BOOK IV.

ATHENIAN: And now, what will this city be? I do not mean to ask what is or will hereafter be the name of the place; that may be determined by the accident of locality or of the original settlement--a river or fountain, or some local deity may give the sanction of a name to the newly-founded city; but I do want to know what the situation is, whether maritime or inland.

CLEINIAS: I should imagine, Stranger, that the city of which we are speaking is about eighty stadia distant from the sea.

ATHENIAN: And are there harbours on the seaboard?

CLEINIAS: Excellent harbours, Stranger; there could not be better.

ATHENIAN: Alas! what a prospect! And is the surrounding country productive, or in need of importations?

CLEINIAS: Hardly in need of anything.

ATHENIAN: And is there any neighbouring State?

CLEINIAS: None whatever, and that is the reason for selecting the place; in days of old, there was a migration of the inhabitants, and the region has been deserted from time immemorial.

ATHENIAN: And has the place a fair proportion of hill, and plain, and wood?

CLEINIAS: Like the rest of Crete in that.

ATHENIAN: You mean to say that there is more rock than plain?

CLEINIAS: Exactly.

ATHENIAN: Then there is some hope that your citizens may be virtuous: had you been on the sea, and well provided with harbours, and an importing rather than a producing country, some mighty saviour would have been needed, and lawgivers more than mortal, if you were ever to have a chance of preserving your state from degeneracy and discordance of manners (compare Ar. Pol.). But there is comfort in the eighty stadia; although the sea is too near, especially if, as you say, the harbours are so good. Still we may be content. The sea is pleasant enough as a daily companion, but has indeed also a bitter and brackish quality; filling the streets with merchants and shopkeepers, and begetting in the souls of men uncertain and unfaithful ways--making the state unfriendly and unfaithful both to her own citizens, and also to other nations. There is a consolation, therefore, in the country producing all things at home; and yet, owing to the ruggedness of the soil, not providing anything in great abundance. Had there been abundance, there might have been a great export trade, and a great

return of gold and silver; which, as we may safely affirm, has the most fatal results on a State whose aim is the attainment of just and noble sentiments: this was said by us, if you remember, in the previous discussion.

CLEINIAS: I remember, and am of opinion that we both were and are in the right.

ATHENIAN: Well, but let me ask, how is the country supplied with timber for ship-building?

CLEINIAS: There is no fir of any consequence, nor pine, and not much cypress; and you will find very little stone-pine or plane-wood, which shipwrights always require for the interior of ships.

ATHENIAN: These are also natural advantages.

CLEINIAS: Why so?

ATHENIAN: Because no city ought to be easily able to imitate its enemies in what is mischievous.

CLEINIAS: How does that bear upon any of the matters of which we have been speaking?

ATHENIAN: Remember, my good friend, what I said at first about the

Cretan laws, that they looked to one thing only, and this, as you both agreed, was war; and I replied that such laws, in so far as they tended to promote virtue, were good; but in that they regarded a part only, and not the whole of virtue, I disapproved of them. And now I hope that you in your turn will follow and watch me if I legislate with a view to anything but virtue, or with a view to a part of virtue only. For I consider that the true lawgiver, like an archer, aims only at that on which some eternal beauty is always attending, and dismisses everything else, whether wealth or any other benefit, when separated from virtue. I was saying that the imitation of enemies was a bad thing; and I was thinking of a case in which a maritime people are harassed by enemies, as the Athenians were by Minos (I do not speak from any desire to recall past grievances); but he, as we know, was a great naval potentate, who compelled the inhabitants of Attica to pay him a cruel tribute; and in those days they had no ships of war as they now have, nor was the country filled with ship-timber, and therefore they could not readily build them. Hence they could not learn how to imitate their enemy at sea, and in this way, becoming sailors themselves, directly repel their enemies. Better for them to have lost many times over the seven youths, than that heavy-armed and stationary troops should have been turned into sailors, and accustomed to be often leaping on shore, and again to come running back to their ships; or should have fancied that there was no disgrace in not awaiting the attack of an enemy and dying boldly; and that there were good reasons, and plenty of them, for a man throwing away his arms, and betaking himself to flight,--which is not dishonourable, as people say, at certain times. This is the language of

naval warfare, and is anything but worthy of extraordinary praise. For we should not teach bad habits, least of all to the best part of the citizens. You may learn the evil of such a practice from Homer, by whom Odysseus is introduced, rebuking Agamemnon, because he desires to draw down the ships to the sea at a time when the Achaeans are hard pressed by the Trojans,--he gets angry with him, and says:

'Who, at a time when the battle is in full cry, biddest to drag the well-benched ships into the sea, that the prayers of the Trojans may be accomplished yet more, and high ruin fall upon us. For the Achaeans will not maintain the battle, when the ships are drawn into the sea, but they will look behind and will cease from strife; in that the counsel which you give will prove injurious.'

You see that he quite knew triremes on the sea, in the neighbourhood of fighting men, to be an evil;--lions might be trained in that way to fly from a herd of deer. Moreover, naval powers which owe their safety to ships, do not give honour to that sort of warlike excellence which is most deserving of it. For he who owes his safety to the pilot and the captain, and the oarsman, and all sorts of rather inferior persons, cannot rightly give honour to whom honour is due. But how can a state be in a right condition which cannot justly award honour?

CLEINIAS: It is hardly possible, I admit; and yet, Stranger, we Cretans are in the habit of saying that the battle of Salamis was the salvation of Hellas.

ATHENIAN: Why, yes; and that is an opinion which is widely spread both among Hellenes and barbarians. But Megillus and I say rather, that the battle of Marathon was the beginning, and the battle of Plataea the completion, of the great deliverance, and that these battles by land made the Hellenes better; whereas the sea-fights of Salamis and Artemisium--for I may as well put them both together--made them no better, if I may say so without offence about the battles which helped to save us. And in estimating the goodness of a state, we regard both the situation of the country and the order of the laws, considering that the mere preservation and continuance of life is not the most honourable thing for men, as the vulgar think, but the continuance of the best life, while we live; and that again, if I am not mistaken, is a remark which has been made already.

CLEINIAS: Yes.

ATHENIAN: Then we have only to ask, whether we are taking the course which we acknowledge to be the best for the settlement and legislation of states.

CLEINIAS: The best by far.

ATHENIAN: And now let me proceed to another question: Who are to be the colonists? May any one come out of all Crete; and is the idea that the population in the several states is too numerous for the means of

subsistence? For I suppose that you are not going to send out a general invitation to any Hellene who likes to come. And yet I observe that to your country settlers have come from Argos and Aegina and other parts of Hellas. Tell me, then, whence do you draw your recruits in the present enterprise?

CLEINIAS: They will come from all Crete; and of other Hellenes, Peloponnesians will be most acceptable. For, as you truly observe, there are Cretans of Argive descent; and the race of Cretans which has the highest character at the present day is the Gortynian, and this has come from Gortys in the Peloponnesus.

ATHENIAN: Cities find colonization in some respects easier if the colonists are one race, which like a swarm of bees is sent out from a single country, either when friends leave friends, owing to some pressure of population or other similar necessity, or when a portion of a state is driven by factions to emigrate. And there have been whole cities which have taken flight when utterly conquered by a superior power in war. This, however, which is in one way an advantage to the colonist or legislator, in another point of view creates a difficulty. There is an element of friendship in the community of race, and language, and laws, and in common temples and rites of worship; but colonies which are of this homogeneous sort are apt to kick against any laws or any form of constitution differing from that which they had at home; and although the badness of their own laws may have been the cause of the factions which prevailed among them, yet from the force of habit

they would fain preserve the very customs which were their ruin, and the leader of the colony, who is their legislator, finds them troublesome and rebellious. On the other hand, the conflux of several populations might be more disposed to listen to new laws; but then, to make them combine and pull together, as they say of horses, is a most difficult task, and the work of years. And yet there is nothing which tends more to the improvement of mankind than legislation and colonization.

CLEINIAS: No doubt; but I should like to know why you say so.

ATHENIAN: My good friend, I am afraid that the course of my speculations is leading me to say something depreciatory of legislators; but if the word be to the purpose, there can be no harm. And yet, why am I disquieted, for I believe that the same principle applies equally to all human things?

CLEINIAS: To what are you referring?

ATHENIAN: I was going to say that man never legislates, but accidents of all sorts, which legislate for us in all sorts of ways. The violence of war and the hard necessity of poverty are constantly overturning governments and changing laws. And the power of disease has often caused innovations in the state, when there have been pestilences, or when there has been a succession of bad seasons continuing during many years. Any one who sees all this, naturally rushes to the conclusion of which I was speaking, that no mortal legislates in anything, but that in human

affairs chance is almost everything. And this may be said of the arts of the sailor, and the pilot, and the physician, and the general, and may seem to be well said; and yet there is another thing which may be said with equal truth of all of them.

CLEINIAS: What is it?

ATHENIAN: That God governs all things, and that chance and opportunity co-operate with Him in the government of human affairs. There is, however, a third and less extreme view, that art should be there also; for I should say that in a storm there must surely be a great advantage in having the aid of the pilot's art. You would agree?

CLEINIAS: Yes.

ATHENIAN: And does not a like principle apply to legislation as well as to other things: even supposing all the conditions to be favourable which are needed for the happiness of the state, yet the true legislator must from time to time appear on the scene?

CLEINIAS: Most true.

ATHENIAN: In each case the artist would be able to pray rightly for certain conditions, and if these were granted by fortune, he would then only require to exercise his art?

CLEINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: And all the other artists just now mentioned, if they were bidden to offer up each their special prayer, would do so?

CLEINIAS: Of course.

ATHENIAN: And the legislator would do likewise?

CLEINIAS: I believe that he would.

ATHENIAN: 'Come, legislator,' we will say to him; 'what are the conditions which you require in a state before you can organize it?' How ought he to answer this question? Shall I give his answer?

CLEINIAS: Yes.

ATHENIAN: He will say--'Give me a state which is governed by a tyrant, and let the tyrant be young and have a good memory; let him be quick at learning, and of a courageous and noble nature; let him have that quality which, as I said before, is the inseparable companion of all the other parts of virtue, if there is to be any good in them.'

CLEINIAS: I suppose, Megillus, that this companion virtue of which the Stranger speaks, must be temperance?

ATHENIAN: Yes, Cleinias, temperance in the vulgar sense; not that which in the forced and exaggerated language of some philosophers is called prudence, but that which is the natural gift of children and animals, of whom some live continently and others incontinently, but when isolated, was, as we said, hardly worth reckoning in the catalogue of goods. I think that you must understand my meaning.

CLEINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: Then our tyrant must have this as well as the other qualities, if the state is to acquire in the best manner and in the shortest time the form of government which is most conducive to happiness; for there neither is nor ever will be a better or speedier way of establishing a polity than by a tyranny.

CLEINIAS: By what possible arguments, Stranger, can any man persuade himself of such a monstrous doctrine?

ATHENIAN: There is surely no difficulty in seeing, Cleinias, what is in accordance with the order of nature?

CLEINIAS: You would assume, as you say, a tyrant who was young, temperate, quick at learning, having a good memory, courageous, of a noble nature?

ATHENIAN: Yes; and you must add fortunate; and his good fortune must be

that he is the contemporary of a great legislator, and that some happy chance brings them together. When this has been accomplished, God has done all that he ever does for a state which he desires to be eminently prosperous; He has done second best for a state in which there are two such rulers, and third best for a state in which there are three.
The difficulty increases with the increase, and diminishes with the diminution of the number.

CLEINIAS: You mean to say, I suppose, that the best government is produced from a tyranny, and originates in a good lawgiver and an orderly tyrant, and that the change from such a tyranny into a perfect form of government takes place most easily; less easily when from an oligarchy; and, in the third degree, from a democracy: is not that your meaning?

ATHENIAN: Not so; I mean rather to say that the change is best made out of a tyranny; and secondly, out of a monarchy; and thirdly, out of some sort of democracy: fourth, in the capacity for improvement, comes oligarchy, which has the greatest difficulty in admitting of such a change, because the government is in the hands of a number of potentates. I am supposing that the legislator is by nature of the true sort, and that his strength is united with that of the chief men of the state; and when the ruling element is numerically small, and at the same time very strong, as in a tyranny, there the change is likely to be easiest and most rapid.

CLEINIAS: How? I do not understand.

ATHENIAN: And yet I have repeated what I am saying a good many times; but I suppose that you have never seen a city which is under a tyranny?

CLEINIAS: No, and I cannot say that I have any great desire to see one.

ATHENIAN: And yet, where there is a tyranny, you might certainly see that of which I am now speaking.

CLEINIAS: What do you mean?

ATHENIAN: I mean that you might see how, without trouble and in no very long period of time, the tyrant, if he wishes, can change the manners of a state: he has only to go in the direction of virtue or of vice, whichever he prefers, he himself indicating by his example the lines of conduct, praising and rewarding some actions and reproving others, and degrading those who disobey.

CLEINIAS: But how can we imagine that the citizens in general will at once follow the example set to them; and how can he have this power both of persuading and of compelling them?

ATHENIAN: Let no one, my friends, persuade us that there is any quicker and easier way in which states change their laws than when the rulers lead: such changes never have, nor ever will, come to pass in any other

way. The real impossibility or difficulty is of another sort, and is rarely surmounted in the course of ages; but when once it is surmounted, ten thousand or rather all blessings follow.

CLEINIAS: Of what are you speaking?

ATHENIAN: The difficulty is to find the divine love of temperate and just institutions existing in any powerful forms of government, whether in a monarchy or oligarchy of wealth or of birth. You might as well hope to reproduce the character of Nestor, who is said to have excelled all men in the power of speech, and yet more in his temperance. This, however, according to the tradition, was in the times of Troy; in our own days there is nothing of the sort; but if such an one either has or ever shall come into being, or is now among us, blessed is he and blessed are they who hear the wise words that flow from his lips. And this may be said of power in general: When the supreme power in man coincides with the greatest wisdom and temperance, then the best laws and the best constitution come into being; but in no other way. And let what I have been saying be regarded as a kind of sacred legend or oracle, and let this be our proof that, in one point of view, there may be a difficulty for a city to have good laws, but that there is another point of view in which nothing can be easier or sooner effected, granting our supposition.

CLEINIAS: How do you mean?

ATHENIAN: Let us try to amuse ourselves, old boys as we are, by moulding in words the laws which are suitable to your state.

CLEINIAS: Let us proceed without delay.

ATHENIAN: Then let us invoke God at the settlement of our state; may He hear and be propitious to us, and come and set in order the State and the laws!

CLEINIAS: May He come!

ATHENIAN: But what form of polity are we going to give the city?

CLEINIAS: Tell us what you mean a little more clearly. Do you mean some form of democracy, or oligarchy, or aristocracy, or monarchy? For we cannot suppose that you would include tyranny.

ATHENIAN: Which of you will first tell me to which of these classes his own government is to be referred?

MEGILLUS: Ought I to answer first, since I am the elder?

CLEINIAS: Perhaps you should.

MEGILLUS: And yet, Stranger, I perceive that I cannot say, without more thought, what I should call the government of Lacedaemon, for it seems

to me to be like a tyranny,--the power of our Ephors is marvellously tyrannical; and sometimes it appears to me to be of all cities the most democratical; and who can reasonably deny that it is an aristocracy (compare Ar. Pol.)? We have also a monarchy which is held for life, and is said by all mankind, and not by ourselves only, to be the most ancient of all monarchies; and, therefore, when asked on a sudden, I cannot precisely say which form of government the Spartan is.

CLEINIAS: I am in the same difficulty, Megillus; for I do not feel confident that the polity of Cnosus is any of these.

ATHENIAN: The reason is, my excellent friends, that you really have polities, but the states of which we were just now speaking are merely aggregations of men dwelling in cities who are the subjects and servants of a part of their own state, and each of them is named after the dominant power; they are not polities at all. But if states are to be named after their rulers, the true state ought to be called by the name of the God who rules over wise men.

CLEINIAS: And who is this God?

ATHENIAN: May I still make use of fable to some extent, in the hope that I may be better able to answer your question: shall I?

CLEINIAS: By all means.

ATHENIAN: In the primeval world, and a long while before the cities came into being whose settlements we have described, there is said to have been in the time of Cronos a blessed rule and life, of which the best-ordered of existing states is a copy (compare Statesman).

CLEINIAS: It will be very necessary to hear about that.

ATHENIAN: I quite agree with you; and therefore I have introduced the subject.

CLEINIAS: Most appropriately; and since the tale is to the point, you will do well in giving us the whole story.

ATHENIAN: I will do as you suggest. There is a tradition of the happy life of mankind in days when all things were spontaneous and abundant. And of this the reason is said to have been as follows:--Cronos knew what we ourselves were declaring, that no human nature invested with supreme power is able to order human affairs and not overflow with insolence and wrong. Which reflection led him to appoint not men but demigods, who are of a higher and more divine race, to be the kings and rulers of our cities; he did as we do with flocks of sheep and other tame animals. For we do not appoint oxen to be the lords of oxen, or goats of goats; but we ourselves are a superior race, and rule over them. In like manner God, in His love of mankind, placed over us the demons, who are a superior race, and they with great ease and pleasure to themselves, and no less to us, taking care of us and giving us peace

and reverence and order and justice never failing, made the tribes of men happy and united. And this tradition, which is true, declares that cities of which some mortal man and not God is the ruler, have no escape from evils and toils. Still we must do all that we can to imitate the life which is said to have existed in the days of Cronos, and, as far as the principle of immortality dwells in us, to that we must hearken, both in private and public life, and regulate our cities and houses according to law, meaning by the very term 'law,' the distribution of mind. But if either a single person or an oligarchy or a democracy has a soul eager after pleasures and desires--wanting to be filled with them, yet retaining none of them, and perpetually afflicted with an endless and insatiable disorder; and this evil spirit, having first trampled the laws under foot, becomes the master either of a state or of an individual,--then, as I was saying, salvation is hopeless. And now, Cleinias, we have to consider whether you will or will not accept this tale of mine.

CLEINIAS: Certainly we will.

ATHENIAN: You are aware,--are you not?--that there are often said to be as many forms of laws as there are of governments, and of the latter we have already mentioned all those which are commonly recognized. Now you must regard this as a matter of first-rate importance. For what is to be the standard of just and unjust, is once more the point at issue. Men say that the law ought not to regard either military virtue, or virtue in general, but only the interests and power and preservation of the

established form of government; this is thought by them to be the best way of expressing the natural definition of justice.

CLEINIAS: How?

ATHENIAN: Justice is said by them to be the interest of the stronger (Republic).

CLEINIAS: Speak plainer.

ATHENIAN: I will:--'Surely,' they say, 'the governing power makes whatever laws have authority in any state'?

CLEINIAS: True.

ATHENIAN: 'Well,' they would add, 'and do you suppose that tyranny or democracy, or any other conquering power, does not make the continuance of the power which is possessed by them the first or principal object of their laws'?

CLEINIAS: How can they have any other?

ATHENIAN: 'And whoever transgresses these laws is punished as an evil-doer by the legislator, who calls the laws just'?

CLEINIAS: Naturally.

ATHENIAN: 'This, then, is always the mode and fashion in which justice exists.'

CLEINIAS: Certainly, if they are correct in their view.

ATHENIAN: Why, yes, this is one of those false principles of government to which we were referring.

CLEINIAS: Which do you mean?

ATHENIAN: Those which we were examining when we spoke of who ought to govern whom. Did we not arrive at the conclusion that parents ought to govern their children, and the elder the younger, and the noble the ignoble? And there were many other principles, if you remember, and they were not always consistent. One principle was this very principle of might, and we said that Pindar considered violence natural and justified it.

CLEINIAS: Yes; I remember.

ATHENIAN: Consider, then, to whom our state is to be entrusted. For there is a thing which has occurred times without number in states--

CLEINIAS: What thing?

ATHENIAN: That when there has been a contest for power, those who gain the upper hand so entirely monopolize the government, as to refuse all share to the defeated party and their descendants--they live watching one another, the ruling class being in perpetual fear that some one who has a recollection of former wrongs will come into power and rise up against them. Now, according to our view, such governments are not polities at all, nor are laws right which are passed for the good of particular classes and not for the good of the whole state. States which have such laws are not polities but parties, and their notions of justice are simply unmeaning. I say this, because I am going to assert that we must not entrust the government in your state to any one because he is rich, or because he possesses any other advantage, such as strength, or stature, or again birth: but he who is most obedient to the laws of the state, he shall win the palm; and to him who is victorious in the first degree shall be given the highest office and chief ministry of the gods; and the second to him who bears the second palm; and on a similar principle shall all the other offices be assigned to those who come next in order. And when I call the rulers servants or ministers of the law, I give them this name not for the sake of novelty, but because I certainly believe that upon such service or ministry depends the well- or ill-being of the state. For that state in which the law is subject and has no authority, I perceive to be on the highway to ruin; but I see that the state in which the law is above the rulers, and the rulers are the inferiors of the law, has salvation, and every blessing which the Gods can confer.

CLEINIAS: Truly, Stranger, you see with the keen vision of age.

ATHENIAN: Why, yes; every man when he is young has that sort of vision dullest, and when he is old keenest.

CLEINIAS: Very true.

ATHENIAN: And now, what is to be the next step? May we not suppose the colonists to have arrived, and proceed to make our speech to them?

CLEINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: 'Friends,' we say to them,--'God, as the old tradition declares, holding in his hand the beginning, middle, and end of all that is, travels according to His nature in a straight line towards the accomplishment of His end. Justice always accompanies Him, and is the punisher of those who fall short of the divine law. To justice, he who would be happy holds fast, and follows in her company with all humility and order; but he who is lifted up with pride, or elated by wealth or rank, or beauty, who is young and foolish, and has a soul hot with insolence, and thinks that he has no need of any guide or ruler, but is able himself to be the guide of others, he, I say, is left deserted of God; and being thus deserted, he takes to him others who are like himself, and dances about, throwing all things into confusion, and many think that he is a great man, but in a short time he pays a penalty which justice cannot but approve, and is utterly destroyed, and his

family and city with him. Wherefore, seeing that human things are thus ordered, what should a wise man do or think, or not do or think'?

CLEINIAS: Every man ought to make up his mind that he will be one of the followers of God; there can be no doubt of that.

ATHENIAN: Then what life is agreeable to God, and becoming in His followers? One only, expressed once for all in the old saying that 'like agrees with like, with measure measure,' but things which have no measure agree neither with themselves nor with the things which have. Now God ought to be to us the measure of all things, and not man (compare Crat.; Theaet.), as men commonly say (Protagoras): the words are far more true of Him. And he who would be dear to God must, as far as is possible, be like Him and such as He is. Wherefore the temperate man is the friend of God, for he is like Him; and the intemperate man is unlike Him, and different from Him, and unjust. And the same applies to other things; and this is the conclusion, which is also the noblest and truest of all sayings,--that for the good man to offer sacrifice to the Gods, and hold converse with them by means of prayers and offerings and every kind of service, is the noblest and best of all things, and also the most conducive to a happy life, and very fit and meet. But with the bad man, the opposite of this is true: for the bad man has an impure soul, whereas the good is pure; and from one who is polluted, neither a good man nor God can without impropriety receive gifts. Wherefore the unholy do only waste their much service upon the Gods, but when offered by any holy man, such service is most acceptable to them. This is the

mark at which we ought to aim. But what weapons shall we use, and how shall we direct them? In the first place, we affirm that next after the Olympian Gods and the Gods of the State, honour should be given to the Gods below; they should receive everything in even numbers, and of the second choice, and ill omen, while the odd numbers, and the first choice, and the things of lucky omen, are given to the Gods above, by him who would rightly hit the mark of piety. Next to these Gods, a wise man will do service to the demons or spirits, and then to the heroes, and after them will follow the private and ancestral Gods, who are worshipped as the law prescribes in the places which are sacred to them. Next comes the honour of living parents, to whom, as is meet, we have to pay the first and greatest and oldest of all debts, considering that all which a man has belongs to those who gave him birth and brought him up, and that he must do all that he can to minister to them, first, in his property, secondly, in his person, and thirdly, in his soul, in return for the endless care and travail which they bestowed upon him of old, in the days of his infancy, and which he is now to pay back to them when they are old and in the extremity of their need. And all his life long he ought never to utter, or to have uttered, an unbecoming word to them; for of light and fleeting words the penalty is most severe; Nemesis, the messenger of justice, is appointed to watch over all such matters. When they are angry and want to satisfy their feelings in word or deed, he should give way to them; for a father who thinks that he has been wronged by his son may be reasonably expected to be very angry. At their death, the most moderate funeral is best, neither exceeding the customary expense, nor yet falling short of the honour which has been

usually shown by the former generation to their parents. And let a man not forget to pay the yearly tribute of respect to the dead, honouring them chiefly by omitting nothing that conduces to a perpetual remembrance of them, and giving a reasonable portion of his fortune to the dead. Doing this, and living after this manner, we shall receive our reward from the Gods and those who are above us (i.e. the demons); and we shall spend our days for the most part in good hope. And how a man ought to order what relates to his descendants and his kindred and friends and fellow-citizens, and the rites of hospitality taught by Heaven, and the intercourse which arises out of all these duties, with a view to the embellishment and orderly regulation of his own life--these things, I say, the laws, as we proceed with them, will accomplish, partly persuading, and partly when natures do not yield to the persuasion of custom, chastising them by might and right, and will thus render our state, if the Gods co-operate with us, prosperous and happy. But of what has to be said, and must be said by the legislator who is of my way of thinking, and yet, if said in the form of law, would be out of place--of this I think that he may give a sample for the instruction of himself and of those for whom he is legislating; and then when, as far as he is able, he has gone through all the preliminaries, he may proceed to the work of legislation. Now, what will be the form of such prefaces? There may be a difficulty in including or describing them all under a single form, but I think that we may get some notion of them if we can guarantee one thing.

CLEINIAS: What is that?

ATHENIAN: I should wish the citizens to be as readily persuaded to virtue as possible; this will surely be the aim of the legislator in all his laws.

CLEINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: The proposal appears to me to be of some value; and I think that a person will listen with more gentleness and good-will to the precepts addressed to him by the legislator, when his soul is not altogether unprepared to receive them. Even a little done in the way of conciliation gains his ear, and is always worth having. For there is no great inclination or readiness on the part of mankind to be made as good, or as quickly good, as possible. The case of the many proves the wisdom of Hesiod, who says that the road to wickedness is smooth and can be travelled without perspiring, because it is so very short:

'But before virtue the immortal Gods have placed the sweat of labour, and long and steep is the way thither, and rugged at first; but when you have reached the top, although difficult before, it is then easy.' (Works and Days.)

CLEINIAS: Yes; and he certainly speaks well.

ATHENIAN: Very true: and now let me tell you the effect which the preceding discourse has had upon me.

CLEINIAS: Proceed.

ATHENIAN: Suppose that we have a little conversation with the legislator, and say to him--'O, legislator, speak; if you know what we ought to say and do, you can surely tell.'

CLEINIAS: Of course he can.

ATHENIAN: 'Did we not hear you just now saying, that the legislator ought not to allow the poets to do what they liked? For that they would not know in which of their words they went against the laws, to the hurt of the state.'

CLEINIAS: That is true.

ATHENIAN: May we not fairly make answer to him on behalf of the poets?

CLEINIAS: What answer shall we make to him?

ATHENIAN: That the poet, according to the tradition which has ever prevailed among us, and is accepted of all men, when he sits down on the tripod of the muse, is not in his right mind; like a fountain, he allows to flow out freely whatever comes in, and his art being imitative, he is often compelled to represent men of opposite dispositions, and thus to contradict himself; neither can he tell whether there is more truth in

one thing that he has said than in another. This is not the case in a law; the legislator must give not two rules about the same thing, but one only. Take an example from what you have just been saying. Of three kinds of funerals, there is one which is too extravagant, another is too niggardly, the third in a mean; and you choose and approve and order the last without qualification. But if I had an extremely rich wife, and she bade me bury her and describe her burial in a poem, I should praise the extravagant sort; and a poor miserly man, who had not much money to spend, would approve of the niggardly; and the man of moderate means, who was himself moderate, would praise a moderate funeral. Now you in the capacity of legislator must not barely say 'a moderate funeral,' but you must define what moderation is, and how much; unless you are definite, you must not suppose that you are speaking a language that can become law.

CLEINIAS: Certainly not.

ATHENIAN: And is our legislator to have no preface to his laws, but to say at once Do this, avoid that--and then holding the penalty in terrorem, to go on to another law; offering never a word of advice or exhortation to those for whom he is legislating, after the manner of some doctors? For of doctors, as I may remind you, some have a gentler, others a ruder method of cure; and as children ask the doctor to be gentle with them, so we will ask the legislator to cure our disorders with the gentlest remedies. What I mean to say is, that besides doctors there are doctors' servants, who are also styled doctors.

CLEINIAS: Very true.

ATHENIAN: And whether they are slaves or freemen makes no difference; they acquire their knowledge of medicine by obeying and observing their masters; empirically and not according to the natural way of learning, as the manner of freemen is, who have learned scientifically themselves the art which they impart scientifically to their pupils. You are aware that there are these two classes of doctors?

CLEINIAS: To be sure.

ATHENIAN: And did you ever observe that there are two classes of patients in states, slaves and freemen; and the slave doctors run about and cure the slaves, or wait for them in the dispensaries--practitioners of this sort never talk to their patients individually, or let them talk about their own individual complaints? The slave doctor prescribes what mere experience suggests, as if he had exact knowledge; and when he has given his orders, like a tyrant, he rushes off with equal assurance to some other servant who is ill; and so he relieves the master of the house of the care of his invalid slaves. But the other doctor, who is a freeman, attends and practices upon freemen; and he carries his enquiries far back, and goes into the nature of the disorder; he enters into discourse with the patient and with his friends, and is at once getting information from the sick man, and also instructing him as far as he is able, and he will not prescribe for him until he has first

convinced him; at last, when he has brought the patient more and more under his persuasive influences and set him on the road to health, he attempts to effect a cure. Now which is the better way of proceeding in a physician and in a trainer? Is he the better who accomplishes his ends in a double way, or he who works in one way, and that the ruder and inferior?

CLEINIAS: I should say, Stranger, that the double way is far better.

ATHENIAN: Should you like to see an example of the double and single method in legislation?

CLEINIAS: Certainly I should.

ATHENIAN: What will be our first law? Will not the legislator, observing the order of nature, begin by making regulations for states about births?

CLEINIAS: He will.

ATHENIAN: In all states the birth of children goes back to the connexion of marriage?

CLEINIAS: Very true.

ATHENIAN: And, according to the true order, the laws relating to

marriage should be those which are first determined in every state?

CLEINIAS: Quite so.

ATHENIAN: Then let me first give the law of marriage in a simple form; it may run as follows:--A man shall marry between the ages of thirty and thirty-five, or, if he does not, he shall pay such and such a fine, or shall suffer the loss of such and such privileges. This would be the simple law about marriage. The double law would run thus:--A man shall marry between the ages of thirty and thirty-five, considering that in a manner the human race naturally partakes of immortality, which every man is by nature inclined to desire to the utmost; for the desire of every man that he may become famous, and not lie in the grave without a name, is only the love of continuance. Now mankind are coeval with all time, and are ever following, and will ever follow, the course of time; and so they are immortal, because they leave children's children behind them, and partake of immortality in the unity of generation. And for a man voluntarily to deprive himself of this gift, as he deliberately does who will not have a wife or children, is impiety. He who obeys the law shall be free, and shall pay no fine; but he who is disobedient, and does not marry, when he has arrived at the age of thirty-five, shall pay a yearly fine of a certain amount, in order that he may not imagine his celibacy to bring ease and profit to him; and he shall not share in the honours which the young men in the state give to the aged. Comparing now the two forms of the law, you will be able to arrive at a judgment about any other laws--whether they should be double in length even when shortest,

because they have to persuade as well as threaten, or whether they shall only threaten and be of half the length.

MEGILLUS: The shorter form, Stranger, would be more in accordance with Lacedaemonian custom; although, for my own part, if any one were to ask me which I myself prefer in the state, I should certainly determine in favour of the longer; and I would have every law made after the same pattern, if I had to choose. But I think that Cleinias is the person to be consulted, for his is the state which is going to use these laws.

CLEINIAS: Thank you, Megillus.

ATHENIAN: Whether, in the abstract, words are to be many or few, is a very foolish question; the best form, and not the shortest, is to be approved; nor is length at all to be regarded. Of the two forms of law which have been recited, the one is not only twice as good in practical usefulness as the other, but the case is like that of the two kinds of doctors, which I was just now mentioning. And yet legislators never appear to have considered that they have two instruments which they might use in legislation--persuasion and force; for in dealing with the rude and uneducated multitude, they use the one only as far as they can; they do not mingle persuasion with coercion, but employ force pure and simple. Moreover, there is a third point, sweet friends, which ought to be, and never is, regarded in our existing laws.

CLEINIAS: What is it?

ATHENIAN: A point arising out of our previous discussion, which comes into my mind in some mysterious way. All this time, from early dawn until noon, have we been talking about laws in this charming retreat: now we are going to promulgate our laws, and what has preceded was only the prelude of them. Why do I mention this? For this reason:--Because all discourses and vocal exercises have preludes and overtures, which are a sort of artistic beginnings intended to help the strain which is to be performed; lyric measures and music of every other kind have preludes framed with wonderful care. But of the truer and higher strain of law and politics, no one has ever yet uttered any prelude, or composed or published any, as though there was no such thing in nature. Whereas our present discussion seems to me to imply that there is;--these double laws, of which we were speaking, are not exactly double, but they are in two parts, the law and the prelude of the law. The arbitrary command, which was compared to the commands of doctors, whom we described as of the meaner sort, was the law pure and simple; and that which preceded, and was described by our friend here as being hortatory only, was, although in fact, an exhortation, likewise analogous to the preamble of a discourse. For I imagine that all this language of conciliation, which the legislator has been uttering in the preface of the law, was intended to create good-will in the person whom he addressed, in order that, by reason of this good-will, he might more intelligently receive his command, that is to say, the law. And therefore, in my way of speaking, this is more rightly described as the preamble than as the matter of the law. And I must further proceed to

observe, that to all his laws, and to each separately, the legislator should prefix a preamble; he should remember how great will be the difference between them, according as they have, or have not, such preambles, as in the case already given.

CLEINIAS: The lawgiver, if he asks my opinion, will certainly legislate in the form which you advise.

ATHENIAN: I think that you are right, Cleinias, in affirming that all laws have preambles, and that throughout the whole of this work of legislation every single law should have a suitable preamble at the beginning; for that which is to follow is most important, and it makes all the difference whether we clearly remember the preambles or not. Yet we should be wrong in requiring that all laws, small and great alike, should have preambles of the same kind, any more than all songs or speeches; although they may be natural to all, they are not always necessary, and whether they are to be employed or not has in each case to be left to the judgment of the speaker or the musician, or, in the present instance, of the lawgiver.

CLEINIAS: That I think is most true. And now, Stranger, without delay let us return to the argument, and, as people say in play, make a second and better beginning, if you please, with the principles which we have been laying down, which we never thought of regarding as a preamble before, but of which we may now make a preamble, and not merely consider them to be chance topics of discourse. Let us acknowledge, then, that

we have a preamble. About the honour of the Gods and the respect of parents, enough has been already said; and we may proceed to the topics which follow next in order, until the preamble is deemed by you to be complete; and after that you shall go through the laws themselves.

ATHENIAN: I understand you to mean that we have made a sufficient preamble about Gods and demigods, and about parents living or dead; and now you would have us bring the rest of the subject into the light of day?

CLEINIAS: Exactly.

ATHENIAN: After this, as is meet and for the interest of us all, I the speaker, and you the listeners, will try to estimate all that relates to the souls and bodies and properties of the citizens, as regards both their occupations and amusements, and thus arrive, as far as in us lies, at the nature of education. These then are the topics which follow next in order.

CLEINIAS: Very good.