnitude. Indeed when a quality meets another quality it suffers some change; it is mixed, and by that admixture it is no longer pure and therefore no longer itself but a blunter thing, whereas magnitude joining magnitude retains its full strength.

But let it be understood how we came to say that body passing through and through another body must produce disintegration, while we make qualities pervade their substances without producing disintegration: the bodilessness of qualities is the reason. Matter, too, is bodiless: it may, then, be supposed that as Matter pervades everything so the bodiless qualities associated with it—as long as they are few—have the power of penetration without disintegration. Anything solid would be stopped either in virtue of the fact that a solid has the precise quality which forbids it to penetrate or in that the mere coexistence of too many qualities in Matter (constitutes density and so) produces the same inhibition.

If, then, what we call a dense body is so by reason of the presence of many qualities, that plenitude of qualities will be the cause (of the inhibition).

If on the other hand density is itself a quality like what they call corporeity, then the cause will be that particular quality.

This would mean that the qualities of two substances do not bring about the mixing by merely being qualities but by being apt to mixture; nor does Matter refuse to enter into a mixing as Matter but as being associated with a quality repugnant to mixture; and this all the more since it has no magnitude of its own but only does not reject magnitude.

3.

We have thus covered our main ground, but since corporeity has been mentioned, we must consider its nature: is it the conjunction of all the qualities or is it an Idea, or Reason-Principle, whose presence in Matter constitutes a body?

Now if body is the compound, the thing made up of all the required qualities plus Matter, then corporeity is nothing more than their conjunction.

And if it is a Reason-Principle, one whose incoming constitutes the body, then clearly this Principle contains embraced within itself all the qualities. If this Reason-Principle is to be no mere principle of definition exhibiting the nature of a thing but a veritable Reason constituting the thing, then it cannot itself contain Matter but must encircle Matter, and by being present to Matter elaborate the body: thus the body will be Matter associated with an indwelling Reason-Principle which will be in itself immaterial, pure Idea, even though irremovably attached to the body. It is not to be confounded with that other Principle in man—treated elsewhere—which dwells in the Intellectual World by right of being itself an Intellectual Principle.

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EIGHTH TRACTATE

Why Distant Objects Appear Small

1.

Seen from a distance, objects appear reduced and close together, however far apart they be: within easy range, their sizes and the distances that separate them are observed correctly.

Distant objects show in this reduction because they must be drawn together for vision and the light must be concentrated to suit the size of the pupil; besides, as we are placed further and further away from the material mass under observation, it is more and more the bare form that reaches us, stripped, so to speak, of magnitude as of all other quality.

Or it may be that we appreciate the magnitude of an object by observing the salience and recession of its several parts, so that to perceive its true size we must have it close at hand.

Or again, it may be that magnitude is known incidentally (as a deduction) from the observation of colour. With an object at hand we know how much space is covered by the colour; at a distance, only that something is coloured, for the parts, quantitatively distinct among themselves, do not give us the precise knowledge of that quantity, the colours themselves reaching us only in a blurred impression.

What wonder, then, if size be like sound—reduced when the form reaches us but faintly—for in sound the hearing is concerned only about the form; magnitude is not discerned except incidentally.

Well, in hearing magnitude is known incidentally; but how? Touch conveys a direct impression of a visible object; what gives us the same direct impression of an object of hearing?

The magnitude of a sound is known not by actual quantity but by degree of impact, by intensity—and this in no indirect knowledge; the ear appreciates a certain degree of force, exactly as the palate perceives by no indirect knowledge, a certain degree of sweetness. But the true magnitude of a sound is its extension; this the hearing may define to itself incidentally by deduction from the degree of intensity but not to the point of precision. The intensity is merely the definite effect at a particular spot; the magnitude is a matter of totality, the sum of space occupied.

Still (it will be objected) the colours seen from a distance are faint; but they are not small as the masses are.

True; but there is the common fact of diminution. There is colour with its diminution, faintness; there is magnitude with its diminution, smallness; and magnitude follows colour diminishing stage by stage with it.

But, the phenomenon is more easily explained by the example of things of wide variety. Take mountains dotted with houses, woods and other land-marks; the observation of each detail gives us the means of calculating, by the single objects noted, the total extent covered: but, where no such detail of form reaches us, our vision, which deals with detail, has not the means towards the knowledge of the whole by measurement of any one clearly discerned magnitude. This applies even to objects of vision close at hand: where there is variety and the eye sweeps over all at one glance so that the forms are not all caught, the total appears the less in proportion to the detail which has escaped the eye; observe each single point and then you can estimate the volume precisely. Again, magnitudes of one colour and unbroken form trick the sense of quantity: the vision can no longer estimate by the particular; it slips away, not finding the stand-by of the difference between part and part.

It was the detail that prevented a near object deceiving our sense of magnitude: in the case of the distant object, because the eye does not pass stage by stage through the stretch of intervening space so as to note its forms, therefore it cannot report the magnitude of that space.

2.

The explanation by lesser angle of vision has been elsewhere dismissed; one point, however, we may urge here.

Those attributing the reduced appearance to the lesser angle occupied allow by their very theory that the unoccupied portion of the eye still sees something beyond or something quite apart from the object of vision, if only air-space.

Now consider some very large object of vision, that mountain for example. No part of the eye is unoccupied; the mountain adequately fills it so that it can take in nothing beyond, for the mountain as seen either corresponds exactly to the eye-space or stretches away out of range to right and to left. How does the explanation by lesser angle of vision hold good in this case, where the object still appears smaller, far, than it is and yet occupies the eye entire?

Or look up to the sky and no hesitation can remain. Of course we cannot take in the entire hemisphere at one glance; the eye directed to it could not cover so vast an expanse. But suppose the possibility: the entire eye, then, embraces the hemisphere entire; but the expanse of the heavens is far greater than it appears; how can its appearing far less than it is be explained by a lessening of the angle of vision?

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NINTH TRACTATE

Against Those that Affirm the Creator of the Kosmos and the Kosmos Itself to be Evil: [Generally Quoted as “Against the Gnostics”]

1.

We have seen elsewhere that the Good, the Principle, is simplex, and, correspondingly, primal—for the secondary can never be simplex—that it contains nothing: that it is an integral Unity.

Now the same Nature belongs to the Principle we know as The One. Just as the goodness of The Good is essential and not the outgrowth of some prior substance so the Unity of The One is its essential.

Therefore:—

When we speak of The One and when we speak of The Good we must recognise an Identical Nature; we must affirm that they are the same—not, it is true, as venturing any predication with regard to that (unknowable) Hypostasis but simply as indicating it to ourselves in the best terms we find.

Even in calling it The First we mean no more than to express that it is the most absolutely simplex: it is the Self-Sufficing only in the sense that it is not of that compound nature which would make it dependent upon any constituent; it is “the Self-Contained” because everything contained in something alien must also exist by that alien.

Deriving then, from nothing alien, entering into nothing alien, in no way a made-up thing, there can be nothing above it.

We need not, then, go seeking any other Principles; this—the One and the Good—is our First, next to it follows the Intellectual Principle, the Primal Thinker, and upon this follows Soul. Such is the order in nature. The Intellectual Realm allows no more than these and no fewer.

Those who hold to fewer Principles must hold the identity of either Intellectual-Principle and Soul or of Intellectual-Principle and The First; but we have abundantly shown that these are distinct.

It remains for us to consider whether there are more than these Three.

Now what other (Divine) Kinds could there be? No Principles of the universe could be found at once simpler and more transcendent than this whose existence we have affirmed and described.

They will scarcely urge upon us the doubling of the Principle in Act by a Principle in Potentiality. It is absurd to seek such a plurality by distinguishing between potentiality and actuality in the case of immaterial beings whose existence is in Act—even in lower forms no such division can be made—and we cannot conceive a duality in the Intellectual-Principle, one phase in some vague calm, another all astir. Under what form can we think of repose in the Intellectual Principle as contrasted with its movement or utterance? What would the quiescence of the one phase be as against the energy of the other?

No: the Intellectual-Principle is continuously itself, unchangeably constituted in stable Act. With movement—towards it or within it—we are in the realm of the Soul's operation: such act is a Reason-Principle emanating from it and entering into Soul, thus made an Intellectual Soul, but in no sense creating an intermediate Principle to stand between the two.

Nor are we warranted in affirming a plurality of Intellectual Principles on the ground that there is one that knows and thinks and another knowing that it knows and thinks. For whatever distinction be possible in the Divine between its Intellectual Act and its Consciousness of that Act, still all must be one projection not unaware of its own operation: it would be absurd to imagine any such unconsciousness in the Authentic Intelligence; the knowing principle must be one and the selfsame with that which knows of the knowing.

The contrary supposition would give us two beings, one that merely knows, and another—a separate being—that knows of the act of knowing.

If we are answered that the distinction is merely a process of our thought, then, at once, the theory of a plurality in the Divine Hypostasis is abandoned: further, the question is opened whether our thought can entertain a knowing principle so narrowed to its knowing as not to know that it knows—a limitation which would be charged as imbecility even in ourselves, who if but of very ordinary moral force are always master of our emotions and mental processes.

No: The Divine Mind in its mentation thinks itself; the object of the thought is nothing external: Thinker and Thought are one; therefore in its thinking and knowing it possesses itself, observes itself and sees itself not as something unconscious but as knowing: in this Primal Knowing it must include, as one and the same Act, the knowledge of the knowing; and even the logical distinction mentioned above cannot be made in the case of the Divine; the very eternity of its self-thinking precludes any such separation between that intellectual act and the consciousness of the act.

The absurdity becomes still more blatant if we introduce yet a further distinction—after that which affirms the knowledge of the knowing, a third distinction affirming the knowing of the knowledge of the knowing: yet there is no reason against carrying on the division for ever and ever.

To increase the Primals by making the Supreme Mind engender the Reason-Principle, and this again engender in the Soul a distinct power to act as mediator between Soul

and the Supreme Mind, this is to deny intellection to the Soul, which would no longer derive its Reason from the Intellectual-Principle but from an intermediate: the Soul then would possess not the Reason-Principle but an image of it: the Soul could not know the Intellectual-Principle; it could have no intellection.

2.

Therefore we must affirm no more than these three Primals: we are not to introduce superfluous distinctions which their nature rejects. We are to proclaim one Intellectual-Principle unchangeably the same, in no way subject to decline, acting in imitation, as true as its nature allows, of the Father.

And as to our own Soul we are to hold that it stands, in part, always in the presence of The Divine Beings, while in part it is concerned with the things of this sphere and in part occupies a middle ground. It is one nature in graded powers; and sometimes the Soul in its entirety is borne along by the loftiest in itself and in the Authentic Existent; sometimes, the less noble part is dragged down and drags the mid-soul with it, though the law is that the Soul may never succumb entire.

The Soul's disaster falls upon it when it ceases to dwell in the perfect Beauty—the appropriate dwelling-place of that Soul which is no part and of which we too are no part—thence to pour forth into the frame of the All whatsoever the All can hold of good and beauty. There that Soul rests, free from all solicitude, not ruling by plan or policy, not redressing, but establishing order by the marvellous efficacy of its contemplation of the things above it.

For the measure of its absorption in that vision is the measure of its grace and power, and what it draws from this contemplation it communicates to the lower sphere, illuminated and illuminating always.

3.

Ever illuminated, receiving light unailing, the All-Soul imparts it to the entire series of later Being which by this light is sustained and fostered and endowed with the fullest measure of life that each can absorb. It may be compared with a central fire warming every receptive body within range.

Our fire, however, is a thing of limited scope: given powers that have no limitation and are never cut off from the Authentic Existences, how imagine anything existing and yet failing to receive from them?

It is of the essence of things that each gives of its being to another: without this communication, The Good would not be Good, nor the Intellectual-Principle an Intellective Principle, nor would Soul itself be what it is: the law is, “some life after the Primal Life, a second where there is a first; all linked in one unbroken chain; all eternal; divergent types being engendered only in the sense of being secondary.”

In other words, things commonly described as generated have never known a beginning: all has been and will be. Nor can anything disappear unless where a later form is possible: without such a future there can be no dissolution.

If we are told that there is always Matter as a possible term, we ask why then should not Matter itself come to nothingness. If we are told it may, then we ask why it should ever have been generated. If the answer comes that it had its necessary place as the ultimate of the series, we return that the necessity still holds.

With Matter left aside as wholly isolated, the Divine Beings are not everywhere but in some bounded place, walled off, so to speak; if that is not possible, Matter itself must receive the Divine light (and so cannot be annihilated).

4.

To those who assert that creation is the work of the Soul after the failing of its wings, we answer that no such disgrace could overtake the Soul of the All. If they tell us of its falling, they must tell us also what caused the fall. And when did it take place? If from eternity, then the Soul must be essentially a fallen thing: if at some one moment, why not before that?

We assert its creative act to be a proof not of decline but rather of its steadfast hold. Its decline could consist only in its forgetting the Divine: but if it forgot, how could it create? Whence does it create but from the things it knew in the Divine? If it creates from the memory of that vision, it never fell. Even supposing it to be in some dim intermediate state, it need not be supposed more likely to decline: any inclination would be towards its Prior, in an effort to the clearer vision. If any memory at all remained, what other desire could it have than to retrace the way?

What could it have been planning to gain by world-creating? Glory? That would be absurd—a motive borrowed from the sculptors of our earth.

Finally, if the Soul created by policy and not by sheer need of its nature, by being characteristically the creative power—how explain the making of this universe?

And when will it destroy the work? If it repents of its work, what is it waiting for? If it has not yet repented, then it will never repent: it must be already accustomed to the world, must be growing more tender towards it with the passing of time.

Can it be waiting for certain souls still here? Long since would these have ceased returning for such re-birth, having known in former life the evils of this sphere; long since would they have foreborne to come.

Nor may we grant that this world is of unhappy origin because there are many jarring things in it. Such a judgement would rate it too high, treating it as the same with the Intelligible Realm and not merely its reflection.

And yet—what reflection of that world could be conceived more beautiful than this of ours? What fire could be a nobler reflection of the fire there than the fire we know here? Or what other earth than this could have been modelled after that earth? And what globe more minutely perfect than this, or more admirably ordered in its course could have been conceived in the image of the self-centred circling of the World of Intelligibles? And for a sun figuring the Divine sphere, if it is to be more splendid than the sun visible to us, what a sun it must be.

5.

Still more unreasonably:—

There are men, bound to human bodies and subject to desire, grief, anger, who think so generously of their own faculty that they declare themselves in contact with the Intelligible World, but deny that the sun possesses a similar faculty less subject to influence, to disorder, to change; they deny that it is any wiser than we, the late born, hindered by so many cheats on the way towards truth.

Their own soul, the soul of the least of mankind, they declare deathless, divine; but the entire heavens and the stars within the heavens have had no communion with the Immortal Principle, though these are far purer and lovelier than their own souls—yet they are not blind to the order, the shapely pattern, the discipline prevailing in the heavens, since they are the loudest in complaint of the disorder that troubles our earth. We are to imagine the deathless Soul choosing of design the less worthy place, and preferring to abandon the nobler to the Soul that is to die.

Equally unreasonable is their introduction of that other Soul which they piece together from the elements.

How could any form or degree of life come about by a blend of the elements? Their conjunction could produce only a warm or cold or an intermediate substance, something dry or wet or intermediate.

Besides, how could such a soul be a bond holding the four elements together when (by the hypothesis) it is a later thing and rises from them? And this element-soul is described as possessing consciousness and will and the rest—what can we think?

Furthermore, these teachers, in their contempt for this creation and this earth, proclaim that another earth has been made for them into which they are to enter when they depart. Now this new earth is the Reason-Form (the Logos) of our world. Why should they desire to live in the archetype of a world abhorrent to them?

Then again, what is the origin of that pattern world? It would appear, from the theory, that the Maker had already declined towards the things of this sphere before that pattern came into being.

Now let us suppose the Maker craving to construct such an Intermediate World—though what motive could He have?—in addition to the Intellectual world

which He eternally possesses. If He made the mid-world first, what end was it to serve?

To be a dwelling-place for Souls?

How then did they ever fall from it? It exists in vain.

If He made it later than this world—abstracting the formal-idea of this world and leaving the Matter out—the Souls that have come to know that intermediate sphere would have experienced enough to keep them from entering this. If the meaning is simply that Souls exhibit the Ideal-Form of the Universe, what is there distinctive in the teaching?

6.

And, what are we to think of the new forms of being they introduce—their “Exiles” and “Impressions” and “Repentings”?

If all comes to states of the Soul—“Repentance” when it has undergone a change of purpose; “Impressions” when it contemplates not the Authentic Existences but their simulacra—there is nothing here but a jargon invented to make a case for their school: all this terminology is piled up only to conceal their debt to the ancient Greek philosophy which taught, clearly and without bombast, the ascent from the cave and the gradual advance of souls to a truer and truer vision.

For, in sum, a part of their doctrine comes from Plato; all the novelties through which they seek to establish a philosophy of their own have been picked up outside of the truth.

From Plato come their punishments, their rivers of the underworld and the changing from body to body; as for the plurality they assert in the Intellectual Realm—the Authentic Existent, the Intellectual-Principle, the Second Creator and the Soul—all this is taken over from the *Timæus*, where we read:—

“As many Ideal-Forms as the Divine Mind beheld dwelling within the Veritably Living Being, so many the Maker resolved should be contained in this All.”

Misunderstanding their text, they conceived one Mind passively including within itself all that has being, another mind, a distinct existence, having vision, and a third planning the Universe—though often they substitute Soul for this planning Mind as the creating Principle—and they think that this third being is the Creator according to Plato.

They are in fact quite outside of the truth in their identification of the Creator.

In every way they misrepresent Plato’s theory as to the method of creation as in many other respects they dishonour his teaching: they, we are to understand, have

penetrated the Intellectual Nature, while Plato and all those other illustrious teachers have failed.

They hope to get the credit of minute and exact identification by setting up a plurality of intellectual Essences; but in reality this multiplication lowers the Intellectual Nature to the level of the Sense-Kind: their true course is to seek to reduce number to the least possible in the Supreme, simply referring all things to the Second Hypostasis—which is all that exists as it is Primal Intellect and Reality and is the only thing that is good except only for the first Nature—and to recognise Soul as the third Principle, accounting for the difference among souls merely by diversity of experience and character. Instead of insulting those venerable teachers they should receive their doctrine with the respect due to the older thought and honour all that noble system—an immortal soul, an Intellectual and Intelligible Realm, the Supreme God, the Soul's need of emancipation from all intercourse with the body, the fact of separation from it, the escape from the world of process to the world of essential-being. These doctrines, all emphatically asserted by Plato, they do well to adopt: where they differ, they are at full liberty to speak their minds, but not to procure assent for their own theories by flaying and flouting the Greeks: where they have a divergent theory to maintain they must establish it by its own merits, declaring their own opinions with courtesy and with philosophical method and stating the controverted opinion fairly; they must point their minds towards the truth and not hunt fame by insult, reviling and seeking in their own persons to replace men honoured by the fine intelligences of ages past.

As a matter of fact the ancient doctrine of the Divine Essences was far the sounder and more instructed, and must be accepted by all not caught in the delusions that beset humanity: it is easy also to identify what has been conveyed in these later times from the ancients with incongruous novelties—how for example, where they must set up a contradictory doctrine, they introduce a medley of generation and destruction, how they cavil at the Universe, how they make the Soul blameable for the association with body, how they revile the Administrator of this All, how they ascribe to the Creator, identified with the Soul, the character and experiences appropriate to partial beings.

7.

That this world has neither beginning nor end but exists for ever as long as the Supreme stands is certainly no novel teaching. And before this school rose it had been urged that commerce with the body is no gain to a Soul.

But to treat the human Soul as a fair presentment of the Soul of the Universe is like picking out potters and blacksmiths and making them warrant for discrediting an entire well-ordered city.

We must recognise how different is the governance exercised by the All-Soul; the relation is not the same: it is not in fetters. Among the very great number of differences it should not have been overlooked that the We (the human Soul) lies under fetter; and this in a second limitation, for the Body-Kind, already fettered within the All-Soul, imprisons all that it grasps.

But the Soul of the Universe cannot be in bond to what itself has bound: it is sovereign and therefore immune of the lower things, over which we on the contrary are not masters. That in it which is directed to the Divine and Transcendent is ever unmingled, knows no encumbering; that in it which imparts life to the body admits nothing bodily to itself. It is the general fact that an inset (as the Body), necessarily shares the conditions of its containing principle (as the Soul), and does not communicate its own conditions where that principle has an independent life: thus a graft will die if the stock dies, but the stock will live on by its proper life though the graft wither. The fire within your own self may be quenched, but the thing, fire, will exist still; and if fire itself were annihilated that would make no difference to the Soul, the Soul in the Supreme, but only to the plan of the material world; and if the other elements sufficed to maintain a Kosmos, the Soul in the Supreme would be unconcerned.

The constitution of the All is very different from that of the single, separate forms of life: there, the established rule commanding to permanence is sovereign; here things are like deserters kept to their own place and duty by a double bond; there is no outlet from the All, and therefore no need of restraining or of driving errants back to bounds: all remains where from the beginning the Soul's nature appointed.

The natural movement within the plan will be injurious to anything whose natural tendency it opposes: one group will sweep bravely onward with the great total to which it is adapted; the others, not able to comply with the larger order, are destroyed. A great choral is moving to its concerted plan; midway in the march, a tortoise is intercepted; unable to get away from the choral line it is trampled under foot; but if it could only range itself within the greater movement it too would suffer nothing.

8.

To ask why the Soul has created the Kosmos, is to ask why there is a Soul and why a Creator creates. The question, also, implies a beginning in the eternal and, further, represents creation as the act of a changeful Being who turns from this to that.

Those that so think must be instructed—if they would but bear with correction—in the nature of the Supernals, and brought to desist from that blasphemy of majestic powers which comes so easily to them, where all should be reverent scruple.

Even in the administration of the Universe there is no ground for such attack, for it affords manifest proof of the greatness of the Intellectual Kind.

This All that has emerged into life is no amorphous structure—like those lesser forms within it which are born night and day out of the lavishness of its vitality—the Universe is a life organised, effective, complex, all-comprehensive, displaying an unfathomable wisdom. How, then, can anyone deny that it is a clear image, beautifully formed, of the Intellectual Divinities? No doubt it is copy, not original; but that is its very nature; it cannot be at once symbol and reality. But to say that it is an inadequate copy is false; nothing has been left out which a beautiful representation within the physical order could include.

Such a reproduction there must necessarily be—though not by deliberation and contrivance—for the Intellectual could not be the last of things, but must have a double Act, one within itself and one outgoing; there must, then, be something later than the Divine; for only the thing with which all power ends fails to pass downwards something of itself. In the Supreme there flourishes a marvellous vigour and therefore it produces.

Since there is no Universe nobler than this, is it not clear what this must be? A representation carrying down the features of the Intellectual Realm is necessary; there is no other Kosmos than this; therefore this is such a representation.

This earth of ours is full of varied life-forms and of immortal beings; to the very heavens it is crowded. And the stars, those of the upper and the under spheres, moving in their ordered path, fellow travellers with the universe, how can they be less than gods? Surely they must be morally good: what could prevent them? All that occasions vice here below is unknown there—no evil of body, perturbed and perturbing.

Knowledge, too; in their unbroken peace, what hinders them from the intellectual grasp of the God-Head and the Intellectual Gods? What can be imagined to give us a wisdom higher than belongs to the Supernals? Could anyone, not fallen to utter folly, bear with such an idea?

Admitting that human Souls have descended under constraint of the All-Soul, are we to think the constrained the nobler? Among Souls, what commands must be higher than what obeys. And if the coming was unconstrained, why find fault with a world you have chosen and can quit if you dislike it?

And further, if the order of this Universe is such that we are able, within it, to practise wisdom and to live our earthly course by the Supernal, does not that prove it a dependency of the Divine?

9.

Wealth and poverty, and all inequalities of that order are made ground of complaint. But this is to ignore that the Sage demands no equality in such matters: he cannot think that to own many things is to be richer or that the powerful have the better of the simple; he leaves all such preoccupations to another kind of man. He has learned that life on earth has two distinct forms, the way of the Sage and the way of the mass, the Sage intent upon the sublimest, upon the realm above, while those of the more strictly human type fall, again, under two classes, the one reminiscent of virtue and therefore not without touch with good, the other mere populace, serving to provide necessaries to the better sort.

But what of murder? What of the feebleness that brings men under slavery to the passions?

Is it any wonder that there should be failing and error, not in the highest, the intellectual, Principle but in Souls that are like undeveloped children? And is not life justified even so if it is a training ground with its victors and its vanquished?

You are wronged; need that trouble an immortal? You are put to death; you have attained your desire. And from the moment your citizenship of the world becomes irksome you are not bound to it.

Our adversaries do not deny that even here there is a system of law and penalty: and surely we cannot in justice blame a dominion which awards to every one his due, where virtue has its honour, and vice comes to its fitting shame, in which there are not merely representations of the gods, but the gods themselves, watchers from above, and—as we read—easily rebutting human reproaches, since they lead all things in order from a beginning to an end, allotting to each human being, as life follows life, a fortune shaped to all that has preceded—the destiny which, to those that do not penetrate it, becomes the matter of boorish insolence upon things divine.

A man's one task is to strive towards making himself perfect—though not in the idea—really fatal to perfection—that to be perfect is possible to himself alone.

We must recognise that other men have attained the heights of goodness; we must admit the goodness of the celestial spirits, and above all of the gods—those whose presence is here but their contemplation in the Supreme, and loftiest of them, the lord of this All, the most blessed Soul. Rising still higher, we hymn the divinities of the Intellectual Sphere, and, above all these, the mighty King of that dominion, whose majesty is made patent in the very multitude of the gods.

It is not by crushing the divine unto a unity but by displaying its exuberance—as the Supreme himself has displayed it—that we show knowledge of the might of God, who, abidingly what He is, yet creates that multitude, all dependent on Him, existing by Him and from Him.

This Universe, too, exists by Him and looks to Him—the Universe as a whole and every God within it—and tells of Him to men, all alike revealing the plan and will of the Supreme.

These, in the nature of things, cannot be what He is, but that does not justify you in contempt of them, in pushing yourself forward as not inferior to them.

The more perfect the man, the more compliant he is, even towards his fellows; we must temper our importance, not thrusting insolently beyond what our nature warrants; we must allow other beings, also, their place in the presence of the Godhead; we may not set ourselves alone next after the First in a dream-flight which deprives us of our power of attaining identity with the Godhead in the measure possible to the human Soul, that is to say, to the point of likeness to which the Intellectual-Principle leads us; to exalt ourselves above the Intellectual-Principle is to fall from it.

Yet imbeciles are found to accept such teaching at the mere sound of the words “You yourself are to be nobler than all else, nobler than men, nobler than even gods.” Human audacity is very great: a man once modest, restrained and simple hears, “You, yourself, are the child of God; those men whom you used to venerate, those beings whose worship they inherit from antiquity, none of these are His children; you without lifting hand are nobler than the very heavens”; others take up the cry: the issue will be much as if in a crowd all equally ignorant of figures, one man were told that he stands a thousand cubic feet; he will naturally accept his thousand cubits even though the others present are said to measure only five cubits; he will merely tell himself that the thousand indicates a considerable figure.

Another point:—(you hold that) God has care for you; how then can He be indifferent to the entire Universe in which you exist?

We may be told that He is too much occupied to look upon the Universe, and that it would not be right for Him to do so; yet when He looks down and upon these people, is He not looking outside Himself and upon the Universe in which they exist? If He cannot look outside Himself so as to survey the Kosmos, then neither does He look upon them.

But they have no need of Him?

The Universe has need of Him, and He knows its ordering and its indwellers and how far they belong to it and how far to the Supreme, and which of the men upon it are friends of God, mildly acquiescing with the Kosmic dispensation when in the total course of things some pain must be brought to them—for we are to look not to the single will of any man but to the universe entire, regarding every one according to worth but not stopping for such things where all that may is hastening onward.

Not one only kind of being is bent upon this quest, which brings bliss to whatsoever achieves, and earns for the others a future destiny in accord with their power. No man, therefore, may flatter himself that he alone is competent; a pretension is not a possession; many boast though fully conscious of their lack and many imagine themselves to possess what was never theirs and even to be alone in possessing what they alone of men never had.

10.

Under detailed investigation, many other tenets of this school—indeed we might say all—could be corrected with an abundance of proof. But I am withheld by regard for some of our own friends who fell in with this doctrine before joining our circle and, strangely, still cling to it.

The school, no doubt, is free-spoken enough—whether in the set purpose of giving its opinions a plausible colour of verity or in honest belief—but we are addressing here our own acquaintances, not those people with whom we could make no way. We have spoken in the hope of preventing our friends from being perturbed by a party which brings, not proof—how could it?—but arbitrary, tyrannical assertion; another style of

address would be applicable to such as have the audacity to flout the noble and true doctrines of the august teachers of antiquity.

That method we will not apply; anyone that has fully grasped the preceding discussion will know how to meet every point in the system.

Only one other tenet of theirs will be mentioned before passing the matter; it is one which surpasses all the rest in sheer folly, if that is the word.

They first maintain that the Soul and a certain “Wisdom” (Sophia) declined and entered this lower sphere—though they leave us in doubt of whether the movement originated in Soul or in this Sophia of theirs, or whether the two are the same to them—then they tell us that the other Souls came down in the descent and that these members of Sophia took to themselves bodies, human bodies, for example.

Yet in the same breath, that very Soul which was the occasion of descent to the others is declared not to have descended. “It knew no decline,” but merely illuminated the darkness in such a way that an image of it was formed upon the Matter. Then, they shape an image of that image somewhere below—through the medium of Matter or of Materiality or whatever else of many names they choose to give it in their frequent change of terms, invented to darken their doctrine—and so they bring into being what they call the Creator or Demiurge, then this lower is severed from his Mother (Sophia) and becomes the author of the Kosmos down to the latest of the succession of images constituting it.

Such is the blasphemy of one of their writers.

11.

Now, in the first place, if the Soul has not actually come down but has illuminated the darkness, how can it truly be said to have declined? The outflow from it of something in the nature of light does not justify the assertion of its decline; for that, it must make an actual movement towards the object lying in the lower realm and illuminate it by contact.

If, on the other hand, the Soul keeps to its own place and illuminates the lower without directing any act towards that end, why should it alone be the illuminant? Why should not the Kosmos draw light also from the yet greater powers contained in the total of existence?

Again, if the Soul possesses the plan of a Universe, and by virtue of this plan illuminates it, why do not that illumination and the creating of the world take place simultaneously? Why must the Soul wait till the representations of the plan be made actual?

Then again this Plan—the “Far Country” of their terminology—brought into being, as they hold, by the greater powers, could not have been the occasion of decline to the creators.

Further, how explain that under this illumination the Matter of the Kosmos produces images of the order of Soul instead of mere bodily-nature? An image of Soul could not demand darkness or Matter, but wherever formed it would exhibit the character of the producing element and remain in close union with it.

Next, is this image a real-being, or, as they say, an Intellection?

If it is a reality, in what way does it differ from its original? By being a distinct form of the Soul? But then, since the original is the reasoning Soul, this secondary form must be the vegetative and generative Soul; and then, what becomes of the theory that it is produced for glory's sake, what becomes of the creation in arrogance and self-assertion? The theory puts an end also to creation by representation and, still more decidedly, to any thinking in the act; and what need is left for a creator creating by way of Matter and Image?

If it is an Intellection, then we ask first What justifies the name? and next, How does anything come into being unless the Soul give this Intellection creative power and how, after all, can creative power reside in a created thing? Are we to be told that it is a question (not so much of creation as) of a first Image followed by a second?

But this is quite arbitrary.

And why is fire the first creation?

12.

And how does this image set to its task immediately after it comes into being?

By memory of what it has seen?

But it was utterly non-existent, it could have no vision, either it or the Mother they bestow upon it.

Another difficulty: These people (tell us that they) come upon earth not as Soul-Images but as veritable Souls; yet, by great stress and strain, one or two of them are able to stir beyond the limits of the world, and when they do attain Reminiscence barely carry with them some slight recollection of the Sphere they once knew: on the other hand, this Image, a new-comer into being, is able, they tell us—as also is its Mother—to form at least some dim representation of the celestial world. It is an Image, stamped in Matter, yet it not merely has the conception of the Supreme and adopts from that world the plan of this, but knows what elements serve the purpose. How, for instance, did it come to make fire before anything else? What made it judge fire a better first than some other object?

Again, if it created the fire of the Universe by thinking of fire, why did it not make the Universe at a stroke by thinking of the Universe? It must have conceived the product complete from the first; the constituent elements would be embraced in that general conception.

The creation must have been in all respects more according to the way of Nature than to that of the arts—for the arts are of later origin than Nature and the Universe, and even at the present stage the partial things brought into being by the natural Kinds do not follow any such order—first fire, then the several other elements, then the various blends of these—on the contrary the living organism entire is encompassed and rounded off within the uterine germ. Why should not the material of the Universe be similarly embraced in a Kosmic Type in which earth, fire and the rest would be included? We can only suppose that these people themselves, acting by their more authentic Soul, would have produced the world by such a process, but that the Creator had not wit to do so.

And yet to conceive the vast span of the Heavens—to be great in that degree—to devise the obliquity of the Zodiac and the circling path of all the celestial bodies beneath it, and this earth of ours—and all in such a way that reason can be given for the plan—this could never be the work of an Image; it tells of that Power (the All-Soul) next to the very Highest Beings.

Against their will, they themselves admit this: their “outshining upon the darkness,” if the doctrine is sifted, makes it impossible to deny the true origins of the Kosmos.

Why should this down-shining take place unless such a process belonged to a universal law?

Either the process is in the order of Nature or against that order. If it is in the nature of things, it must have taken place from eternity; if it is against the nature of things, then the breach of natural right exists in the Supreme also; evil antedates this world; the cause of evil is not the world; on the contrary the Supreme is the evil to us; instead of the Soul’s harm coming from this sphere, we have this Sphere harmed by the Soul.

In fine, the theory amounts to making the world one of the Primals, and with it the Matter from which it emerges.

The Soul that declined, they tell us, saw and illuminated the already existent Darkness. Now whence came that Darkness?

If they tell us that the Soul created the Darkness by its Decline, then, obviously, there was nowhere for the Soul to decline to; the cause of the decline was not the Darkness but the very nature of the Soul. The theory, therefore, refers the entire process to pre-existing compulsions: the guilt inheres in the Primal Beings.

13.

Those, then, that censure the constitution of the Kosmos do not understand what they are doing or where this audacity leads them. They do not understand that there is a successive order of Primals, Secondaries, Tertiaries and so on continuously to the Ultimates; that nothing is to be blamed for being inferior to the First; that we can but accept, meekly, the constitution of the total, and make our best way towards the

Primals, withdrawing from the tragic spectacle, as they see it, of the Kosmic spheres—which in reality are all suave graciousness.

And what, after all, is there so terrible in these Spheres with which it is sought to frighten people unaccustomed to thinking, never trained in an instructive and coherent gnosis?

Even the fact that their material frame is of fire does not make them dreadful; their Movements are in keeping with the All and with the Earth: but what we must consider in them is the Soul, that on which these people base their own title to honour.

And, yet, again, their material frames are pre-eminent in vastness and beauty, as they co-operate in act and in influence with the entire order of Nature, and can never cease to exist as long as the Primals stand; they enter into the completion of the All of which they are major parts.

If men rank highly among other living Beings, much more do these, whose office in the All is not to play the tyrant but to serve towards beauty and order. The action attributed to them must be understood as a foretelling of coming events, while the causing of all the variety is due, in part to diverse destinies—for there cannot be one lot for the entire body of men—in part to the birth moment, in part to wide divergencies of place, in part to states of the Souls.

Once more, we have no right to ask that all men shall be good, or to rush into censure because such universal virtue is not possible: this would be repeating the error of confusing our sphere with the Supreme and treating evil as a nearly negligible failure in wisdom—as good lessened and dwindling continuously, a continuous fading out: it would be like calling the Nature-Principle evil because it is not Sense-Perception and the thing of sense evil for not being a Reason-Principle. If evil is no more than that, we will be obliged to admit evil in the Supreme also, for there, too, Soul is less exalted than the Intellectual-Principle, and That too has its Superior.

14.

In yet another way they infringe still more gravely upon the inviolability of the Supreme.

In the sacred formulas they inscribe, purporting to address the Supernal Beings—not merely the Soul but even the Transcendents—they are simply uttering spells and appeasements and evocations in the idea that these Powers will obey a call and be led about by a word from any of us who is in some degree trained to use the appropriate forms in the appropriate way—certain melodies, certain sounds, specially directed breathings, sibilant cries, and all else to which is ascribed magic potency upon the Supreme. Perhaps they would repudiate any such intention: still they must explain how these things act upon the unembodied: they do not see that the power they attribute to their own words is so much taken away from the majesty of the divine.

They tell us they can free themselves of diseases.

If they meant, by temperate living and an appropriate regime, they would be right and in accordance with all sound knowledge. But they assert diseases to be Spirit-Beings and boast of being able to expel them by formula: this pretension may enhance their importance with the crowd, gaping upon the powers of magicians; but they can never persuade the intelligent that disease arises otherwise than from such causes as overstrain, excess, deficiency, putrid decay, in a word some variation whether from within or from without.

The nature of illness is indicated by its very cure. A motion, a medicine, the letting of blood, and the disease shifts down and away; sometimes scantiness of nourishment restores the system: presumably the Spiritual power gets hungry or is debilitated by the purge. Either this Spirit makes a hasty exit or it remains within. If it stays, how does the disease disappear, with the cause still present? If it quits the place, what has driven it out? Has anything happened to it? Are we to suppose it throve on the disease? In that case the disease existed as something distinct from the Spirit-Power. Then again, if it steps in where no cause of sickness exists, why should there be anything else but illness? If there must be such a cause, the Spirit is unnecessary: that cause is sufficient to produce that fever. As for the notion, that just when the cause presents itself, the watchful Spirit leaps to incorporate itself with it, this is simply amusing.

But the manner and motive of their teaching have been sufficiently exhibited; and this was the main purpose of the discussion here upon their Spirit-Powers. I leave it to yourselves to read the books and examine the rest of the doctrine: you will note all through how our form of philosophy inculcates simplicity of character and honest thinking in addition to all other good qualities, how it cultivates reverence and not arrogant self-assertion, how its boldness is balanced by reason, by careful proof, by cautious progression, by the utmost circumspection—and you will compare those other systems to one proceeding by this method. You will find that the tenets of their school have been huddled together under a very different plan: they do not deserve any further examination here.

15.

There is, however, one matter which we must on no account overlook—the effect of these teachings upon the hearers led by them into despising the world and all that is in it.

There are two theories as to the attainment of the End of life. The one proposes pleasure, bodily pleasure, as the term; the other pronounces for good and virtue, the desire of which comes from God and moves, by ways to be studied elsewhere, towards God.

Epicurus denies a Providence and recommends pleasure and its enjoyment, all that is left to us: but the doctrine under discussion is still more wanton; it carps at Providence and the Lord of Providence; it scorns every law known to us; immemorial virtue and all restraint it makes into a laughing stock, lest any loveliness be seen on earth; it cuts at the root of all orderly living, and of the righteousness which, innate in the moral

sense, is made perfect by thought and by self-discipline: all that would give us a noble human being is gone. What is left for them—except where the pupil by his own character betters the teaching—comes to pleasure, self-seeking, the grudge of any share with one's fellows, the pursuit of advantage.

Their error is that they know nothing good here: all they care for is something else to which they will at some future time apply themselves: yet, this world, to those that have known it once, must be the starting-point of the pursuit: arrived here from out of the divine nature, they must inaugurate their effort by some earthly correction. The understanding of beauty is not given except to a nature scorning the delight of the body, and those that have no part in well-doing can make no step towards the Supernal.

This school, in fact, is convicted by its neglect of all mention of virtue: any discussion of such matters is missing utterly: we are not told what virtue is or under what different kinds it appears; there is no word of all the numerous and noble reflections upon it that have come down to us from the ancients; we do not learn what constitutes it or how it is acquired, how the Soul is tended, how it is cleaned. For to say "Look to God" is not helpful without some instruction as to what this looking imports: it might very well be said that one can "look" and still sacrifice no pleasure, still be the slave of impulse, repeating the word God but held in the grip of every passion and making no effort to master any. Virtue, advancing towards the Term and, linked with thought, occupying a Soul makes God manifest: God on the lips without a good conduct of life, is a word.

16.

On the other hand, to despise this Sphere, and the Gods within it or anything else that is lovely, is not the way to goodness.

Every evil-doer began by despising the Gods; and one not previously corrupt, taking to this contempt, even though in other respects not wholly bad, becomes an evil-doer by the very fact.

Besides, in this slighting of the Mundane Gods and the world, the honour they profess for the gods of the Intellectual Sphere becomes an inconsistency; Where we love, our hearts are warm also to the Kin of the beloved; we are not indifferent to the children of our friend. Now every Soul is a child of that Father; but in the heavenly bodies there are Souls, intellective, holy, much closer to the Supernal Beings than are ours; for how can this Kosmos be a thing cut off from That and how imagine the gods in it to stand apart?

But of this matter we have treated elsewhere: here we urge that where there is contempt for the Kin of the Supreme the knowledge of the Supreme itself is merely verbal.

What sort of piety can make Providence stop short of earthly concerns or set any limit whatsoever to it?

And what consistency is there in this school when they proceed to assert that Providence cares for them, though for them alone?

And is this Providence over them to be understood of their existence in that other world only or of their lives here as well? If in the other world, how came they to this? If in this world, why are they not already raised from it?

Again, how can they deny that the Lord of Providence is here? How else can He know either that they are here, or that in their sojourn here they have not forgotten Him and fallen away? And if He is aware of the goodness of some, He must know of the wickedness of others, to distinguish good from bad. That means that He is present to all, is, by whatever mode, within this Universe. The Universe, therefore, must be participant in Him.

If He is absent from the Universe, He is absent from yourselves, and you can have nothing to tell about Him or about the powers that come after Him.

But, allowing that a Providence reaches to you from the world beyond—making any concession to your liking—it remains none the less certain that this world holds from the Supernal and is not deserted and will not be: a Providence watching entires is even more likely than one over fragments only; and similarly, Participation is more perfect in the case of the All-Soul—as is shown, further, by the very existence of things and the wisdom manifest in their existence. Of those that advance these wild pretensions, who is so well ordered, so wise, as the Universe? The comparison is laughable, utterly out of place; to make it, except as a help towards truth, would be impiety.

The very question can be entertained by no intelligent being but only by one so blind, so utterly devoid of perception and thought, so far from any vision of the Intellectual Universe as not even to see this world of our own.

For who that truly perceives the harmony of the Intellectual Realm could fail, if he has any bent towards music, to answer to the harmony in sensible sounds? What geometrician or arithmetician could fail to take pleasure in the symmetries, correspondences and principles of order observed in visible things? Consider, even, the case of pictures: those seeing by the bodily sense the productions of the art of painting do not see the one thing in the one only way; they are deeply stirred by recognising in the objects depicted to the eyes the presentation of what lies in the idea, and so are called to recollection of the truth—the very experience out of which Love rises. Now, if the sight of Beauty excellently reproduced upon a face hurries the mind to that other Sphere, surely no one seeing the loveliness lavish in the world of sense—this vast orderliness, the Form which the stars even in their remoteness display—no one could be so dull-witted, so immoveable, as not to be carried by all this to recollection, and gripped by reverent awe in the thought of all this, so great, sprung from that greatness. Not to answer thus could only be to have neither fathomed this world nor had any vision of that other.

17.

Perhaps the hate of this school for the corporeal is due to their reading of Plato who inveighs against body as a grave hindrance to Soul and pronounces the corporeal to be characteristically the inferior.

Then let them for the moment pass over the corporeal element in the Universe and study all that still remains.

They will think of the Intellectual Sphere which includes within itself the Ideal-Form realised in the Kosmos. They will think of the Souls, in their ordered rank, that produce incorporeal magnitude and lead the Intelligible out towards spatial extension, so that finally the thing of process becomes, by its magnitude, as adequate a representation as possible of the principle void of parts which is its model—the greatness of power there being translated here into greatness of bulk. Then whether they think of the Kosmic Sphere (the All-Soul) as already in movement under the guidance of that power of God which holds it through and through, beginning and middle and end, or whether they consider it as in rest and exercising as yet no outer governance: either approach will lead to a true appreciation of the Soul that conducts this Universe.

Now let them set body within it—not in the sense that Soul suffers any change but that, since “In the Gods there can be no grudging,” it gives to its inferior all that any partial thing has strength to receive—and at once their conception of the Kosmos must be revised; they cannot deny that the Soul of the Kosmos has exercised such a weight of power as to have brought the corporeal-principle, in itself unlovely, to partake of good and beauty to the utmost of its receptivity—and to a pitch which stirs Souls, beings of the divine order.

These people may no doubt say that they themselves feel no such stirring, and that they see no difference between beautiful and ugly forms of body; but, at that, they can make no distinction between the ugly and the beautiful in conduct; sciences can have no beauty; there can be none in thought; and none, therefore, in God. This world descends from the Firsts: if this world has no beauty, neither has its Source; springing thence, this world, too, must have its beautiful things. And while they proclaim their contempt for earthly beauty, they would do well to ignore that of youths and women so as not to be overcome by incontinence.

In fine, we must consider that their self-satisfaction could not turn upon a contempt for anything indisputably base; theirs is the perverse pride of despising what was once admired.

We must always keep in mind that the beauty in a partial thing cannot be identical with that in a whole; nor can any several objects be as stately as the total.

And we must recognise, that even in the world of sense and part, there are things of a loveliness comparable to that of the Celestials—forms whose beauty must fill us with veneration for their creator and convince us of their origin in the divine, forms which

show how ineffable is the beauty of the Supreme since they cannot hold us but we must, though in all admiration, leave these for those. Further, wherever there is interior beauty, we may be sure that inner and outer correspond; where the interior is vile, all is brought low by that flaw in the dominants.

Nothing base within can be beautiful without—at least not with an authentic beauty, for there are examples of a good exterior not sprung from a beauty dominant within; people passing as handsome but essentially base have that, a spurious and superficial beauty: if anyone tells me he has seen people really fine-looking but interiorly vile, I can only deny it; we have here simply a false notion of personal beauty; unless, indeed, the inner vileness were an accident in a nature essentially fine; in this Sphere there are many obstacles to self-realisation.

In any case the All is beautiful, and there can be no obstacle to its inner goodness: where the nature of a thing does not comport perfection from the beginning, there may be a failure in complete expression; there may even be a fall to vileness, but the All never knew a childlike immaturity; it never experienced a progress bringing novelty into it; it never had bodily growth: there was nowhere from whence it could take such increment; it was always the All-Container.

And even for its Soul no one could imagine any such a path of process: or, if this were conceded, certainly it could not be towards evil.

18.

But perhaps this school will maintain that, while their teaching leads to a hate and utter abandonment of the body, ours binds the Soul down in it.

In other words: two people inhabit the one stately house; one of them declaims against its plan and against its Architect, but none the less maintains his residence in it; the other makes no complaint, asserts the entire competency of the Architect and waits cheerfully for the day when he may leave it, having no further need of a house: the malcontent imagines himself to be the wiser and to be the readier to leave because he has learned to repeat that the walls are of soulless stone and timber and that the place falls far short of a true home; he does not see that his only distinction is in not being able to bear with necessity—assuming that his conduct, his grumbling, does not cover a secret admiration for the beauty of those same “stones.” As long as we have bodies we must inhabit the dwellings prepared for us by our good sister the Soul in her vast power of labourless creation.

Or would this school reject the word Sister? They are willing to address the lowest of men as brothers; are they capable of such raving as to disown the tie with the Sun and the powers of the Heavens and the very Soul of the Kosmos? Such kinship, it is true, is not for the vile; it may be asserted only of those that have become good and are no longer body but embodied Soul and of a quality to inhabit the body in a mode very closely resembling the indwelling of the All-Soul in the universal frame. And this means continence, self-restraint, holding staunch against outside pleasure and against outer spectacle, allowing no hardship to disturb the mind. The All-Soul is immune

from shock; there is nothing that can affect it: but we, in our passage here, must call on virtue in repelling these assaults, reduced for us from the beginning by a great conception of life, annulled by matured strength.

Attaining to something of this immunity, we begin to reproduce within ourselves the Soul of the vast All and of the heavenly bodies: when we are come to the very closest resemblance, all the effort of our fervid pursuit will be towards that goal to which they also tend; their contemplative vision becomes ours, prepared as we are, first by natural disposition and afterwards by all this training, for that state which is theirs by the Principle of their Being.

This school may lay claim to vision as a dignity reserved to themselves, but they are not any the nearer to vision by the claim—or by the boast that while the celestial powers, bound for ever to the ordering of the Heavens, can never stand outside the material universe, they themselves have their freedom in their death. This is a failure to grasp the very notion of “standing outside,” a failure to appreciate the mode in which the All-Soul cares for the unensouled.

No: it is possible to go free of love for the body; to be clean-living, to disregard death; to know the Highest and aim at that other world; not to slander, as negligent in the quest, others who are able for it and faithful to it; and not to err with those that deny vital motion to the stars because to our sense they stand still—the error which in another form leads this school to deny outer vision to the Star-Nature, only because they do not see the Star-Soul in outer manifestation.

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NOTE ON THE ORDER OF THE TRACTATES OF THE THIRD AND SECOND ENNEADS

It has been pointed out by several exponents and commentators (for example Whittaker, pp. 31-32) that the logical order of the Enneads is roughly IV., V., VI., II., III., I. Starting from I., therefore, it is best to read in the order I., III., II.

Since it happens that the second and third tractates fall together in this volume it has been judged advisable to open with the Third as the most natural sequent to the First.

The order in which Porphyry knew the tractates of the Second and Third Enneads is as follows (see volume i.):—

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|------------------|
| III. 1. Third. | 2 and 3. Forty-seventh and Forty-eighth. | |
| 4. Fifteenth. | 5. Fiftieth. | 6. Twenty-sixth. |
| 7. Forty-fifth. | 8. Thirtieth. | 9. Thirteenth. |
| II. 1. Fortieth. | 2. Second. | 3. Forty-second. |
| 4. Twelfth. | 5. Twenty-fifth. | 6. Seventeenth. |
| 7. Thirty-seventh. | 8. Thirty-fifth. | 9. Thirty-third. |

Approximately, therefore, the chronological order of the tractates in this volume runs:—

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| I. (Second) II. 2. | II. (Third) III. 1. |
| III. (Twelfth) II. 4. | IV. (Thirteenth) III. 9. |
| V. (Fifteenth) III. 4. | VI. (Seventeenth) II. 6. |
| VII. (Twenty-fifth) II. 5. | VIII. (Twenty-sixth) III. 6. |
| IX. (Thirtieth) III. 8. | X. (Thirty-third) II. 9. |
| XI. (Thirty-fifth) II. 8. | XII. (Thirty-seventh) II. 7. |
| XIII. (Fortieth) II. 1. | XIV. (Forty-first) II. 3. |
| XV. (Forty-fifth) III. 7. | XVI. (Forty-seventh) III. 2. |
| XVII. (Forty-eighth) III. 3. | XVIII. (Fiftieth) III. 5. |

In simple honesty to such readers as do not consult the original, the translator feels obliged to state that he does not pretend to be perfectly satisfied that he has himself understood every passage of which he has been obliged to present a rendering: he has in no case passed for publication any passage or phrase which does not appear to him to carry a clear sense in English and a sense possible in view at once of the text and of Plotinus' general thought; he has been scrupulous in frankly committing himself; but there are at least three or four places in which he feels himself to be as probably wrong as right, places in which either the text is disordered or Plotinus, as often, was inattentive to the normal sequence, or even—verbally at least—to the general consistency, of his thought.

For the present it appears that the best service to Plotinian studies is to dare to be tentative and to beg critics to collaborate in the clearing of dark passages: the notices the first volume of this series received were more flattering than helpful. Modifications suggested by such comment will be noted in the final volume.

Readers are reminded that “we read” translates “he says” of the text, and always indicates a reference to Plato, whose name does not appear in the translation except where it was written by Plotinus: and that all matter shown in brackets is added by the translator for clearness’ sake, and therefore is not canonical. Nothing but what is judged to be quite obviously present in the text appears without this warning sign.

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The translator desires to acknowledge invaluable help derived from repeated study of "The Philosophy of Plotinus," by William Ralph Inge, C.V.O., D.D., etc., Dean of St. Paul's (Longmans, Green and Co., 1918)—a work fascinating in detail and henceforth the necessary foundation to English speakers of all serious study of Plotinus.

In several cases of perplexity, the translator consulted Mr. E. R. Dodds, of University College, Reading, and profited greatly by his advice: in at least two cases he has adopted readings from a revised text projected by Mr. Dodds.

Dr. Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie's translation, "Plotinus' Complete Works" (Comparative Literature Press: Alpine, N.Y., U.S.A., and George Bell, London), came to hand too late to serve in the preparation of this second volume: it will be carefully consulted in the revision of the three Enneads remaining to the completion of this work.

The translator finds that in his first volume he inadvertently made far too little of the kindly offices of Mr. Ernest R. Debenham, who most generously undertook the entire financial burden of the work: his deepest thanks are here offered for the service by which he is enabled to realise the dominant desire of his life.