

ARISTOTLE'S
POLITICS



Collen)

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ARISTOTLE'S

Politics

TRANSLATED BY

BENJAMIN JOWETT

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

MAX LERNER

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

WILLIAMS COLLEGE

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BOOK I

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Chapters 1, 2. Definition and structure of the State.

1. The state is the highest form of community and aims at the highest good. How it differs from other communities will appear if we examine the parts of which it is composed.
2. It consists of villages which consist of households. The household is founded upon the two relations of male and female, of master and slave; it exists to satisfy man's daily needs. The village, a wider community, satisfies a wider range of needs. The state aims at satisfying all the needs of men. Men form states to secure a bare subsistence; but the ultimate object of the state is the good life. The naturalness of the state is proved by the faculty of speech in man. In the order of Nature the state precedes the household and the individual. It is founded on a natural impulse, that towards political association.

*Chapters 3-13. Household economy. The Slave.
Property. Children and Wives.*

3. Let us discuss the household, since the state is composed of households.

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4. First as to slavery. The slave is a piece of property which is animate, and useful for action rather than for production.
5. Slavery is natural; in every department of the natural universe we find the relation of ruler and subject. There are human beings who, without possessing reason, understand it. These are natural slaves.
6. But we find persons in slavery who are not natural slaves. Hence slavery itself is condemned by some; but they are wrong. The natural slave benefits by subjection to a master.
7. The art of ruling slaves differs from that of ruling free men but calls for no detailed description; any one who is a natural master can acquire it for himself.
8. As to property and the modes of acquiring it. This subject concerns us in so far as property is an indispensable substratum to the household.
9. But we do not need that form of finance which accumulates wealth for its own sake. This is unnatural finance. It has been made possible by the invention of coined money. It accumulates money by means of exchange. Natural and unnatural finance are often treated as though they were the same, but differ in their aims;
10. Also in their subject-matter; for natural finance is only concerned with the fruits of the earth and animals.
11. Natural finance is necessary to the householder; he must therefore know about live stock, agriculture, possibly about the exchange of the products of the earth, such as wood and minerals, for money. Special treatises on finance exist, and the subject should be specially studied by statesmen.
12. Lastly, we must discuss and distinguish the relations of husband to wife, of father to child.

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13. In household management persons call for more attention than things; free persons for more than slaves. Slaves are only capable of an inferior kind of virtue. Socrates was wrong in denying that there are several kinds of virtue. Still the slave must be trained in virtue. The education of the free man will be subsequently discussed.

*BOOK II**Chapters 1-8. Ideal Commonwealths—Plato, Phaleas, Hippodamus.*

1. To ascertain the nature of the ideal state we should start by examining both the best states of history and the best that theorists have imagined. Otherwise we might waste our time over problems which others have already solved.
Among theorists, Plato in the *Republic* raises the most fundamental questions. He desires to abolish private property and the family.
2. But the end which he has in view is wrong. He wishes to make all his citizens absolutely alike; but the differentiation of functions is a law of nature. There can be too much unity in a state.
3. And the means by which he would promote unity are wrong.
The abolition of property will produce, not remove, disension.
Communism of wives and children will destroy natural affection.
4. Other objections can be raised; but this is the fatal one.
5. To descend to details. The advantages to be expected from communism of property would be better secured if private property were used in a liberal spirit to relieve

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the wants of others. Private property makes men happier, and enables them to cultivate such virtues as generosity. The *Republic* makes unity the result of uniformity among the citizens, which is not the case. The good sense of mankind has always been against Plato, and experiment would show that his idea is impracticable.

6. Plato sketched another ideal state in the *Laws*; it was meant to be more practicable than the other. In the *Laws* he abandoned communism, but otherwise upheld the leading ideas of the earlier treatise, except that he made the new state larger and too large. He forgot to discuss foreign relations, and to fix a limit of private property, and to restrict the increase of population, and to distinguish between ruler and subject. The form of government which he proposed was bad.
7. Phaleas of Chalcedon made equal distribution of property the main feature of his scheme. This would be difficult to effect, and would not meet the evils which Phaleas had in mind. Dissensions arise from deeper causes than inequality of wealth. His state would be weak against foreign foes. His reforms would anger the rich and not satisfy the poor.
8. Hippodamus, who was not a practical politician, aimed at symmetry. In his state there were to be three classes, three kinds of landed property, three sorts of laws. He also proposed to (1) create a Court of Appeal, (2) let juries qualify their verdicts, (3) reward those who made discoveries of public utility. His classes and his property system were badly devised. Qualified verdicts are impossible since jurymen may not confer together. The law about discoveries would encourage men to tamper with the Constitution. Now laws when obsolete and absurd should be changed; but needless changes diminish the respect for law.

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Chapters 9-12. The best existent states—Sparta, Crete, and Carthage—Greek lawgivers.

9. The Spartans cannot manage their serf population. Their women are too influential and too luxurious. Their property system has concentrated all wealth in a few hands. Hence the citizen body has decreased. There are points to criticize in the Ephorate, the Senate, the Kingship, the common meals, the Admiralty. The Spartan and his state are only fit for war. Yet even in war Sparta is hampered by the want of a financial system.
10. The Cretan cities resemble Sparta in their constitutions, but are more primitive. Their common meals are better managed. But the Cosmi are worse than the Ephors. The Cretan constitution is a narrow and factious oligarchy; the cities are saved from destruction only by their inaccessibility.
11. The Carthaginian polity is highly praised, and not without reason. It may be compared with the Spartan; it is an oligarchy with some democratic features. It lays stress upon wealth; in Carthage all offices are bought and sold. Also, one man may hold several offices together. These are bad features. But the discontent of the people is soothed by schemes of emigration.
12. Of lawgivers, Solon was the best; conservative when possible, and a moderate democrat. About Philolaus, Charondas, Phaleas, Draco, Pittacus, and Androdamas there is little to be said.

BOOK III

Chapters 1-5. The Citizen, civic virtue, and the civic body.

1. How are we to define a citizen? He is more than a mere denizen; private rights do not make a citizen. He is

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- ordinarily one who possesses political power; who sits on juries and in the assembly. But it is hard to find a definition which applies to all so-called citizens. To define him as the son of citizen parents is futile.
2. Some say that his civic rights must have been justly acquired. But he is a citizen who has political power, however acquired.
 3. Similarly the state is defined by reference to the distribution of political power; when the mode of distribution is changed a new state comes into existence.
 4. The good citizen may not be a good man; the good citizen is one who does good service to his state, and this state may be bad in principle. In a constitutional state the good citizen knows both how to rule and how to obey. The good man is one who is fitted to rule. But the citizen in a constitutional state learns to rule by obeying orders. Therefore citizenship in such a state is a moral training.
 5. Mechanics will not be citizens in the best state. Extreme democracies, and some oligarchies, neglect this rule. But circumstances oblige them to do this. They have no choice.

*Chapters 6-13. The Classification of Constitutions;
Democracy and Oligarchy; Kingship.*

6. The aims of the state are two: to satisfy man's social instinct, and to fit him for the good life. Political rule differs from that over slaves in aiming primarily at the good of those who are ruled.
7. Constitutions are bad or good according as the common welfare is, or is not, their aim. Of good Constitutions there are three: Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Polity.

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- Of bad there are also three: Tyranny, Oligarchy, Extreme Democracy. The bad are perversions of the good.
8. Democracies and Oligarchies are not made by the numerical proportion of the rulers to the ruled. Democracy is the rule of the poor; oligarchy is that of the rich.
 9. Democrats take Equality for their motto; oligarchs believe that political rights should be unequal and proportionate to wealth. But both sides miss the true object of the state, which is virtue. Those who do most to promote virtue deserve the greatest share of power.
 10. On the same principle, Justice is not the will of the majority or of the wealthier, but that course of action which the moral aim of the state requires.
 11. But are the Many or the Few likely to be the better rulers? It would be unreasonable to give the highest offices to the Many. But they have a faculty of criticism which fits them for deliberative and judicial power. The good critic need not be an expert; experts are sometimes bad judges. Moreover, the Many have a greater stake in the city than the Few. But the governing body, whether Few or Many, must be held in check by the laws.
 12. On what principle should political power be distributed? Granted that equals deserve equal shares; who are these equals? Obviously those who are equally able to be of service to the state.
 13. Hence there is something in the claims advanced by the wealthy, the free born, the noble, the highly gifted. But no one of these classes should be allowed to rule the rest. A state should consist of men who are equal, or nearly so, in wealth, in birth, in moral and intellectual excellence. The principle which underlies Ostracism is plausible. But in the ideal state, if a pre-eminent individual be found, he should be made a king.

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Chapters 14-18. The Forms of Monarchy.

14. Of Monarchy there are five kinds, (1) the Spartan, (2) the Barbarian, (3) the elective dictatorship, (4) the Heroic, (5) Absolute Kingship.
15. The last of these forms might appear the best polity to some; that is, if the king acts as the embodiment of law. For he will dispense from the law in the spirit of the law. But this power would be less abused if reserved for the Many. Monarchy arose to meet the needs of primitive society; it is now obsolete and on various grounds objectionable.
16. It tends to become hereditary; it subjects equals to the rule of an equal. The individual monarch may be misled by his passions, and no single man can attend to all the duties of government.
17. One case alone can be imagined in which Absolute Kingship would be just.
18. Let us consider the origin and nature of the best polity, now that we have agreed not to call Absolute Kingship the best.

*BOOK IV (VI)**Chapters 1-10. Variations of the main types of Constitutions.*

1. Political science should study (1) the ideal state, (2) those states which may be the best obtainable under special circumstances, and even (3) those which are essentially bad. For the statesman must sometimes make the best of a bad Constitution.
2. Of our six main types of state, Kingship and Aristocracy have been discussed (cf. Bk. III, c. 14 fol.). Let us begin by dealing with the other four and their divisions, inquiring also when and why they may be desirable.

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3. First as to Democracy and Oligarchy. The common view that Democracy and Oligarchy should be taken as the main types of Constitution is at variance with our own view and wrong. So is the view that the numerical proportion of rulers to ruled makes the difference between these two types; in a Democracy the Many are also the poor, in an Oligarchy the Few are also the wealthy. In every state the distinction between rich and poor is the most fundamental of class-divisions. Still Oligarchy and Democracy are important types; and their variations arise from differences in the character of the rich and the poor by whom they are ruled.
4. Of Democracies there are four kinds. The worst, extreme Democracy, is that in which all offices are open to all, and the will of the people overrides all law.
5. Of Oligarchies too there are four kinds; the worst is that in which offices are hereditary and the magistrates uncontrolled by law.
6. These variations arise under circumstances which may be briefly described.
7. Of Aristocracy in the strict sense there is but one form, that in which the best men alone are citizens.
8. Polity is a compromise between Democracy and Oligarchy, but inclines to the Democratic side. Many so-called Aristocracies are really Polities.
9. There are different ways of effecting the compromise which makes a Polity. The Laconian Constitution is an example of a successful compromise.
10. Tyranny is of three kinds: (1) the barbarian despotism, and (2) the elective dictatorship have already been discussed; in both there is rule according to law over willing subjects. But in (3) the strict form of tyranny, there is the lawless rule of one man over unwilling subjects.

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Chapters 11-13. Of the Best State both in general and under special circumstances.

11. For the average city-state the best constitution will be a mean between the rule of rich and poor; the middle-class will be supreme. No state will be well administered unless the middle-class holds sway. The middle-class is stronger in large than in small states. Hence in Greece it has rarely attained to power; especially as democracy and oligarchy were aided by the influence of the leading states.
12. No constitution can dispense with the support of the strongest class in the state. Hence Democracy and Oligarchy are the only constitutions possible in some states. But in these cases the legislator should conciliate the middle-class.
13. Whatever form of constitution be adopted there are expedients to be noted which may help in preserving it.

Chapters 14-16. How to proceed in framing a Constitution.

14. The legislator must pay attention to three subjects in particular: (a) The Deliberative Assembly which is different in each form of constitution.
15. (b) The Executive. Here he must know what offices are indispensable and which of them may be conveniently combined in the person of one magistrate; also whether the same offices should be supreme in every state; also which of the twelve or more methods of making appointments should be adopted in each case.
16. (c) The Courts of Law. Here he must consider the kinds of law-courts, their spheres of action, their methods of procedure.

BOOK V (VIII)

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Chapters 1-4. Of Revolutions, and their causes in general.

1. Ordinary states are founded on erroneous ideas of justice, which lead to discontent and revolution. Of revolutions some are made to introduce a new Constitution, others to modify the old, others to put the working of the Constitution in new hands. Both Democracy and Oligarchy contain inherent flaws which lead to revolution, but Democracy is the more stable of the two types.
2. We may distinguish between the frame of mind which fosters revolution, the objects for which it is started, and the provocative causes.
3. The latter deserve a more detailed account.
4. Trifles may be the occasion but are never the true cause of a sedition. One common cause is the aggrandizement of a particular class; another is a feud between rich and poor when they are evenly balanced and there is no middle-class to mediate. As to the manner of effecting a revolution: it may be carried through by force or fraud.

Chapters 5-12. Revolutions in particular States, and how revolutions may be avoided.

5. (a) In Democracies revolutions may arise from a persecution of the rich; or when a demagogue becomes a general, or when politicians compete for the favour of the mob.
6. (b) In Oligarchies the people may rebel against oppression; ambitious oligarchs may conspire, or appeal to the people, or set up a tyrant. Oligarchies are seldom destroyed except by the feuds of their own members; unless they employ a mercenary captain, who may become a tyrant.

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7. (c) In Aristocracies and Polities the injustice of the ruling class may lead to revolution, but less often in Polities. Aristocracies may also be ruined by an unprivileged class, or an ambitious man of talent. Aristocracies tend to become oligarchies. Also they are liable to gradual dissolution; which is true of Polities as well.
8. The best precautions against sedition are these: to avoid illegality and frauds upon the unprivileged; to maintain good feeling between rulers and ruled; to watch destructive agencies; to alter property qualifications from time to time; to let no individual or class become too powerful; not to let magistracies be a source of gain; to beware of class-oppression.
9. In all magistrates we should require loyalty, ability, and justice; we should not carry the principle of the constitution to extremes; we should educate the citizens in the spirit of a constitution.
10. (d) The causes which destroy and the means which preserve a Monarchy must be considered separately. Let us first distinguish between Tyranny and Kingship. Tyranny combines the vices of Democracy and Oligarchy. Kingship is exposed to the same defects as Aristocracy. But both these kinds of Monarchy are especially endangered by the insolence of their representatives and by the fear or contempt which they inspire in others. Tyranny is weak against both external and domestic foes; Kingship is strong against invasion, weak against sedition.
11. Moderation is the best preservative of Kingship. Tyranny may rely on the traditional expedients of demoralizing and dividing its subjects, or it may imitate Kingship by showing moderation in expenditure, and courtesy and temperance in social relations, by the wise use of ministers, by holding the balance evenly between the rich and poor.

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12. But the Tyrannies of the past have been short-lived. Plato's discussion of revolutions in the *Republic* is inadequate; e. g. he does not explain the results of a revolution against a tyranny, and could not do so on his theory; nor is he correct about the cause of revolution in an Oligarchy; nor does he distinguish between the different varieties of Oligarchy and Democracy.

BOOK VI (VII)

Chapters 1-8. Concerning the proper organization of Democracies and Oligarchies.

1. (A) Democracies differ *inter se* (1) according to the character of the citizen body, (2) according to the mode in which the characteristic features of democracy are combined.
2. Liberty is the first principle of democracy. The results of liberty are that the numerical majority is supreme, and that each man lives as he likes. From these characteristics we may easily infer the other features of democracy.
3. In oligarchies it is not the numerical majority, but the wealthier men, who are supreme. Both these principles are unjust if the supreme authority is to be absolute and above the law. Both numbers and wealth should have their share of influence. But it is hard to find the true principles of political justice, and harder still to make men act upon them.
4. Democracy has four species (cf. Bk. IV, c. 4). The best is (1) an Agricultural Democracy, in which the magistrates are elected by, and responsible to, the citizen body, while each office has a property qualification proportionate to its importance. These democracies should encourage agriculture by legislation. The next best

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- is (2) the Pastoral Democracy. Next comes (3) the Commercial Democracy. Worst of all is (4) the Extreme Democracy with manhood suffrage.
5. It is harder to preserve than to found a Democracy. To preserve it we must prevent the poor from plundering the rich; we must not exhaust the public revenues by giving pay for the performance of public duties; we must prevent the growth of a pauper class.
 6. (B) The modes of founding Oligarchies call for little explanation. Careful organization is the best way of preserving these governments.
 7. Much depends on the military arrangements; oligarchs must not make their subjects too powerful an element in the army. Admission to the governing body should be granted on easy conditions. Office should be made a burden, not a source of profit.
 8. Both in oligarchies and democracies the right arrangement of offices is important. Some kinds of office are necessary in every state; others are peculiar to special types of state.

BOOK VII (IV)

Chapters 1-3. The Summum Bonum for individuals and states.

1. Before constructing the ideal state we must know what is the most desirable life for states and individuals. True happiness flows from the possession of wisdom and virtue, and not from the possession of external goods. But a virtuous life must be equipped with external goods as instruments. These laws hold good of both states and individuals.
2. But does the highest virtue consist in contemplation or in action? The states of the past have lived for action in

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the shape of war and conquest. But war cannot be regarded as a reasonable object for a state.

3. A virtuous life implies activity, but activity may be speculative as well as practical. Those are wrong who regard the life of a practical politician as degrading. But again they are wrong who treat political power as the highest good.

Chapters 4-12. A picture of the Ideal State.

4. We must begin by considering the population and the territory. The former should be as small as we can make it without sacrificing independence and the capacity for a moral life. The smaller the population the more manageable it will be.
5. The territory must be large enough to supply the citizens with the means of living liberally and temperately, with an abundance of leisure. The city should be in a central position.
6. Communication with the sea is desirable for economic and military reasons; but the moral effects of sea-trade are bad. If the state has a marine, the port town should be at some distance from the city.
7. The character of the citizens should be a mean between that of Asiatics and that of the northern races; intelligence and high spirit should be harmoniously blended as they are in some Greek races.
8. We must distinguish the members of the state from those who are necessary as its servants, but no part of it. There must be men who are able to provide food, to practise the arts, to bear arms, to carry on the work of exchange, to supervise the state religion, to exercise political and judicial functions.
9. But of these classes we should exclude from the citizen body (1) the mechanics, (2) the traders, (3) the

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husbandmen. Warriors, rulers, priests remain as eligible for citizenship. The same persons should exercise these three professions, but at different periods of life. Ownership of land should be confined to them.

10. Such a distinction between a ruling and a subject class, based on a difference of occupation, is nothing new. It still exists in Egypt, and the custom of common meals in Crete and Italy proves that it formerly existed there. Most of the valuable rules of politics have been discovered over and over again in the course of history.
In dealing with the land of the state we must distinguish between public demesnes and private estates. Both kinds of land should be tilled by slaves or barbarians of a servile disposition.
11. The site of the city should be chosen with regard (1) to public health, (2) to political convenience, (3) to strategic requirements. The ground-plan of the city should be regular enough for beauty, not so regular as to make defensive warfare difficult. Walls are a practical necessity.
12. It is well that the arrangement of the buildings in the city should be carefully thought out.

Chapters 13-17. The Educational System of the Ideal State, its aim, and early stages.

13. The nature and character of the citizens must be determined with reference to the kind of happiness which we desire them to pursue. Happiness was defined in the *Ethics* as the perfect exercise of virtue, the latter term being understood not in the conditional, but in the absolute sense. Now a man acquires virtue of this kind by the help of nature, habit, and reason.
Habit and reason are the fruits of education, which must therefore be discussed.

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14. The citizens should be educated to obey when young and to rule when they are older. Rule is their ultimate and highest function. Since the good ruler is the same as the good man, our education must be so framed as to produce the good man. It should develop all man's powers and fit him for all the activities of life; but the highest powers and the highest activities must be the supreme care of education. An education which is purely military, like the Laconian, neglects this principle.
15. The virtues of peace (intellectual culture, temperance, justice) are the most necessary for states and individuals; war is nothing but a means towards securing peace. But education must follow the natural order of human development, beginning with the body, dealing next with the appetites, and training the intellect last of all.
16. To produce a healthy physique the legislator must fix the age of marriage, regulate the physical condition of the parents, provide for the exposure of infants, and settle the duration of marriage.
17. He must also prescribe a physical training for infants and young children. For their moral education the very young should be committed to overseers; these should select the tales which they are told, their associates, the pictures, plays, and statues which they see. From five to seven years of age should be the period of preparation for intellectual training.

BOOK VIII (V).

Chapters 1-7. The Ideal Education continued. Its Music and Gymnastic.

1. Education should be under state-control and the same for all the citizens.

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2. It should comprise those useful studies which every one must master, but none which degrade the mind or body.
3. Reading, writing, and drawing have always been taught on the score of their utility; gymnastic as producing valour. Music is taught as a recreation, but it serves a higher purpose. The noble employment of leisure is the highest aim which a man can pursue; and music is valuable for this purpose. The same may be said of drawing, and other subjects of education have the same kind of value.
4. Gymnastic is the first stage of education; but we must not develop the valour and physique of our children at the expense of the mind, as they do in Sparta. Until puberty, and for three years after, bodily exercise should be light.
5. Music, if it were a mere amusement, should not be taught to children; they would do better by listening to professionals. But music is a moral discipline and a rational enjoyment.
6. By learning music children become better critics and are given a suitable occupation. When of riper age they should abandon music; professional skill is not for them; nor should they be taught difficult instruments.
7. The various musical harmonies should be used for different purposes. Some inspire virtue, others valour, others enthusiasm. The ethical harmonies are those which children should learn. The others may be left to professionals. The Dorian harmony is the best for education. The Phrygian is bad; but the Lydian may be beneficial to children.

Cetera desunt.

POLITICS

BOOK I

1 Every state is a community of some kind, and every 1252^a community is established with a view to some good; for mankind always act in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.

Some people think¹ that the qualifications of a statesman, king, householder, and master are the same, and that they differ, not in kind, but only in the number of their subjects. For example, the ruler over a few is called 10 a master; over more, the manager of a household; over a still larger number, a statesman or king, as if there were no difference between a great household and a small state. The distinction which is made between the king and the statesman is as follows: When the government is personal, the ruler is a king; when, according to the 15 rules of the political science, the citizens rule and are ruled in turn, then he is called a statesman.

But all this is a mistake; for governments differ in kind, as will be evident to any one who considers the matter according to the method² which has hitherto guided us. As in other departments of science, so in politics, the 20

¹ Cp. Plato, *Politicus*, 258 E-259 D.

² Cp. 1256^a2.

only the master of the slave; he does not belong to him, whereas the slave is not only the slave of his master, but wholly belongs to him. Hence we see what is the nature and office of a slave; he who is by nature not his own but another's man, is by nature a slave; and he may be said to be another's man who, being a human being, is also a possession. And a possession may be defined as an instrument of action, separable from the possessor.

5 But is there any one thus intended by nature to be a slave, and for whom such a condition is expedient and right, or rather is not all slavery a violation of nature?

20 There is no difficulty in answering this question, on grounds both of reason and of fact. For that some should rule and others be ruled is a thing not only necessary, but expedient; from the hour of their birth, some are marked out for subjection, others for rule.

And there are many kinds both of rulers and subjects (and that rule is the better which is exercised over better subjects—for example, to rule over men is better than to rule over wild beasts; for the work is better which is executed by better workmen, and where one man rules and another is ruled, they may be said to have a work); for in all things which form a composite whole and which are made up of parts, whether continuous or discrete, a distinction between the ruling and the subject element comes to light. Such a duality exists in living creatures, but not in them only; it originates in the constitution of the universe; even in things which have no life there is a ruling principle, as in a musical mode. But we are wandering from the subject. We will therefore restrict ourselves to the living creature, which, in the first place, consists of soul and body: and of these two, the one is by nature the ruler, and the other the subject. But then

we must look for the intentions of nature in things which retain their nature, and not in things which are corrupted. And therefore we must study the man who is in the most perfect state both of body and soul, for in him we shall see the true relation of the two; although in bad or corrupted natures the body will often appear to rule over the soul, because they are in an evil and unnatural condition. At all events we may firstly observe in living creatures both a despotical and a constitutional rule; for the soul rules the body with a despotical rule, whereas the intellect rules the appetites with a constitutional and royal rule. And it is clear that the rule of the soul over the body, and of the mind and the rational element over the passionate, is natural and expedient; whereas the equality of the two or the rule of the inferior is always hurtful. The same holds good of animals in relation to men; for tame animals have a better nature than wild, and all tame animals are better off when they are ruled by man; for then they are preserved. Again, the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules, and the other is ruled; this principle, of necessity, extends to all mankind. Where then there is such a difference as that between soul and body, or between men and animals (as in the case of those whose business is to use their body, and who can do nothing better), the lower sort are by nature slaves, and it is better for them as for all inferiors that they should be under the rule of a master. For he who can be, and therefore is, another's, and he who participates in rational principle enough to apprehend, but not to have, such a principle, is a slave by nature. Whereas the lower animals cannot even apprehend a principle; they obey their instincts. And indeed the use made of slaves and of tame animals is not very different; for both with their bodies minister to the needs

25 of life. Nature would like to distinguish between the bodies of freemen and slaves, making the one strong for servile labour, the other upright, and although useless 30 for such services, useful for political life in the arts both of war and peace. But the opposite often happens—that some have the souls and others have the bodies of free-men. And doubtless if men differed from one another in the mere forms of their bodies as much as the statues of 35 the Gods do from men, all would acknowledge that the inferior class should be slaves of the superior. And if this is true of the body, how much more just that a similar distinction should exist in the soul? but the beauty of the 1255^a body is seen, whereas the beauty of the soul is not seen. It is clear, then, that some men are by nature free, and others slaves, and that for these latter slavery is both expedient and right.

6 But that those who take the opposite view have in a certain way right on their side, may be easily seen. For the words slavery and slave are used in two senses. There is a slave or slavery by law as well as by nature. The law of which I speak is a sort of convention—the law by which whatever is taken in war is supposed to belong to the victors. But this right many jurists impeach, as they would an orator who brought forward an unconstitutional measure: they detest the notion that, because one man has the power of doing violence and is superior in brute strength, another shall be his slave and subject. 10 Even among philosophers there is a difference of opinion. The origin of the dispute, and what makes the views invade each other's territory, is as follows: in some sense virtue, when furnished with means, has actually the greatest power of exercising force: and as superior power is only found where there is superior excellence of

some kind, power seems to imply virtue, and the dispute to be simply one about justice (for it is due to one party 15 identifying justice with goodwill,¹⁰ while the other identifies it with the mere rule of the stronger). If these views are thus set out separately, the other views¹¹ have no force or plausibility against the view that the superior in virtue ought to rule, or be master. Others, clinging, as 20 they think, simply to a principle of justice (for law and custom are a sort of justice), assume that slavery in accordance with the custom of war is justified by law, but at the same moment they deny this. For what if the cause of the war be unjust? And again, no one would ever 25 say that he is a slave who is unworthy to be a slave. Were this the case, men of the highest rank would be slaves and the children of slaves if they or their parents chance to have been taken captive and sold. Wherefore Hellenes do not like to call Hellenes slaves, but confine the term to barbarians. Yet, in using this language, they really mean 30 the natural slave of whom we spoke at first;¹² for it must be admitted that some are slaves everywhere, others nowhere. The same principle applies to nobility. Hellenes regard themselves as noble everywhere, and not only in their own country, but they deem the barbarians noble 35 only when at home, thereby implying that there are two sorts of nobility and freedom, the one absolute, the other relative. The Helen of Theodectes says:

'Who would presume to call me servant who am on both sides sprung from the stem of the Gods?'

¹⁰ i. e. mutual goodwill, which is held to be incompatible with the relation of master and slave.

¹¹ i. e. those stated in ll. 5-12, that the stronger always has, and that he never has, a right to enslave the weaker. Aristotle finds that these views cannot maintain themselves against his intermediate view, that the superior in *virtue* should rule.

¹² Chap. 5.

What does this mean but that they distinguish freedom and slavery, noble and humble birth, by the two principles of good and evil? They think that as men and animals beget men and animals, so from good men a good man springs. But this is what nature, though she may intend it, cannot always accomplish.

We see then that there is some foundation for this difference of opinion, and that all are not either slaves by nature or freemen by nature, and also that there is in some cases a marked distinction between the two classes, rendering it expedient and right for the one to be slaves and the others to be masters: the one practising obedience, the others exercising the authority and lordship which nature intended them to have. The abuse of this authority is injurious to both; for the interests of part and whole,¹³ of body and soul, are the same, and the slave is a part of the master, a living but separated part of his bodily frame. Hence, where the relation of master and slave between them is natural they are friends and have a common interest, but where it rests merely on law and force the reverse is true.

7 The previous remarks are quite enough to show that the rule of a master is not a constitutional rule, and that all the different kinds of rule are not, as some affirm, the same with each other.¹⁴ For there is one rule exercised over subjects who are by nature free, another over subjects who are by nature slaves. The rule of a household is a monarchy, for every house is under one head: whereas constitutional rule is a government of freemen and equals. The master is not called a master because

¹³ Cp. 1254^a 8.

¹⁴ Plato, *Polit.* 258 E–259 D, referred to already in 1252^a 7–16, 1253^b 18–20.

he has science,¹⁵ but because he is of a certain character, and the same remark applies to the slave and the free-man. Still there may be a science for the master and a science for the slave. The science of the slave would be such as the man of Syracuse taught, who made money by instructing slaves in their ordinary duties. And such a knowledge may be carried further, so as to include cookery and similar menial arts. For some duties are of the more necessary, others of the more honourable sort; as the proverb says, 'slave before slave, master before master'. But all such branches of knowledge are servile.¹⁶ There is likewise a science of the master, which teaches the use of slaves; for the master as such is concerned, not with the acquisition, but with the use of them. Yet this so-called science is not anything great or wonderful; for the master need only know how to order that which the slave must know how to execute. Hence those who are in a position which places them above toil have stewards who attend to their households while they occupy themselves with philosophy or with politics. But the art of acquiring slaves, I mean of justly acquiring them, differs both from the art of the master and the art of the slave, being a species of hunting or war.¹⁷ Enough of the distinction between master and slave.

8 Let us now inquire into property generally, and into the art of getting wealth, in accordance with our usual method,¹⁷ for a slave has been shown¹⁸ to be a part of property. The first question is whether the art of getting wealth is the same with the art of managing a household or a part of it, or instrumental to it; and if the last,

¹⁵ *Polit.* 259 C, 293 C.

¹⁶ Of understanding the whole by the part, Cp. 1252^a 17.

¹⁷ Chap. 4.

¹⁸ Cp. vii. 1333^b 38.

whether in the way that the art of making shuttles is instrumental to the art of weaving, or in the way that the casting of bronze is instrumental to the art of the statuary, for they are not instrumental in the same way, but the one provides tools and the other material; and by material I mean the substratum out of which any work is made; thus wool is the material of the weaver, bronze of the statuary. Now it is easy to see that the art of household management is not identical with the art of getting wealth, for the one uses the material which the other provides. For the art which uses household stores can be no other than the art of household management. There is, however, a doubt whether the art of getting wealth is a part of household management or a distinct art. If the getter of wealth has to consider whence wealth and property can be procured, but there are many sorts of property and riches, then are husbandry, and the care and provision of food in general, parts of the wealth-getting art or distinct arts? Again, there are many sorts of food, and therefore there are many kinds of lives both of animals and men; they must all have food, and the differences in their food have made differences in their ways of life. For of beasts, some are gregarious, others are solitary; they live in the way which is best adapted to sustain them, accordingly as they are carnivorous or herbivorous or omnivorous: and their habits are determined for them by nature in such a manner that they may obtain with greater facility the food of their choice. But, as different species have different tastes, the same things are not naturally pleasant to all of them; and therefore the lives of carnivorous or herbivorous animals further differ among themselves. In the lives of men too there is a great difference. The laziest are shepherds, who lead an idle life, and get their subsistence without trouble

from tame animals; their flocks having to wander from place to place in search of pasture, they are compelled to follow them, cultivating a sort of living farm. Others support themselves by hunting, which is of different kinds. Some, for example, are brigands, others, who dwell near lakes or marshes or rivers or a sea in which there are fish, are fishermen, and others live by the pursuit of birds or wild beasts. The greater number obtain a living from the cultivated fruits of the soil. Such are the modes of subsistence which prevail among those whose industry springs up of itself, and whose food is not acquired by exchange and retail trade—there is the shepherd, the husbandman, the brigand, the fisherman, the hunter. Some gain a comfortable maintenance out of two employments, eking out the deficiencies of one of them by another: thus the life of a shepherd may be combined with that of a brigand, the life of a farmer with that of a hunter. Other modes of life are similarly combined in any way which the needs of men may require. Property, in the sense of a bare livelihood, seems to be given by nature herself to all, both when they are first born, and when they are grown up. For some animals bring forth, together with their offspring, so much food as will last until they are able to supply themselves; of this the vermparous or oviparous animals are an instance; and the viviparous animals have up to a certain time a supply of food for their young in themselves, which is called milk. In like manner we may infer that, after the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake, and that the other animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all, at least the greater part of them, for food, and for the provision of clothing and various instruments. Now if nature makes nothing incomplete, and nothing in vain, the inference must be that she has

made all animals for the sake of man. And so, in one point of view, the art of war is a natural art of acquisition, for the art of acquisition includes hunting, an art which we ought to practise against wild beasts, and 25 against men who, though intended by nature to be governed, will not submit; for war of such a kind is naturally just.¹⁹

Of the art of acquisition then there is one kind which by nature is a part of the management of a household, in so far as the art of household management must either find ready to hand, or itself provide, such things necessary to life, and useful for the community of the family or state, as can be stored. They are the elements of true riches; for the amount of property which is needed for a good life is not unlimited, although Solon in one of his poems says that

'No bound to riches has been fixed for man'.

But there is a boundary fixed, just as there is in the other 35 arts; for the instruments of any art are never unlimited, either in number or size, and riches may be defined as a number of instruments to be used in a household or in a state. And so we see that there is a natural art of acquisition which is practised by managers of households and by statesmen, and what is the reason of this.

40 9 There is another variety of the art of acquisition which is commonly and rightly called an art of wealth-getting, and has in fact suggested the notion that riches 1257^a and property have no limit. Being nearly connected with the preceding, it is often identified with it. But though they are not very different, neither are they the same.

¹⁹ Cp. 1255^b 38, 1333^b 38.

The kind already described is given by nature, the other is gained by experience and art.

Let us begin our discussion of the question with the 5 following considerations:

Of everything which we possess there are two uses: both belong to the thing as such, but not in the same manner, for one is the proper, and the other the improper or secondary use of it. For example, a shoe is used for wear, and is used for exchange; both are uses of the shoe. He who gives a shoe in exchange for money or food to him 10 who wants one, does indeed use the shoe as a shoe, but this is not its proper or primary purpose, for a shoe is not made to be an object of barter. The same may be said of all possessions, for the art of exchange extends to all of them, and it arises at first from what is natural, from the circumstance that some have too little, others too much. Hence we may infer that retail trade is not a natural part of the art of getting wealth; had it been so, men would have ceased to exchange when they had enough. In the first community, indeed, which is the family, this art is obviously of no use, but it begins to be useful when the 20 society increases. For the members of the family originally had all things in common; later, when the family divided into parts, the parts shared in many things, and different parts in different things, which they had to give in exchange for what they wanted, a kind of barter which is still practised among barbarous nations who exchange 25 with one another the necessaries of life and nothing more; giving and receiving wine, for example, in exchange for corn, and the like. This sort of barter is not part of the wealth-getting art and is not contrary to nature, but is needed for the satisfaction of men's natural wants. The other or more complex form of exchange 30 grew, as might have been inferred, out of the simpler.

When the inhabitants of one country became more dependent on those of another, and they imported what they needed, and exported what they had too much of,
 35 money necessarily came into use. For the various necessities of life are not easily carried about, and hence men agreed to employ in their dealings with each other something which was intrinsically useful and easily applicable to the purposes of life, for example, iron, silver, and the like. Of this the value was at first measured simply by
 40 size and weight, but in process of time they put a stamp upon it, to save the trouble of weighing and to mark the value.

1257^b When the use of coin had once been discovered, out of the barter of necessary articles arose the other art of wealth-getting, namely, retail trade; which was at first probably a simple matter, but became more complicated as soon as men learned by experience whence and by what exchanges the greatest profit might be made. Originating in the use of coin, the art of getting wealth is generally thought to be chiefly concerned with it, and to be the art which produces riches and wealth; having to consider how they may be accumulated. Indeed, riches is assumed by many to be only a quantity of coin, before
 10 cause the arts of getting wealth and retail trade are concerned with coin. Others maintain that coined money is a mere sham, a thing not natural, but conventional only, because, if the users substitute another commodity for it, it is worthless, and because it is not useful as a means to any of the necessities of life, and, indeed, he who is rich in coin may often be in want of necessary food. But how can that be wealth of which a man may have a great
 15 abundance and yet perish with hunger, like Midas in the fable, whose insatiable prayer turned everything that was set before him into gold?

Hence men seek after a better notion of riches and of the art of getting wealth than the mere acquisition of coin, and they are right. For natural riches and the natural art of wealth-getting are a different thing; in their true form they are part of the management of a household; whereas retail trade is the art of producing wealth, not in every way, but by exchange. And it is thought to be concerned with coin; for coin is the unit of exchange and the measure or limit of it. And there is no bound to the riches which spring from this art of wealth-getting.²⁰ As in the art of medicine there is no limit to the pursuit of health, and as in the other arts there is no limit to the pursuit of their several ends, for they aim at accomplishing their ends to the uttermost (but of the means there is a limit, for the end is always the limit), so, too, in this art of wealth-getting there is no limit of the end, which is riches of the spurious kind, and the acquisition of wealth.
 30 But the art of wealth-getting which consists in household management, on the other hand, has a limit; the unlimited acquisition of wealth is not its business. And, therefore, in one point of view, all riches must have a limit; nevertheless, as a matter of fact, we find the opposite to be the case; for all getters of wealth increase their hoard of coin without limit. The source of the confusion is the near connection between the two kinds of wealth-getting; in either, the instrument is the same, although the use is
 35 different, and so they pass into one another; for each is a use of the same property, but with a difference: accumulation is the end in the one case, but there is a further end in the other. Hence some persons are led to believe that getting wealth is the object of household management, and the whole idea of their lives is that they ought either to increase their money without limit, or at any
 40

²⁰ Cp. 1256^b 32.

rate not to lose it. The origin of this disposition in men is that they are intent upon living only, and not upon living well; and, as their desires are unlimited, they also desire that the means of gratifying them should be without limit. Those who do aim at a good life seek the means 1258^a of obtaining bodily pleasures; and, since the enjoyment of these appears to depend on property, they are absorbed in getting wealth: and so there arises the second species of wealth-getting. For, as their enjoyment is in excess, they seek an art which produces the excess of enjoyment; and, if they are not able to supply their pleasures by the art of getting wealth, they try other arts, using in turn every faculty in a manner contrary to nature. The quality of courage, for example, is not intended to make wealth, but to inspire confidence; neither is this the aim of the general's or of the physician's art; but the one aims at victory and the other at health. Nevertheless, some men turn every quality or art into a means of getting wealth; this they conceive to be the end, and to the promotion of the end they think all things must contribute.

Thus, then, we have considered the art of wealth-getting which is unnecessary, and why men want it; and also the necessary art of wealth-getting, which we have seen to be different from the other, and to be a natural part of the art of managing a household, concerned with the provision of food, not, however, like the former kind, unlimited, but having a limit.

10 And we have found the answer to our original question,²¹ Whether the art of getting wealth is the business of the manager of a household and of the statesman or 20 not their business?—viz. that wealth is presupposed by

²¹ 1256^a 3.

earth which, although they bear no fruit, are nevertheless profitable; for example, the cutting of timber and all mining. The art of mining, by which minerals are obtained, itself has many branches, for there are various kinds of things dug out of the earth. Of the several divisions of wealth-getting I now speak generally; a minute consideration of them might be useful in practice, but it would be tiresome to dwell upon them at greater length now.

Those occupations are most truly arts in which there ³⁵ is the least element of chance; they are the meanest in which the body is most deteriorated, the most servile in which there is the greatest use of the body, and the most illiberal in which there is the least need of excellence.

Works have been written upon these subjects by various persons; for example, by Chares the Parian, and ⁴⁰ Apollodorus the Lemnian, who have treated of Tillage and Planting, while others have treated of other ^{1259*} branches; any one who cares for such matters may refer to their writings. It would be well also to collect the scattered stories of the ways in which individuals have succeeded in amassing a fortune; for all this is useful to persons who value the art of getting wealth. There is the ⁵ anecdote of Thales the Milesian and his financial device, which involves a principle of universal application, but is attributed to him on account of his reputation for wisdom. He was reproached for his poverty, which was supposed to show that philosophy was of no use. According ¹⁰ to the story, he knew by his skill in the stars while it was yet winter that there would be a great harvest of olives in the coming year; so, having a little money, he gave deposits for the use of all the olive-presses in Chios and Miletus, which he hired at a low price because no one bid against him. When the harvest-time came, and many

15 were wanted all at once and of a sudden, he let them out at any rate which he pleased, and made a quantity of money. Thus he showed the world that philosophers can easily be rich if they like, but that their ambition is of another sort. He is supposed to have given a striking proof of his wisdom, but, as I was saying, his device for
 20 getting wealth is of universal application, and is nothing but the creation of a monopoly. It is an art often practised by cities when they are in want of money; they make a monopoly of provisions.

There was a man of Sicily, who, having money deposited with him, bought up all the iron from the iron mines; 25 afterwards, when the merchants from their various markets came to buy, he was the only seller, and without much increasing the price he gained 200 per cent. Which when Dionysius heard, he told him that he might take away his money, but that he must not remain at Syracuse, for he thought that the man had discovered a way
 30 of making money which was injurious to his own interests. He made the same discovery as Thales; they both contrived to create a monopoly for themselves. And statesmen as well ought to know these things; for a state is often as much in want of money and of such devices for obtaining it as a household, or even more so; hence
 35 some public men devote themselves entirely to finance.

12 Of household management we have seen²⁵ that there are three parts—one is the rule of a master over slaves, which has been discussed already,²⁶ another of a father, and the third of a husband. A husband and
 40 father, we saw, rules over wife and children, both free, but the rule differs, the rule over his children being a
 1259^b royal, over his wife a constitutional rule. For although

²⁵ 1253^b 3-11.

²⁶ 1253^b 14-1255^b 39.

there may be exceptions to the order of nature, the male is by nature fitter for command than the female, just as the elder and full-grown is superior to the younger and more immature. But in most constitutional states the citizens rule and are ruled by turns, for the idea of a constitutional state implies that the natures of the citizens are equal, and do not differ at all.²⁷ Nevertheless, when one rules and the other is ruled we endeavour to create a difference of outward forms and names and titles of respect, which may be illustrated by the saying of Amasis about his foot-pan.²⁸ The relation of the male to the female is of this kind, but there the inequality is permanent. The rule of a father over his children is 10 royal, for he rules by virtue both of love and of the respect due to age, exercising a kind of royal power. And therefore Homer has appropriately called Zeus ‘father of Gods and men’, because he is the king of them all. For a king is the natural superior of his subjects, but he should be of the same kin or kind with them, and such 15 is the relation of elder and younger, of father and son.

13 Thus it is clear that household management attends more to men than to the acquisition of inanimate things, and to human excellence more than to the excellence of property which we call wealth, and to the virtue of free-men more than to the virtue of slaves. A question may indeed be raised, whether there is any excellence at all in a slave beyond and higher than merely instrumental and ministerial qualities—whether he can have the virtues of temperance, courage, justice, and the like; or whether slaves possess only bodily and ministerial qualities. And, whichever way we answer the question, a difficulty arises; for, if they have virtue, in what will they

²⁷ Cp. ii. 1261^a 39, iii. 1288^a 12.

²⁸ Herod. ii. 172.

differ from freemen? On the other hand, since they are men and share in rational principle, it seems absurd to say that they have no virtue. A similar question may be raised about women and children, whether they too have virtues: ought a woman to be temperate and brave and just, and is a child to be called temperate, and intemperate, or not? So in general we may ask about the natural ruler, and the natural subject, whether they have the same or different virtues. For if a noble nature is equally required in both, why should one of them always rule, and the other always be ruled? Nor can we say that this is a question of degree, for the difference between ruler and subject is a difference of kind, which the difference of more and less never is. Yet how strange is the supposition that the one ought, and that the other ought not, to have virtue! For if the ruler is intemperate and unjust, how can he rule well? if the subject, how can he obey well? If he be licentious and cowardly, he will certainly not do his duty. It is evident, therefore, that both of them must have a share of virtue, but varying as natural subjects also vary among themselves. Here the very constitution of the soul has shown us the way; in it one part naturally rules, and the other is subject, and the virtue of the ruler we maintain to be different from that of the subject;—the one being the virtue of the rational, and the other of the irrational part. Now, it is obvious that the same principle applies generally, and therefore almost all things rule and are ruled according to nature. But the kind of rule differs;—the freeman rules over the slave after another manner from that in which the male rules over the female, or the man over the child; although the parts of the soul are present in all of them, they are present in different degrees. For the slave has no deliberative faculty at all; the woman has, but it is without au-

thority, and the child has, but it is immature. So it must necessarily be supposed to be with the moral virtues also; all should partake of them, but only in such manner and degree as is required by each for the fulfilment of his duty. Hence the ruler ought to have moral virtue in perfection, for his function, taken absolutely, demands a master artificer, and rational principle is such an artificer; the subjects, on the other hand, require only that measure of virtue which is proper to each of them.²⁰ Clearly, then, moral virtue belongs to all of them; but the temperance of a man and of a woman, or the courage and justice of a man and of a woman, are not, as Socrates maintained,²⁹ the same; the courage of a man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying. And this holds of all other virtues, as will be more clearly seen if we look at them in detail, for those who say generally that virtue consists in a good disposition of the soul, or in doing rightly, or the like, only deceive themselves. Far better than such definitions is their mode of speaking, who, like Gorgias,³⁰ enumerate the virtues. All classes must be deemed to have their special attributes; as the poet says of women,

‘Silence is a woman’s glory’,
30

but this is not equally the glory of man. The child is imperfect, and therefore obviously his virtue is not relative to himself alone, but to the perfect man and to his teacher, and in like manner the virtue of the slave is relative to a master. Now we determined³¹ that a slave is useful for the wants of life, and therefore he will obviously require only so much virtue as will prevent him from failing in his duty through cowardice or lack of

²⁹ Plato, *Meno*, 72 A–73 C.

³¹ 1254^b 16–39, Cf. 1259^b 25 sq.

³⁰ *Meno*, 71 E, 72 A.

self-control. Some one will ask whether, if what we are saying is true, virtue will not be required also in the artisans, for they often fail in their work through the lack of self-control? But is there not a great difference in the two cases? For the slave shares in his master's life; 40 the artisan is less closely connected with him, and only attains excellence in proportion as he becomes a slave.

1260^b The meaner sort of mechanic has a special and separate slavery; and whereas the slave exists by nature, not so the shoemaker or other artisan. It is manifest, then, that the master ought to be the source of such excellence in the slave, and not a mere possessor of the art of mastership which trains the slave in his duties.³² Wherefore they are mistaken who forbid us to converse with slaves and say that we should employ command only,³³ for slaves stand even more in need of admonition than children.

So much for this subject; the relations of husband and wife, parent and child, their several virtues, what in their intercourse with one another is good, and what is 10 evil, and how we may pursue the good and escape the evil, will have to be discussed when we speak of the different forms of government.³⁴ For, inasmuch as every family is a part of a state, and these relationships are the parts of a family, and the virtue of the part must have regard to the virtue of the whole, women and children 15 must be trained by education with an eye to the constitution,³⁵ if the virtues of either of them are supposed to make any difference in the virtues of the state. And they must make a difference: for the children grow up to be

³² Cp. 1255^b 23, 31-35.

³³ Plato, *Laws*, vi. 777 e.

³⁴ The question is not actually discussed in the *Politics*.

³⁵ Cp. v. 1310^a 12-36, viii. 1337^a 11-18.

citizens, and half the free persons in a state are women.³⁶ 20

Of these matters, enough has been said; of what remains, let us speak at another time. Regarding, then, our present inquiry as complete, we will make a new beginning. And, first, let us examine the various theories of a perfect state.

³⁶ Plato, *Laws*, vi. 781 A.

- 5 But want is not the sole incentive to crime; men also wish to enjoy themselves and not to be in a state of desire—they wish to cure some desire, going beyond the necessities of life, which preys upon them; nay, this is not the only reason—they may desire superfluities in order to enjoy pleasures unaccompanied with pain, and therefore they commit crimes.

Now what is the cure of these three disorders? Of the first, moderate possessions and occupation; of the second, habits of temperance; as to the third, if any desire pleasures which depend on themselves, they will find the satisfaction of their desires nowhere but in philosophy; for all other pleasures we are dependent on others. The fact is that the greatest crimes are caused by excess and not by necessity. Men do not become tyrants in order that they may not suffer cold; and hence great is the honour bestowed, not on him who kills a thief, but on him who kills a tyrant. Thus we see that the institutions of Phaleas avail only against petty crimes.

There is another objection to them. They are chiefly designed to promote the internal welfare of the state. But the legislator should consider also its relation to neighbouring nations, and to all who are outside of it.⁶³

20 The government must be organized with a view to military strength; and of this he has said not a word. And so with respect to property: there should not only be enough to supply the internal wants of the state, but also to meet dangers coming from without. The property of the state should not be so large that more powerful neighbours may be tempted by it, while the owners are unable to repel the invaders; nor yet so small that the state is unable to maintain a war even against states of equal power, and of the same character. Phaleas has not laid down any

⁶³ Cp. 1265^a 20.

another second, another third, have, when regarded in this relation, nothing, or hardly anything, worth mentioning in common. Now we see that governments differ in kind, and that some of them are prior and that others are posterior; those which are faulty or perverted are necessarily posterior to those which are perfect. (What we mean by perversion will be hereafter explained.³) The citizen then of necessity differs under each form of government; and our definition is best adapted to the citizen of a democracy; but not necessarily to other states. For in some states the people are not acknowledged, nor have they any regular assembly, but only extraordinary ones; and suits are distributed by sections among the magistrates. At Lacedaemon, for instance, the Ephors determine suits about contracts, which they distribute among themselves, while the elders are judges of homicide, and other causes are decided by other magistrates. A similar principle prevails at Carthage;⁴ there certain magistrates decide all causes. We may, indeed, modify our definition of the citizen so as to include these states. In them it is the holder of a definite, not of an indefinite office, who legislates and judges, and to some or all such holders of definite offices is reserved the right of deliberating or judging about some things or about all things. The conception of the citizen now begins to clear up.

He who has the power to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state is said by us to be a citizen of that state; and, speaking generally, a state is a body of citizens sufficing for the purposes of life.

2 But in practice a citizen is defined to be one of whom both the parents are citizens; others insist on going further back; say to two or three or more ancestors. This is

³ Cp. 1279^a 19.

⁴ Cp. ii. 1273^a 19.

allel question is raised respecting the state, whether a certain act is or is not an act of the state; for example, in the transition from an oligarchy or a tyranny to a democracy. In such cases persons refuse to fulfil their contracts or any other obligations, on the ground that the tyrant, and not the state, contracted them; they argue that some constitutions are established by force, and not for the sake of the common good. But this would apply equally to democracies, for they too may be founded on violence, and then the acts of the democracy will be neither more nor less acts of the state in question than those of an oligarchy or of a tyranny. This question runs up into another:—on what principle shall we ever say that the state is the same, or different? It would be a very superficial view which considered only the place and the inhabitants (for the soil and the population may be separated, and some of the inhabitants may live in one place and some in another). This, however, is not a very serious difficulty; we need only remark that the word 'state' is ambiguous.⁸

It is further asked: When are men, living in the same place, to be regarded as a single city—what is the limit? Certainly not the wall of the city, for you might surround all Peloponnesus with a wall. Like this, we may say, is Babylon,⁹ and every city that has the compass of a nation rather than a city; Babylon, they say, had been taken for three days before some part of the inhabitants became aware of the fact. This difficulty may, however, with advantage be deferred¹⁰ to another occasion; the statesman has to consider the size of the state, and whether it should consist of more than one nation or not.

⁸i. e. *Polis* means both 'state' and 'city'.

⁹Cp. ii. 1265^a 14.

¹⁰The size of the state is discussed in vii. 1326^a 8–1327^a 3; the question whether it should consist of more than one nation is barely touched upon, in v. 1303^a 25–b 3.

Again, shall we say that while the race of inhabitants, as well as their place of abode, remain the same, the city is also the same, although the citizens are always dying and being born, as we call rivers and fountains the same, although the water is always flowing away and coming again? Or shall we say that the generations of men, like the rivers, are the same, but that the state changes? For, since the state is a partnership, and is a partnership of citizens in a constitution, when the form of the government changes, and becomes different, then it may be supposed that the state is no longer the same, just as a tragic differs from a comic chorus, although the members of both may be identical. And in this manner we speak of every union or composition of elements as different when the form of their composition alters; for example, a scale containing the same sounds is said to be different, accordingly as the Dorian or the Phrygian mode is employed. And if this is true it is evident that the sameness of the state consists chiefly in the sameness of the constitution, and it may be called or not called by the same name, whether the inhabitants are the same or entirely different. It is quite another question, whether a state ought or ought not to fulfil engagements when the form of government changes.

4 There is a point nearly allied to the preceding: Whether the virtue of a good man and a good citizen is the same or not.¹¹ But, before entering on this discussion, we must certainly first obtain some general notion of the virtue of the citizen. Like the sailor, the citizen is a member of a community. Now, sailors have different functions, for one of them is a rower, another a pilot, and a third a look-out man, a fourth is described by some

¹¹ Cp. Nic. Eth. v. 1130^b 28.

rule of a master, which is concerned with menial offices¹² —the master need not know how to perform these, but may employ others in the execution of them: the other³⁵ would be degrading; and by the other I mean the power actually to do menial duties, which vary much in character and are executed by various classes of slaves, such, for example, as handicraftsmen, who, as their name signifies, live by the labour of their hands:—under these¹²⁷⁷ the mechanic is included. Hence in ancient times, and among some nations, the working classes had no share in the government—a privilege which they only acquired under the extreme democracy. Certainly the good man and the statesman and the good citizen ought not to learn the crafts of inferiors except for their own occasional use;¹³ if they habitually practice them, there will cease⁵ to be a distinction between master and slave.

This is not the rule of which we are speaking; but there is a rule of another kind, which is exercised over freemen and equals by birth—a constitutional rule, which the ruler must learn by obeying, as he would learn¹⁰ the duties of a general of cavalry by being under the orders of a general of cavalry, or the duties of a general of infantry by being under the orders of a general of infantry, and by having had the command of a regiment and of a company. It has been well said that ‘he who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander’. The two are not the same, but the good citizen ought to be capable of both; he should know how to govern like a freeman, and how to obey like a freeman—these are the¹⁵ virtues of a citizen. And, although the temperance and justice of a ruler are distinct from those of a subject, the virtue of a good man will include both; for the virtue of the good man who is free and also a subject, e. g. his jus-

¹² Cp. i. 1255^b 20-37.

¹³ Cp. viii. 1337^b 15.

those to be citizens who are necessary to the existence of the state; for example, children are not citizens equally with grown-up men, who are citizens absolutely, but children, not being grown up, are only citizens on a certain assumption.¹⁸ Nay, in ancient times, and among some nations, the artisan class *were* slaves or foreigners, and therefore the majority of them are so now. The best form of state will not admit them to citizenship; but if they are admitted, then our definition of the virtue of a citizen will not apply to every citizen, nor to every free man as such, but only to those who are freed from necessary services. The necessary people are either slaves who minister to the wants of individuals, or mechanics and labourers who are the servants of the community. These reflections carried a little further will explain their position; and indeed what has been said already¹⁹ is of itself, when understood, explanation enough.

Since there are many forms of government there must be many varieties of citizens, and especially of citizens who are subjects; so that under some governments the mechanic and the labourer will be citizens, but not in others, as, for example, in aristocracy or the so-called government of the best (if there be such an one), in which honours are given according to virtue and merit; for no man can practise virtue who is living the life of a mechanician or labourer. In oligarchies the qualification for office is high, and therefore no labourer can ever be a citizen; but a mechanician may, for an actual majority of them are rich. At Thebes²⁰ there was a law that no man could hold office who had not retired from business for ten years. But in many states the law goes to the length of admitting aliens; for in some democracies a man is a citi-

¹⁸ sc. that they grow up to be men.

²⁰ Cp. vi. 1321^a 28.

¹⁹ 1275^a 38 sqq.

zen though his mother only be a citizen; and a similar principle is applied to illegitimate children; the law is relaxed when there is a dearth of population. But when the number of citizens increases, first the children of a male or a female slave are excluded; then those whose mothers only are citizens; and at last the right of citizenship is confined to those whose fathers and mothers are both citizens.

Hence, as is evident, there are different kinds of citizens; and he is a citizen in the highest sense who shares in the honours of the state. Compare Homer's words 'like some dishonoured stranger';²¹ he who is excluded from the honours of the state is no better than an alien. But when this exclusion is concealed, then the object is that the privileged class may deceive their fellow inhabitants.

As to the question whether the virtue of the good man^{1278^b}

^b is the same as that of the good citizen, the considerations already adduced prove that in some states the good man and the good citizen are the same, and in others different. When they are the same it is not every citizen who is a good man, but only the statesman and those who have or may have, alone or in conjunction with others, the conduct of public affairs.

Having determined these questions, we have next to consider whether there is only one form of government or many, and if many, what they are, and how many, and what are the differences between them.

A constitution is the arrangement of magistracies in a state,²² especially of the highest of all. The government is everywhere sovereign in the state, and the constitution is in fact the government. For example, in de-

²¹ Achilles complains of Agamemnon's so treating him, *Iliad* ix. 648, xvi. 59.

²² Cp. 1274^b 38, iv. 1289^a 15.

mocracies the people are supreme, but in oligarchies, the few; and, therefore, we say that these two forms of government also are different: and so in other cases.

First, let us consider what is the purpose of a state, and how many forms of government there are by which human society is regulated. We have already said, in the first part of this treatise,²³ when discussing household management and the rule of a master, that man is by nature a political animal. And therefore, men, even when they do not require one another's help, desire to live together; not but that they are also brought together by their common interests in proportion as they severally attain to any measure of well-being. This is certainly the chief end, both of individuals and of states. And also for the sake of mere life (in which there is possibly some noble element so long as the evils of existence do not greatly overbalance the good) mankind meet together and maintain the political community. And we all see that men cling to life even at the cost of enduring great misfortune, seeming to find in life a natural sweetness and happiness.

There is no difficulty in distinguishing the various kinds of authority; they have been often defined already in discussions outside the school. The rule of a master, although the slave by nature and the master by nature have in reality the same interests, is nevertheless exercised primarily with a view to the interest of the master,³⁵ but accidentally considers the slave, since, if the slave perish, the rule of the master perishes with him. On the other hand, the government of a wife and children and of a household, which we have called household management, is exercised in the first instance for the good of the governed or for the common good of both parties, but

²³ Cp. i. 1253^a 2.

⁴⁰ essentially for the good of the governed, as we see to be
 1279^a the case in medicine, gymnastic, and the arts in general, which are only accidentally concerned with the good of the artists themselves.²⁴ For there is no reason why the trainer may not sometimes practise gymnastics, and the helmsman is always one of the crew. The trainer or the helmsman considers the good of those committed to his care. But, when he is one of the persons taken care of, he accidentally participates in the advantage, for the helmsman is also a sailor, and the trainer becomes one of those in training. And so in politics: when the state is framed upon the principle of equality and likeness, the citizens think that they ought to hold office by turns. Formerly, as is natural, every one would take his turn of service; and then again, somebody else would look after his interest, just as he, while in office, had looked after theirs.²⁵ But nowadays, for the sake of the advantage which is to be gained from the public revenues and from office, men want to be always in office. One might imagine that the rulers, being sickly, were only kept in health while they continued in office; in that case we may be sure that they would be hunting after places. The conclusion is evident: that governments which have a regard to the common interest are constituted in accordance with strict principles of justice, and are therefore true forms; but those which regard only the interest of the rulers are all defective and perverted forms, for they are despotic, whereas a state is a community of freemen.

7 Having determined these points, we have next to consider how many forms of government there are, and what they are; and in the first place what are the true forms, for when they are determined the perversions of

²⁴ Cp. Pl. *Rep.* i. 341 D.

²⁵ Cp. ii. 1261^a 37—^b 6.

them will at once be apparent. The words constitution and government have the same meaning, and the government, which is the supreme authority in states, must be in the hands of one, or of a few, or of the many. The true forms of government, therefore, are those in which the one, or the few, or the many, govern with a view to the common interest; but governments which rule with a view to the private interest, whether of the one, or of the few, or of the many, are perversions.²⁶ For the members of a state, if they are truly citizens, ought to participate in its advantages. Of forms of government in which one rules, we call that which regards the common interests, kingship or royalty; that in which more than one, but not many, rule, aristocracy; and it is so called, either because the rulers are the best men, or because they have at heart the best interests of the state and of the citizens. But when the citizens at large administer the state for the common interest, the government is called by the generic name—a constitution. And there is a reason for this use of language. One man or a few may excel in virtue; but as the number increases it becomes more difficult for them to attain perfection in every kind of virtue, though they may in military virtue, for this is found in the masses. Hence in a constitutional government the fighting-men have the supreme power, and those who possess arms are the citizens.

Of the above-mentioned forms, the perversions are as follows:—of royalty, tyranny; of aristocracy, oligarchy; of constitutional government, democracy. For tyranny is a kind of monarchy which has in view the interest of the monarch only; oligarchy has in view the interest of the wealthy; democracy, of the needy: none of them the common good of all.

²⁶ Cp. *Nic. Eth.* viii. 10.

the smaller number, as in an oligarchy, is an accident due to the fact that the rich everywhere are few, and the poor numerous. But if so, there is a misapprehension of the causes of the difference between them. For the real difference between democracy and oligarchy is poverty and wealth.⁴⁰ Wherever men rule by reason of their wealth, whether they be few or many, that is an oligarchy, and where the poor rule, that is a democracy. But as a fact the rich are few and the poor many; for few are well-to-do, whereas freedom is enjoyed by all, and wealth and freedom are the grounds on which the oligarchical and democratical parties respectively claim power in the state.

9 Let us begin by considering the common definitions of oligarchy and democracy, and what is justice oligarchical and democratical. For all men cling to justice of some kind, but their conceptions are imperfect and they do not express the whole idea. For example, justice is thought by them to be, and is, equality, not, however, for all, but only for equals. And inequality is thought to be, and is, justice; neither is this for all, but only for unequals. When the persons are omitted, then men judge erroneously. The reason is that they are passing judgement on themselves, and most people are bad judges in their own case. And whereas justice implies a relation to persons as well as to things, and a just distribution, as I have already said in the *Ethics*,²⁷ implies the same ratio between the persons and between the things, they agree about the equality of the things, but dispute about the equality of the persons, chiefly for the reason which I have just given—because they are bad judges in their own affairs; and secondly, because both the parties to the argument are speaking of a limited and partial jus-

²⁷ v. 1131^a 15.

be further inferred that virtue must be the care of a state which is truly so called, and not merely enjoys the name: for without this end the community becomes a mere alliance which differs only in place from alliances of which the members live apart; and law is only a convention, 'a surety to one another of justice,' as the sophist Ly-¹⁰ cophron says, and has no real power to make the citizens good and just.

This is obvious; for suppose distinct places, such as Corinth and Megara, to be brought together so that their walls touched, still they would not be one city, not even if the citizens had the right to intermarry, which is one ¹⁵ of the rights peculiarly characteristic of states. Again, if men dwelt at a distance from one another, but not so far off as to have no intercourse, and there were laws among them that they should not wrong each other in their exchanges, neither would this be a state. Let us suppose ²⁰ that one man is a carpenter, another a husbandman, another a shoemaker, and so on, and that their number is ten thousand: nevertheless, if they have nothing in common but exchange, alliance, and the like, that would not constitute a state. Why is this? Surely not because they ²⁵ are at a distance from one another: for even supposing that such a community were to meet in one place, but that each man had a house of his own, which was in a manner his state, and that they made alliance with one another, but only against evil-doers; still an accurate thinker would not deem this to be a state, if their intercourse with one another was of the same character after as be- ³⁰ fore their union. It is clear then that a state is not a mere society, having a common place, established for the prevention of mutual crime and for the sake of exchange.²⁹ These are conditions without which a state cannot exist;

²⁹ Cp. *Protag.* 322 B.

but all of them together do not constitute a state, which is a community of families and aggregations of families in well-being, for the sake of a perfect and self-sufficing life. Such a community can only be established among those who live in the same place and intermarry. Hence arise in cities family connexions, brotherhoods, common sacrifices, amusements which draw men together. But these are created by friendship, for the will to live together is friendship. The end of the state is the good life, and these are the means towards it. And the state is the union of families and villages in a perfect and self-sufficing life, by which we mean a happy and honourable life.³⁰

Our conclusion, then, is that political society exists for the sake of noble actions, and not of mere companionship. Hence they who contribute most to such a society have a greater share in it than those who have the same or a greater freedom or nobility of birth but are inferior to them in political virtue; or than those who exceed them in wealth but are surpassed by them in virtue.

From what has been said it will be clearly seen that all the partisans of different forms of government speak of a part of justice only.

10 There is also a doubt as to what is to be the supreme power in the state:—Is it the multitude? Or the wealthy? Or the good? Or the one best man? Or a tyrant? Any of these alternatives seems to involve disagreeable consequences. If the poor, for example, because they are more in number, divide among themselves the property of the rich—is not this unjust? No, by heaven (will be the reply), for the supreme authority justly willed it. But if this is not injustice, pray what is? Again, when in the first division all has been taken, and the majority divide

³⁰ Cp. i. 1252^b 27; Nic. Eth. i. 1097^b 6.

God among men. Hence we see that legislation is necessarily concerned only with those who are equal in birth and in capacity; and that for men of pre-eminent virtue there is no law—they are themselves a law. Any one would be ridiculous who attempted to make laws for
 15 them: they would probably retort what, in the fable of Antisthenes, the lions said to the hares,⁵¹ when in the council of the beasts the latter began haranguing and claiming equality for all. And for this reason democratic states have instituted ostracism; equality is above all
 20 things their aim, and therefore they ostracized and banished from the city for a time those who seemed to predominate too much through their wealth, or the number of their friends, or through any other political influence. Mythology tells us that the Argonauts left Heracles behind for a similar reason; the ship Argo would not take
 25 him because she feared that he would have been too much for the rest of the crew. Wherefore those who denounce tyranny and blame the counsel which Periander gave to Thrasybulus cannot be held altogether just in their censure. The story is that Periander, when the herald was sent to ask counsel of him, said nothing, but
 30 only cut off the tallest ears of corn till he had brought the field to a level. The herald did not know the meaning of the action, but came and reported what he had seen to Thrasybulus, who understood that he was to cut off the principal men in the state;⁵² and this is a policy not only
 35 expedient for tyrants or in practice confined to them, but equally necessary in oligarchies and democracies. Ostracism⁵³ is a measure of the same kind, which acts by disabling and banishing the most prominent citizens. Great powers do the same to whole cities and nations, as

⁵¹ i. e. 'where are your claws and teeth?'

⁵² Cp. v. 1311^a 20.

⁵³ Cp. v. 1302^b 18.

there would be great doubts about the use of it, not when applied to excess in strength, wealth, popularity, or the like, but when used against some one who is pre-eminent in virtue—what is to be done with him? Mankind will not say that such an one is to be expelled and exiled; on the other hand, he ought not to be a subject—that would be as if mankind should claim to rule over Zeus, dividing his offices among them. The only alternative is that all should joyfully obey such a ruler, according to what seems to be the order of nature, and that men like him should be kings in their state for life.

35 14 The preceding discussion, by a natural transition, leads to the consideration of royalty, which we admit to be one of the true forms of government. Let us see whether in order to be well governed a state or country should be under the rule of a king or under some other form of government; and whether monarchy, although good for some, may not be bad for others. But first we must determine whether there is one species of royalty 1285^a or many. It is easy to see that there are many, and that the manner of government is not the same in all of them.

Of royalties according to law, (1) the Lacedaemonian is thought to answer best to the true pattern; but there the royal power is not absolute, except when the kings go on an expedition, and then they take the command. Matters of religion are likewise committed to them. The kingly office is in truth a kind of generalship, irresponsible and perpetual. The king has not the power of life and death, except in a specified case, as for instance, in ancient times, he had it when upon a campaign, by right of force. This custom is described in Homer. For Agamemnon is patient when he is attacked in the assembly, but when the army goes out to battle he has the power

even of life and death. Does he not say?—‘When I find a man skulking apart from the battle, nothing shall save him from the dogs and vultures, for in my hands is death.’⁵⁵

This, then, is one form of royalty—a generalship for life: and of such royalties some are hereditary and others elective.

(2) There is another sort of monarchy not uncommon among the barbarians, which nearly resembles tyranny. But this is both legal and hereditary. For barbarians, being more servile in character than Hellenes, and Asiatics than Europeans, do not rebel against a despotic government. Such royalties have the nature of tyrannies because the people are by nature slaves;⁵⁶ but there is no danger of their being overthrown, for they are hereditary and legal. Wherefore also their guards are such as a king and not such as a tyrant would employ,²⁵ that is to say, they are composed of citizens, whereas the guards of tyrants are mercenaries.⁵⁷ For kings rule according to law over voluntary subjects, but tyrants over involuntary; and the one are guarded by their fellow-citizens, the others are guarded against them.

These are two forms of monarchy, and there was a third (3) which existed in ancient Hellas, called an Aesymnetia or dictatorship. This may be defined generally as an elective tyranny, which, like the barbarian monarchy, is legal, but differs from it in not being hereditary. Sometimes the office was held for life, sometimes for a term of years, or until certain duties had been performed. For example, the Mytilenaeans elected Pittacus leader against the exiles, who were headed by Antimenides and Alcaeus the poet. And Alcaeus himself

⁵⁵ Il. ii. 391–393. The last clause is not found in our Homer.

⁵⁶ Cp. i. 125^a 7.

⁵⁷ Cp. v. 1311^a 7.

shows in one of his banquet odes that they chose Pittacus tyrant, for he reproaches his fellow-citizens for 'having made the low-born Pittacus tyrant of the spiritless and ill-fated city, with one voice shouting his praises'.^{1285b}

These forms of government have always had the character of tyrannies, because they possess despotic power; but inasmuch as they are elective and acquiesced in by their subjects, they are kingly.

(4) There is a fourth species of kingly rule—that of the heroic times—which was hereditary and legal, and was exercised over willing subjects. For the first chiefs were benefactors of the people⁵⁸ in arts or arms; they either gathered them into a community, or procured land for them; and thus they became kings of voluntary subjects, and their power was inherited by their descendants. They took the command in war and presided over the sacrifices, except those which required a priest. They also decided causes either with or without an oath; and when they swore, the form of the oath was the stretching out of their sceptre. In ancient times their power extended continuously to all things whatsoever, in city and country, as well as in foreign parts; but at a later date they relinquished several of these privileges, and others the people took from them, until in some states nothing was left to them but the sacrifices; and where they retained more of the reality they had only the right of leadership in war beyond the border.

These, then, are the four kinds of royalty. First the monarchy of the heroic ages; this was exercised over voluntary subjects, but limited to certain functions; the king was a general and a judge, and had the control of religion. The second is that of the barbarians, which is an hereditary despotic government in accordance with

⁵⁸ Cp. v. 1310^b 10.

law. A third is the power of the so-called Aesymnete or Dictator; this is an elective tyranny. The fourth is the Lacedaemonian, which is in fact a generalship, hereditary and perpetual. These four forms differ from one another in the manner which I have described.

(5) There is a fifth form of kingly rule in which one has the disposal of all, just as each nation or each state has the disposal of public matters; this form corresponds to the control of a household. For as household management is the kingly rule of a house, so kingly rule is the household management of a city, or of a nation, or of many nations.

merely
15 Of these forms we need only consider two, the Lacedaemonian and the absolute royalty; for most of the others lie in a region between them, having less power than the last, and more than the first. Thus the inquiry is reduced to two points: first, is it advantageous to the state that there should be a perpetual general, and if so, should the office be confined to one family, or open to the citizens in turn? Secondly, is it well that a single man should have the supreme power in all things? The first question falls under the head of laws rather than of constitutions; for perpetual generalship might equally exist under any form of government, so that this matter may be dismissed for the present.⁵⁹ The other kind of royalty is a sort of constitution; this we have now to consider, and briefly to run over the difficulties involved in it. We will begin by inquiring whether it is more advantageous to be ruled by the best man or by the best laws.⁶⁰

The advocates of royalty maintain that the laws speak only in general terms, and cannot provide for circumstances; and that for any science to abide by written

⁵⁹ It is not discussed later.

⁶⁰ Cp. Plato, *Polit.* 294 A–295 C.

rules is absurd. In Egypt the physician is allowed to alter his treatment after the fourth day, but if sooner, he takes 15 the risk. Hence it is clear that a government acting according to written laws is plainly not the best. Yet surely the ruler cannot dispense with the general principle which exists in law; and that is a better ruler which is free from passion than that in which it is innate. Whereas the law is passionless, passion must ever sway the heart 20 of man. Yes, it may be replied, but then on the other hand an individual will be better able to deliberate in particular cases.

The best man, then, must legislate, and laws must be passed, but these laws will have no authority when they 25 miss the mark, though in all other cases retaining their authority. But when the law cannot determine a point at all, or not well, should the one best man or should all decide? According to our present practice assemblies meet, sit in judgment, deliberate, and decide, and their judgements all relate to individual cases. Now any member of the assembly, taken separately, is certainly inferior to the wise man. But the state is made up of many individuals. And as a feast to which all the guests contribute is better than a banquet furnished by a single 30 man,⁶¹ so a multitude is a better judge of many things than any individual.

Again, the many are more incorruptible than the few; they are like the greater quantity of water which is less easily corrupted than a little. The individual is liable to be overcome by anger or by some other passion, and then 35 his judgement is necessarily perverted; but it is hardly to be supposed that a great number of persons would all get into a passion and go wrong at the same moment. Let us assume that they are the freemen, and that they never

⁶¹ Cp. 1281^a 42.

act in violation of the law, but fill up the gaps which the law is obliged to leave. Or, if such virtue is scarcely attainable by the multitude, we need only suppose that the majority are good men and good citizens, and ask which will be the more incorruptible, the one good ruler, or the 40 many who are all good? Will not the many? But, you 1286^b will say, there may be parties among them, whereas the one man is not divided against himself. To which we may answer that their character is as good as his. If we call the rule of many men, who are all of them good, aristocracy, and the rule of one man royalty, then aristocracy will be better for states than royalty, whether the government is supported by force or not,⁶² provided only that a number of men equal in virtue can be found.

The first governments were kingships, probably for this reason, because of old, when cities were small, men of eminent virtue were few. Further, they were made 10 kings because they were benefactors,⁶³ and benefits can only be bestowed by good men. But when many persons equal in merit arose, no longer enduring the pre-eminence of one, they desired to have a commonwealth, and set up a constitution. The ruling class soon deteriorated and enriched themselves out of the public treasury; riches became the path to honour, and so oligarchies 15 naturally grew up. These passed into tyrannies and tyrannies into democracies; for love of gain in the ruling classes was always tending to diminish their number, and so to strengthen the masses, who in the end set upon their masters and established democracies. Since cities 20 have increased in size, no other form of government appears to be any longer even easy to establish.⁶⁴

Even supposing the principle to be maintained that kingly power is the best thing for states, how about the

⁶² Cp. I. 27.

⁶³ Cp. 1285^b 6.

⁶⁴ Cp. iv. 1293^a 1, 1297^b 22.

family of the king? Are his children to succeed him? If they are no better than anybody else, that will be mischievous. But, says the lover of royalty, the king, though he might, will not hand on his power to his children. That, however, is hardly to be expected, and is too much to ask of human nature. There is also a difficulty about the force which he is to employ; should a king have guards about him by whose aid he may be able to coerce the refractory? If not, how will he administer his kingdom? Even if he be the lawful sovereign who does nothing arbitrarily or contrary to law, still he must have some force wherewith to maintain the law. In the case of a limited monarchy there is not much difficulty in answering this question; the king must have such force as will be more than a match for one or more individuals, but, not so great as that of the people. The ancients observe this principle when they have guards to any one whom they appointed dictator or tyrant. Thus, when Dionysius asked the Syracusans to allow him guards, somebody advised that they should give him only such a number.

1287^a 16 At this place in the discussion there impends the inquiry respecting the king who acts solely according to his own will; he has now to be considered. The so-called limited monarchy, or kingship according to law, as I have already remarked,⁶⁵ is not a distinct form of government, for under all governments, as, for example, in a democracy or aristocracy, there may be a general holding office for life, and one person is often made supreme over the administration of a state. A magistracy of this kind exists at Epidamnus,⁶⁶ and also at Opus, but in the latter city has a more limited power. Now, absolute monarchy, or the arbitrary rule of a sovereign over

⁶⁵ 1286^a 2.

⁶⁶ Cp. v. 1301^b 21.

all the citizens, in a city which consists of equals, is thought by some to be quite contrary to nature; it is argued that those who are by nature equals must have the same natural right and worth, and that for unequal¹⁵ to have an equal share, or for equals to have an uneven share, in the offices of state, is as bad as for different bodily constitutions to have the same food and clothing. Wherefore it is thought to be just that among equals every one be ruled as well as rule, and therefore that all should have their turn. We thus arrive at law; for an order of succession implies law. And the rule of the law, it is argued, is preferable to that of any individual. On the same principle, even if it be better for certain individuals to govern, they should be made only guardians and ministers of the law. For magistrates there must be —this is admitted; but then men say that to give authority to any one man when all are equal is unjust. Nay, there may indeed be cases which the law seems unable to determine, but in such cases can a man? Nay, it will be replied, the law trains officers for this express purpose, and appoints them to determine matters which are left undecided by it, to the best of their judgement. Further, it permits them to make any amendment of the existing laws which experience suggests. Therefore he who bids the law rule may be deemed to bid God and Reason alone rule, but he who bids man rule adds an element of the beast; for desire is a wild beast, and passion perverts the minds of rulers, even when they are the best of men. The law is reason unaffected by desire. We are told⁶⁷ that a patient should call in a physician; he will not get better if he is doctored out of a book. But the parallel of the arts is clearly not in point; for the physician does nothing contrary to rule from motives of friendship; he only

⁶⁷ Cp. 1286^a 12-14, *Polit.* 296 B.

origin of the vexed question whether the best law or the best man should rule. For matters of detail about which men deliberate cannot be included in legislation. Nor does any one deny that the decision of such matters must be left to man, but it is argued that there should be many judges, and not one only. For every ruler who has been trained by the law judges well; and it would surely seem strange that a person should see better with two eyes, or hear better with two ears, or act better with two hands or feet, than many with many; indeed, it is already the practice of kings to make to themselves many eyes and ears and hands and feet. For they make colleagues of those who are the friends of themselves and their governments. They must be friends of the monarch and of his government; if not his friends, they will not do what he wants; but friendship implies likeness and equality; and, therefore, if he thinks that his friends ought to rule, he must think that those who are equal to himself and like himself ought to rule equally with himself. These are the principal controversies relating to monarchy.

17 But may not all this be true in some cases and not in others? for there is by nature both a justice and an advantage appropriate to the rule of a master, another to kingly rule, another to constitutional rule; but there is none naturally appropriate to tyranny, or to any other perverted form of government; for these come into being contrary to nature. Now, to judge at least from what has been said, it is manifest that, where men are alike and equal, it is neither expedient nor just that one man should be lord of all, whether there are laws, or whether there are no laws, but he himself is in the place of law. Neither should a good man be lord over good men, nor a bad man over bad; nor, even if he excels in virtue,

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should he have a right to rule, unless in a particular case, at which I have already hinted, and to which I will once more recur.⁷² But first of all, I must determine what natures are suited for government by a king, and what for an aristocracy, and what for a constitutional government.

A people who are by nature capable of producing a race superior in the virtue needed for political rule are fitted for kingly government; and a people submitting to be ruled as freemen by men whose virtue renders them capable of political command are adapted for an aristocracy; while the people who are suited for constitutional freedom are those among whom there naturally exists a warlike multitude⁷³ able to rule and to obey in turn by a law which gives office to the well-to-do according to their desert. But when a whole family, or some individual, happens to be so pre-eminent in virtue as to surpass all others, then it is just that they should be the royal family and supreme over all, or that this one citizen should be king of the whole nation. For, as I said before,⁷⁴ to give them authority is not only agreeable to that ground of right which the founders of all states, whether aristocratical, or oligarchical, or again democratical, are accustomed to put forward (for these all recognize the claim of excellence, although not the same excellence), but accords with the principle already laid down. For surely it would not be right to kill, or ostracize, or exile such a person, or require that he should take his turn in being governed. The whole is naturally superior to the part, and he who has this pre-eminence is in the relation of a whole to a part. But if so, the only alternative is that he should have the supreme power,

⁷² 1284^a 3, and 1288^a 15.

⁷⁴ 1283^b 20, 1284^a 3-17, b²⁵.

⁷³ Cp. 1279^b 2.

and that mankind should obey him, not in turn, but always. These are the conclusions at which we arrive respecting royalty and its various forms, and this is the answer to the question, whether it is or is not advantageous to states, and to which, and how.

18 We maintain⁷⁵ that the true forms of government are three, and that the best must be that which is administered by the best, and in which there is one man, or a whole family, or many persons, excelling all the others together in virtue, and both rulers and subjects are fitted, the one to rule, the others to be ruled, in such a manner as to attain the most eligible life. We showed at the commencement of our inquiry⁷⁶ that the virtue of the good man is necessarily the same as the virtue of the citizen of the perfect state. Clearly then in the same manner, and by the same means through which a man becomes truly good, he will frame a state that is to be 1288^b ruled by an aristocracy or by a king, and the same education and the same habits will be found to make a good man and a man fit to be a statesman or king.

Having arrived at these conclusions, we must proceed to speak of the perfect state, and describe how it comes into being and is established.

⁷⁵ Cp. 1279^a 22-b4.

⁷⁶ cc. 4, 5.

BOOK IV

¹⁰ 1 In all arts and sciences which embrace the whole of any subject, and do not come into being in a fragmentary way, it is the province of a single art or science to consider all that appertains to a single subject. For example, the art of gymnastic considers not only the suitableness of different modes of training to different bodies (²), but what sort is absolutely the best (¹); (for the absolutely best must suit that which is by nature best and best furnished with the means of life), and also ¹⁵ what common form of training is adapted to the great majority of men (⁴). And if a man does not desire the best habit of body, or the greatest skill in gymnastics, which might be attained by him, still the trainer or the teacher of gymnastic should be able to impart any lower degree of either (³). The same principle equally holds in medicine and ship-building, and the making of clothes, ²⁰ and in the arts generally.¹

Hence it is obvious that government too is the subject of a single science, which has to consider what government is best and of what sort it must be, to be most in accordance with our aspirations, if there were no external impediment, and also what kind of government ²⁵ is adapted to particular states. For the best is often un-

attainable, and therefore the true legislator and statesman ought to be acquainted, not only with (¹) that which is best in the abstract, but also with (²) that which is best relatively to circumstances. We should be able further to say how a state may be constituted under any given conditions (³); both how it is originally formed and, when formed, how it may be longest preserved; the supposed state being so far from having the best constitution that it is unprovided even with the conditions necessary for the best; neither is it the best under the circumstances, but of an inferior type.

He ought, moreover, to know (⁴) the form of government which is best suited to states in general; for political writers, although they have excellent ideas, are often unpractical. We should consider, not only what form of government is best, but also what is possible and what is easily attainable by all. There are some who would have none but the most perfect; for this many natural advantages are required. Others, again, speak of a more attainable form, and, although they reject the constitution under which they are living, they extol some one in particular, for example the Lacedaemonian.² Any change of government which has to be introduced should be one ^{1289^a} which men, starting from their existing constitutions, will be both willing and able to adopt, since there is quite as much trouble in the reformation of an old constitution as in the establishment of a new one, just as to unlearn is as hard as to learn. And therefore, in addition ⁵ to the qualifications of the statesman already mentioned, he should be able to find remedies for the defects of existing constitutions, as has been said before.³ This he cannot do unless he knows how many forms of government there are. It is often supposed that there is only

¹ The numbers in this paragraph are made to correspond with the numbers in the next.

² Cp. ii. 1265^b 35.

³ Cp. 1288^b 29.

one kind of democracy and one of oligarchy. But this is a mistake; and, in order to avoid such mistakes, we must ascertain what differences there are in the constitutions of states, and in how many ways they are combined. The same political insight will enable a man to know which laws are the best, and which are suited to different constitutions; for the laws are, and ought to be, relative to the constitution, and not the constitution to the laws. A constitution is the organization of offices in a state, and determines what is to be the governing body, and what is the end of each community. But laws are not to be confounded with the principles of the constitution; they are the rules according to which the magistrates should administer the state, and proceed against offenders. So that we must know the varieties, and the number of varieties, of each form of government, if only with a view to making laws. For the same laws cannot be equally suited to all oligarchies or to all democracies, since there is certainly more than one form both of democracy and of oligarchy.

In our original discussion⁴ about governments we divided them into three true forms: kingly rule, aristocracy, and constitutional government, and three corresponding perversions—tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy. Of kingly rule and of aristocracy we have already spoken,⁵ for the inquiry into the perfect state is the same thing with the discussion of the two forms thus named, since both imply a principle of virtue provided with external means. We have already determined in what aristocracy and kingly rule differ from one another, and when the latter should be established.⁶ In what

⁴ iii. 7; Cp. *Nic. Eth.* viii. 10.

⁵ iii. 14-18.

⁶ iii. 32-37, 1286^b 3-5, 1284^a 3-b34, ch. 17.

follows we have to describe the so-called constitutional government, which bears the common name of all constitutions, and the other forms, tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy.

It is obvious which of the three perversions is the worst, and which is the next in badness. That which is ⁴⁰ the perversion of the first and most divine is necessarily the worst. And just as a royal rule, if not a mere name,^{1289^b must exist by virtue of some great personal superiority in the king,⁷ so tyranny, which is the worst of governments, is necessarily the farthest removed from a well-constituted form; oligarchy is little better, for it is a long way from aristocracy, and democracy is the most tolerable of the three.}

A writer⁸ who preceded me has already made these distinctions, but his point of view is not the same as mine. For he lays down the principle that when all the constitutions are good (the oligarchy and the rest being virtuous), democracy is the worst, but the best when all are bad. Whereas we maintain that they are in any case defective, and that one oligarchy is not to be accounted ¹⁰ better than another, but only less bad.

Not to pursue this question further at present, let us begin by determining (1)⁹ how many varieties of constitution there are (since of democracy and oligarchy there are several): (2)¹⁰ what constitution is the most generally acceptable, and what is eligible in the next degree after the perfect state; and besides this what other there is which is aristocratical and well-constituted, and at the same time adapted to states in general; (3)¹¹ of the other forms of government to whom each is suited.

⁷ Cp. iii. 1284^a 3-b34, chs. 17, 18, v. 1310^b 10 sq., vii. 1325^b 10-12.

⁸ Plato, *Polit.* 302 E, 303 A.

⁹ C. 3-10.

¹⁰ C. 11.

¹¹ C. 12.

that there are two kinds of government—democracy and oligarchy.

I have already explained²¹ that there are many forms of constitution, and to what causes the variety is due.

Let me now show that there are different forms both of democracy and oligarchy, as will indeed be evident from what has preceded. For both in the common people and in the notables various classes are included; of the common people, one class are husbandmen, another artisans; another traders, who are employed in buying and selling; another are the seafaring class, whether engaged in war or in trade, as ferrymen or as fishermen. (In many places any one of these classes forms quite a large population; for example, fishermen at Tarentum and Byzantium, crews of triremes at Athens, merchant seamen at Aegina and Chios, ferrymen at Tenedos.) To the classes already mentioned may be added day-labourers, and those who, owing to their needy circumstances, have no leisure, or those who are not of free birth on both sides; and there may be other classes as well. The notables again may be divided according to their wealth, birth, virtue, education, and similar differences.

Of forms of democracy first comes that which is said to be based strictly on equality. In such a democracy the law says that it is just for the poor to have no more advantage than the rich; and that neither should be masters, but both equal. For if liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost. And since the people are the majority, and the opinion of the majority is decisive, such a government must necessarily be a democracy. Here then is one sort of democracy. There is

²¹ Cp. iii. c. 6.

another, in which the magistrates are elected according to a certain property qualification, but a low one; he who ⁴⁰ has the required amount of property has a share in the government, but he who loses his property loses his rights.

Another kind is that in which all the citizens who are ^{1292*} under no disqualification share in the government, but still the law is supreme. In another, everybody, if he be only a citizen, is admitted to the government, but the law is supreme as before. A fifth form of democracy, in other respects, the same, is that in which, not the law, but the multitude, have the supreme power, and supersede the law by their decrees. This is a state of affairs brought about by the demagogues. For in democracies which are subject to the law the best citizens hold the first place, and there are no demagogues; but where the laws are not supreme, there demagogues spring up. For the people becomes a monarch, and is many in one; and the many have the power in their hands, not as individuals, but collectively. Homer says that 'it is not good to have a rule of many',²² but whether he means this corporate rule, or the rule of many individuals, is uncertain. At all events this sort of democracy, which is now a monarch, and no longer ¹⁵ under the control of law, seeks to exercise monarchical sway, and grows into a despot; the flatterer is held in honour; this sort of democracy being relatively to other democracies what tyranny is to other forms of monarchy. The spirit of both is the same, and they alike exercise a despotic rule over the better citizens. The decrees of the demos correspond to the edicts of the tyrant; and the ²⁰ demagogue is to the one what the flatterer is to the other. Both have great power;—the flatterer with the tyrant, the demagogue with democracies of the kind which we are describing. The demagogues make the decrees of the

²² II. ii. 204.

25 people override the laws, by referring all things to the popular assembly. And therefore they grow great, because the people have all things in their hands, and they hold in their hands the votes of the people, who are too ready to listen to them. Further, those who have any complaint to bring against the magistrates say, 'let the people be judges'; the people are too happy to accept the invitation; and so the authority of every office is undermined. Such a democracy is fairly open to the objection that it is not a constitution at all; for where the laws have no authority, there is no constitution. The law ought to be supreme over all, and the magistracies should judge of particulars, and only this should be considered a constitution. So that if democracy be a real form of government, the sort of system in which all things are regulated by decrees is clearly not even a democracy in the true sense of the word, for decrees relate only to particulars.²³

These then are the different kinds of democracy.

5 Of oligarchies, too, there are different kinds:—one
 40 where the property qualification for office is such that the poor, although they form the majority, have no share in the government, yet he who acquires a qualification may
 1292^b obtain a share. Another sort is when there is a qualification for office, but a high one, and the vacancies in the governing body are filled by co-optation. If the election is made out of all the qualified persons, a constitution of this kind inclines to an aristocracy, if out of a privileged class, to an oligarchy. Another sort of oligarchy is when
 5 the son succeeds the father. There is a fourth form, likewise hereditary, in which the magistrates are supreme and not the law. Among oligarchies this is what tyranny is among monarchies, and the last-mentioned form of

²³ Cp. *Nic. Eth.* v. 1137^b 27.

are revenues to support them. This is one sort of democracy, and these are the causes which give birth to it. Another kind is based on the distinction which naturally comes next in order; in this, every one to whose birth there is no objection is eligible, but actually shares in the government only if he can find leisure. Hence in such a democracy the supreme power is vested in the laws, because the state has no means of paying the citizens. A third kind is when all freemen have a right to share in the government, but do not actually share, for the reason which has been already given; so that in this form again the law must rule. A fourth kind of democracy is that which comes latest in the history of states. In our own day, when cities have far outgrown their original size, and their revenues have increased, all the citizens have a place in the government, through the great preponderance of the multitude; and they all, including the poor who receive pay, and therefore have leisure to exercise their rights, share in the administration. Indeed, when they are paid, the common people have the most leisure, for they are not hindered by the care of their property, which often fetters the rich, who are thereby prevented from taking part in the assembly or in the courts, and so the state is governed by the poor, who are a majority, and not by the laws. So many kinds of democracies there are, and they grow out of these necessary causes.

Of oligarchies, one form is that in which the majority of the citizens have some property, but not very much; and this is the first form, which allows to any one who obtains the required amount the right of sharing in the government. The sharers in the government being a numerous body, it follows that the law must govern, and not individuals. For in proportion as they are further removed from a monarchical form of government, and in

respect of property have neither so much as to be able to live without attending to business, nor so little as to need state support, they must admit the rule of law and not claim to rule themselves. But if the men of property in the state are fewer than in the former case, and own more property, there arises a second form of oligarchy. For the stronger they are, the more power they claim, and having this object in view, they themselves select those of the other classes who are to be admitted to the government; but, not being as yet strong enough to rule without the law, they make the law represent their wishes.²⁶ When this power is intensified by a further diminution of their numbers and increase of their property, there arises a third and further stage of oligarchy, in which the governing class keep the offices in their own hands, and the law ordains that the son shall succeed the father. When, again, the rulers have great wealth and numerous friends, this sort of family despotism approaches a monarchy; individuals rule and not the law. This is the fourth sort of oligarchy, and is analogous to the last sort of democracy.

7 There are still two forms besides democracy and oligarchy; one of them is universally recognized and included among the four principal forms of government, which are said to be (1) monarchy, (2) oligarchy, (3) democracy, and (4) the so-called aristocracy or government of the best. But there is also a fifth, which retains the generic name of polity or constitutional government; this is not common, and therefore has not been noticed by writers who attempt to enumerate the different kinds

²⁶ i. e. they make a law that the governing class shall have the power of co-optation from other classes.

of government; like Plato,²⁷ in their books about the
 1293^b state, they recognize four only. The term 'aristocracy' is
 rightly applied to the form of government which is de-
 scribed in the first part of our treatise;²⁸ for that only
 can be rightly called aristocracy which is a government
 formed of the best men absolutely, and not merely of
 men who are good when tried by any given standard. In
 5 the perfect state the good man is absolutely the same as
 the good citizen; whereas in other states the good citizen
 is only good relatively to his own form of government.
 But there are some states differing from oligarchies and
 also differing from the so-called polity or constitutional
 government; these are termed aristocracies, and in them
 magistrates are certainly chosen, both according to their
 10 wealth and according to their merit. Such a form of gov-
 ernment differs from each of the two just now men-
 tioned, and is termed an aristocracy. For indeed in states
 which do not make virtue the aim of the community, men
 of merit and reputation for virtue may be found. And so
 where a government has regard to wealth, virtue, and
 15 numbers, as at Carthage,²⁹ that is aristocracy; and also
 where it has regard only to two out of the three, as at
 Lacedaemon, to virtue and numbers, and the two prin-
 ciples of democracy and virtue temper each other. There
 are these two forms of aristocracy in addition to the first
 20 and perfect state, and there is a third form, viz. the con-
 stitutions which incline more than the so-called polity
 towards oligarchy.]

8 [I have yet to speak of the so-called polity and of
 tyranny. I put them in this order, not because a polity or
 constitutional government is to be regarded as a perver-

²⁷ *Rep.* viii, ix.

²⁸ iii. 1279^a 34, 1286^b 3, Cp. vii. 1328^b 37.

²⁹ Cp. ii. 1273^a 21-30.

ferent characteristics, and taking a portion from each, put the two together, like the parts of an indenture. Now there are three modes in which fusions of government 35 may be affected. In the first mode we must combine the laws made by both governments, say concerning the administration of justice. In oligarchies they impose a fine on the rich if they do not serve as judges, and to the poor they give no pay; but in democracies they give pay to the poor and do not fine the rich. Now (1) the union of these 40 two modes³¹ is a common or middle term between them, and is therefore characteristic of a constitutional govern- 1294^b ment, for it is a combination of both. This is one mode of uniting the two elements. Or (2) a mean may be taken between the enactments of the two: thus democracies require no property qualification, or only a small one, from members of the assembly, oligarchies a high one; here neither of these is the common term, but a mean be- 5 tween them. (3) There is a third mode, in which something is borrowed from the oligarchical and something from the democratical principle. For example, the appointment of magistrates by lot is thought to be democratical, and the election of them oligarchical; democratical again when there is no property qualification, oligarchical when there is. In the aristocratical or consti- 10 tutional state, one element will be taken from each—from oligarchy the principle of electing to offices, from democracy the disregard of qualification. Such are the various modes of combination.

There is a true union of oligarchy and democracy when the same state may be termed either a democracy or 15 an oligarchy; those who use both names evidently feel that the fusion is complete. Such a fusion there is also in the mean; for both extremes appear in it. The Lacedae-

³¹ Cp. 1297^a 38.

tyranny is reckoned by us to be a form of government), although there is not much to be said about it. I have already in the former part of this treatise³³ discussed royalty or kingship according to the most usual meaning of the term, and considered whether it is or is not advantageous to states, and what kind of royalty should be established, and from what source, and how.

When speaking of royalty we also spoke³⁴ of two forms of tyranny, which are both according to law, and therefore easily pass into royalty. Among Barbarians there are elected monarchs who exercise a despotic power; despotic rulers were also elected in ancient Hellas, called Aesymnetes or dictators. These monarchies, when compared with one another, exhibit certain differences. And they are, as I said before,³⁵ royal, in so far as the monarch rules according to law over willing subjects; but they are tyrannical in so far as he is despotic and rules according to his own fancy. There is also a third kind of tyranny, which is the most typical form, and is the counterpart of the perfect monarchy. This tyranny is just that arbitrary power of an individual which is responsible to no one, and governs all alike, whether equals or better, with a view to its own advantage, not to that of its subjects, and therefore against their will. No freeman, if he can escape from it, will endure such a government.

The kinds of tyranny are such and so many, and for the reasons which I have given.

11 We have now to inquire what is the best constitution for most states, and the best life for most men, neither assuming a standard of virtue which is above ordinary persons, nor an education which is exceptionally favoured by nature and circumstances, nor yet an ideal state

³³ iii. 14-17.

³⁴ iii. 1285^a 16-^b3.

³⁵ iii. 1285^b 2.

which is an aspiration only, but having regard to the life
 30 in which the majority are able to share, and to the form of government which states in general can attain. As to those aristocracies, as they are called, of which we were just now speaking,³⁶ they either lie beyond the possibilities of the greater number of states, or they approximate to the so-called constitutional government, and therefore need no separate discussion. And in fact the
 35 conclusion at which we arrive respecting all these forms rests upon the same grounds. For if what was said in the *Ethics*³⁷ is true, that the happy life is the life according to virtue lived without impediment, and that virtue is a mean, then the life which is in a mean, and in a mean attainable by every one, must be the best. And the same
 40 principles of virtue and vice are characteristic of cities and of constitutions; for the constitution is in a figure the
 1295^b life of the city.

Now in all states there are three elements: one class is very rich, another very poor, and a third in a mean. It is admitted that moderation and the mean are best, and therefore it will clearly be best to possess the gifts of fortune in moderation; for in that condition of life men are most ready to follow rational principle. But he who greatly excels in beauty, strength, birth, or wealth, or on the other hand who is very poor, or very weak, or very much disgraced, finds it difficult to follow rational principle.³⁸ Of these two the one sort grow into violent and
 5 great criminals, the others into rogues and petty rascals. And two sorts of offences correspond to them, the one committed from violence, the other from roguery. Again, the middle class is least likely to shrink from rule, or to

³⁶ 1293^b 7-21, Cp. 1293^b 36-1294^a 25.

³⁷ Nic. Eth. i. 1098^a 16. vii. 1153^b 10, x. 1177^a 12.

³⁸ Cp. Pl. Rep. iv. 421 D ff.

them, and whichever party, whether the rich or the common people, transgresses the mean and predominates, 25 draws the constitution its own way, and thus arises either oligarchy or democracy. There is another reason—the poor and the rich quarrel with one another, and whichever side gets the better, instead of establishing a just or popular government, regards political supremacy as the 30 prize of victory, and the one party sets up a democracy and the other an oligarchy. Further, both the parties which had the supremacy in Hellas looked only to the interest of their own form of government, and established in states, the one, democracies, and the other, oligarchies; they thought of their own advantage, of the public not 35 at all. For these reasons the middle form of government has rarely, if ever, existed, and among a very few only. One man alone of all who ever ruled in Hellas was induced to give this middle constitution to states. But it has 40 now become a habit among the citizens of states, not even 1296^b to care about equality; all men are seeking for dominion, // or, if conquered, are willing to submit.

What then is the best form of government, and what makes it the best, is evident; and of other constitutions, since we say ⁴³ that there are many kinds of democracy and many of oligarchy, it is not difficult to see which has the first and which the second or any other place in the 5 order of excellence, now that we have determined which is the best. For that which is nearest to the best must of necessity be better, and that which is furthest from it worse, if we are judging absolutely and not relatively to given conditions: I say 'relatively to given conditions', 10 since a particular government may be preferable, but another form may be better for some people.

⁴³ 1289^a 8, b13, 1291^b 15–1292^b 10, 1292^b 22–1293^a 10.

look for some form of government more suitable to both, they will find none better than this, for the rich and the poor will never consent to rule in turn, because they mis-⁵ trust one another. The arbiter is always the one trusted, and he who is in the middle is an arbiter. The more perfect the admixture of the political elements, the more lasting will be the constitution. Many even of those who desire to form aristocratical governments make a mistake, not only in giving too much power to the rich, but in attempting to overreach the people. There comes a time when out of a false good there arises a true evil, since the encroachments of the rich are more destructive to the constitution than those of the people.

13 The devices by which oligarchies deceive the people are five in number; they relate to (1) the assembly; (2) the magistracies; (3) the courts of law; (4) the use of arms; (5) gymnastic exercises. (1) The assemblies are thrown open to all, but either the rich only are fined for non-attendance, or a much larger fine is inflicted upon them. (2) As to the magistracies, those who are qualified by property cannot decline office upon oath, but the poor may. (3) In the law-courts the rich, and the rich only, are fined if they do not serve, the poor are let off with impunity, or, as in the laws of Charondas, a larger fine is inflicted on the rich, and a smaller one on the poor. In some states all citizens who have registered themselves are allowed to attend the assembly and to try causes; but if after registration they do not attend either in the assembly or at the courts, heavy fines are imposed upon them. The intention is that through fear of the fines they may avoid registering themselves, and then they cannot sit in the law-courts or in the assembly. Concerning (4) the possession of arms, and (5) gymnastic exercises, they

10 I have still to speak of monarchy, and the causes of its destruction and preservation. What I have said already respecting forms of constitutional government applies almost equally to royal and to tyrannical rule. For royal rule is of the nature of an aristocracy, and a tyranny is a compound of oligarchy and democracy in their most extreme forms; it is therefore most injurious to its subjects, being made up of two evil forms of government, and having the perversions and errors of both. These two forms of monarchy are contrary in their very origin. The appointment of a king is the resource of the better classes against the people, and he is elected by them out of their own number, because either he himself or his family excel in virtue and virtuous actions; whereas a tyrant is chosen from the people to be their protector against the notables, and in order to prevent them from being injured. History shows that almost all tyrants have been demagogues who gained the favour of the people by their accusation of the notables.⁴⁹ At any rate this was the manner in which the tyrannies arose in the days when cities had increased in power. Others which were older originated in the ambition of kings wanting to overstep the limits of their hereditary power and become despots. Others again grew out of the class which were chosen to be chief magistrates; for in ancient times the people who elected them gave the magistrates, whether civil or religious, a long tenure. Others arose out of the custom which oligarchies had of making some individual supreme over the highest offices. In any of these ways an ambitious man had no difficulty, if he desired, in creating a tyranny, since he had the power in his hands already, either as king or as one of the officers of state.⁵⁰ Thus Pheidon at Argos and several others

⁴⁹ Cp. 1305^a 8; Plato, *Rep.* viii. 565 D.

⁵⁰ Cp. 1305^a 15.

were originally kings, and ended by becoming tyrants; Phalaris, on the other hand, and the Ionian tyrants, acquired the tyranny by holding great offices. Whereas Panaetius at Leontini, Cypselus at Corinth, Peisistratus at Athens, Dionysius at Syracuse, and several others who afterwards became tyrants, were at first demagogues.

And so, as I was saying,⁵¹ royalty ranks with aristocracy, for it is based upon merit, whether of the individual or of his family, or on benefits conferred,⁵² or on these claims with power added to them. For all who have obtained this honour have benefited, or had in their power to benefit, states and nations; some, like Codrus, have prevented the state from being enslaved in war; others, like Cyrus, have given their country freedom, or have settled or gained a territory, like the Lacedaemonian, Macedonian, and Molossian kings. The idea of a king is to be a protector of the rich against unjust treatment,^{1311^a}

of the people against insult and oppression. Whereas a tyrant, as has often been repeated,⁵³ has no regard to any public interest, except as conducive to his private ends; his aim is pleasure, the aim of a king, honour.

Wherefore also in their desires they differ; the tyrant is desirous of riches, the king, of what brings honour. And the guards of a king are citizens, but of a tyrant mercenaries.⁵⁴

That tyranny has all the vices both of democracy and oligarchy is evident. As of oligarchy so of tyranny, the end is wealth; (for by wealth only can the tyrant maintain either his guard or his luxury). Both mistrust the people, and therefore deprive them of their arms. Both agree too in injuring the people and driving them out of

⁵¹ l. 2 sq.

⁵³ iii. 1279^b 6 sq., iv. 1295^a 19.

⁵² Cp. iii. 1285^b 6.

⁵⁴ Cp. iii. 1285^a 24.

15 the city and dispersing them. From democracy tyrants have borrowed the art of making war upon the notables and destroying them secretly or openly, or of exiling them because they are rivals and stand in the way of their power; and also because plots against them are
 20 contrived by men of this class, who either want to rule or to escape subjection. Hence Periander advised Thrasybulus⁵⁵ by cutting off the tops of the tallest ears of corn, meaning that he must always put out of the way the citizens who overtop the rest. And so, as I have already intimated,⁵⁶ the beginnings of change are the same in monarchies as in forms of constitutional government;
 25 subjects attack their sovereigns out of fear or contempt, or because they have been unjustly treated by them. And of injustice, the most common form is insult, another is confiscation of property.

The ends sought by conspiracies against monarchies, whether tyrannies or royalties, are the same as the ends
 30 sought by conspiracies against other forms of government. Monarchs have great wealth and honour, which are objects of desire to all mankind. The attacks are made sometimes against their lives, sometimes against the office; where the sense of insult is the motive, against their lives. Any sort of insult (and there are many) may stir up anger, and when men are angry, they commonly
 35 act out of revenge, and not from ambition. For example, the attempt made upon the Peisistratidae arose out of the public dishonour offered to the sister of Harmodius and the insult to himself. He attacked the tyrant for his sister's sake, and Aristogeiton joined in the attack for the sake of Harmodius. A conspiracy was also formed
 40 against Periander, the tyrant of Ambracia, because, 1311^b when drinking with a favourite youth, he asked him

⁵⁵ Cp. 1284^a 26.

⁵⁶ 1310^a 40 sqq.

archs; as, for example, Cyrus attacked Astyages, despising the effeminacy of his life, and believing that his power was worn out. Thus again, Seuthes the Thracian conspired against Amadocus, whose general he was.

And sometimes men are actuated by more than one 15 motive, like Mithridates, who conspired against Ariobarzanes, partly out of contempt and partly from the love of gain.

Bold natures, placed by their sovereigns in a high military position, are most likely to make the attempt in the expectation of success; for courage is emboldened 20 by power, and the union of the two inspires them with the hope of an easy victory.

Attempts of which the motive is ambition arise in a different way as well as in those already mentioned. There are men who will not risk their lives in the hope of 25 gains and honours however great, but who nevertheless regard the killing of a tyrant simply as an extraordinary action which will make them famous and honourable in the world; they wish to acquire, not a kingdom, but a 30 name. It is rare, however, to find such men; he who would kill a tyrant must be prepared to lose his life if he fail. He must have the resolution of Dion, who, when he made war upon Dionysius, took with him very few 35 troops, saying 'that whatever measure of success he might attain would be enough for him, even if he were to die the moment he landed; such a death would be welcome to him'. But this is a temper to which few can attain.

Once more, tyrannies, like all other governments, are 40 destroyed from without by some opposite and more 1312^b powerful form of government. That such a government will have the will to attack them is clear; for the two are opposed in principle; and all men, if they can, do

what they will. Democracy is antagonistic to tyranny, on the principle of Hesiod, 'Potter hates Potter', because they are nearly akin, for the extreme form of democracy is tyranny; and royalty and aristocracy are both alike opposed to tyranny, because they are constitutions of a different type. And therefore the Lacedaemonians put down most of the tyrannies, and so did the Syracusans during the time when they were well governed.

Again, tyrannies are destroyed from within, when the 10 reigning family are divided among themselves, as that of Gelo was, and more recently that of Dionysius; in the case of Gelo because Thrasybulus, the brother of Hiero, flattered the son of Gelo and led him into excesses in order that he might rule in his name. Whereupon the family got together a party to get rid of Thrasybulus and 15 save the tyranny; but those of the people who conspired with them seized the opportunity and drove them all out. In the case of Dionysius, Dion, his own relative, attacked and expelled him with the assistance of the people; he afterwards perished himself.

There are two chief motives which induce men to 20 attack tyrannies—hatred and contempt. Hatred of tyrants is inevitable, and contempt is also a frequent cause of their destruction. Thus we see that most of those who have acquired, have retained their power, but those who have inherited,⁵⁹ have lost it, almost at once; for, living in luxurious ease, they have become contemptible, and 25 offer many opportunities to their assailants. Anger, too, must be included under hatred, and produces the same effects. It is oftentimes even more ready to strike—the angry are more impetuous in making an attack, for they do not follow rational principle. And men are very apt to give way to their passions when they are insulted. To

⁵⁹ Cp. Plato, *Laws*, iii. 695.

this cause is to be attributed the fall of the Peisistratidae 30 and of many others. Hatred is more reasonable, for anger is accompanied by pain, which is an impediment to reason, whereas hatred is painless.⁶⁰

In a word, all the causes which I have mentioned⁶¹ as destroying the last and most unmixed form of oligarchy, and the extreme form of democracy, may be assumed to affect tyranny; indeed the extreme forms of both are only tyrannies distributed among several persons. Kingly rule is little affected by external causes, and is therefore lasting; it is generally destroyed from 40 within. And there are two ways in which the destruction may come about; (1) when the members of the royal 1313^a family quarrel among themselves, and (2) when the kings attempt to administer the state too much after the fashion of a tyranny, and to extend their authority contrary to the law. Royalties do not now come into existence; where such forms of government arise, they are rather monarchies or tyrannies. For the rule of a king is 5 over voluntary subjects, and he is supreme in all important matters; but in our own day men are more upon an equality, and no one is so immeasurably superior to others as to represent adequately the greatness and dignity of the office. Hence mankind will not, if they can help, endure it, and any one who obtains power by force 10 or fraud is at once thought to be a tyrant. In hereditary monarchies a further cause of destruction is the fact that kings often fall into contempt, and, although possessing not tyrannical power, but only royal dignity, are apt to outrage others. Their overthrow is then readily effected; for there is an end to the king when his subjects do not 15 want to have him, but the tyrant lasts, whether they like him or not.

⁶⁰ Cp. *Rhetic*, ii. 1382^a 12. ⁶¹ 1302^b 25–33, 1304^b 20–1306^b 21.

The destruction of monarchies is to be attributed to these and the like causes.

11 And they are preserved, to speak generally, by the opposite causes; or, if we consider them separately, (1) 20 royalty is preserved by the limitation of its powers. The more restricted the functions of kings, the longer their power will last unimpaired; for then they are more moderate and not so despotic in their ways; and they are less envied by their subjects. This is the reason why the kingly office has lasted so long among the Molossians. 25 And for a similar reason it has continued among the Lacedaemonians, because there it was always divided between two, and afterwards further limited by Theopompos in various respects, more particularly by the establishment of the Ephoralty. He diminished the power of the kings, but established on a more lasting basis the kingly office, which was thus made in a certain sense not 30 less, but greater. There is a story that when his wife once asked him whether he was not ashamed to leave to his sons a royal power which was less than he had inherited from his father, 'No indeed,' he replied, 'for the power which I leave to them will be more lasting.'

As to (2) tyrannies, they are preserved in two most 35 opposite ways. One of them is the old traditional method in which most tyrants administer their government. Of such arts Periander of Corinth is said to have been the great master, and many similar devices may be gathered from the Persians in the administration of their government. There are firstly the prescriptions mentioned some distance back,⁶² for the preservation of a tyranny, in so far as this is possible; viz. that the tyrant should lop off those who are too high; he must put to death men of

⁶² 1311^a 15-22.

spirit; he must not allow common meals, clubs, education, and the like; he must be upon his guard against anything which is likely to inspire either courage or confidence among his subjects; he must prohibit literary assemblies or other meetings for discussion, and he must take every means to prevent people from knowing one another (for acquaintance begets mutual confidence). 5 Further, he must compel all persons staying in the city to appear in public and live at his gates; then he will know what they are doing: if they are always kept under, they will learn to be humble. In short, he should practise these and the like Persian and barbaric arts, which all have the same object. A tyrant should also endeavour to know 10 what each of his subjects says or does, and should employ spies, like the 'female detectives' at Syracuse, and the eavesdroppers whom Hiero was in the habit of sending to any place of resort or meeting; for the fear of informers 15 prevents people from speaking their minds, and if they do, they are more easily found out. Another art of the tyrant is to sow quarrels among the citizens; friends should be embroiled with friends, the people with the notables, and the rich with one another. Also he should impoverish his subjects; he thus provides against the maintenance of a guard by the citizens, and the people, 20 having to keep hard at work, are prevented from conspiring. The Pyramids of Egypt afford an example of this policy; also the offerings of the family of Cypselus, and the building of the temple of Olympian Zeus by the Peisistratidae, and the great Polycratean monuments at Samos; all these works were alike intended to occupy the people and keep them poor. Another practice of 25 tyrants is to multiply taxes, after the manner of Dionysius at Syracuse, who contrived that within five years his subjects should bring into the treasury their whole

property. The tyrant is also fond of making war in order that his subjects may have something to do and be always 30 in want of a leader. And whereas the power of a king is preserved by his friends, the characteristic of a tyrant is to distrust his friends, because he knows that all men want to overthrow him, and they above all have the power.

Again, the evil practices of the last and worst form of democracy⁶³ are all found in tyrannies. Such are the power given to women in their families in the hope that they will inform against their husbands, and the licence which is allowed to slaves in order that they may betray 35 their masters; for slaves and women do not conspire against tyrants; and they are of course friendly to tyrannies and also to democracies, since under them they have a good time. For the people too would fain be a monarch, and therefore by them, as well as by the tyrant, the flatterer is held in honour; in democracies he is the demagogue; and the tyrant also has those who associate with 40 him in a humble spirit, which is a work of flattery.

Hence tyrants are always fond of bad men, because they love to be flattered, but no man who has the spirit of a freeman in him will lower himself by flattery; good men love others, or at any rate do not flatter them. Moreover, the bad are useful for bad purposes; 'nail knocks 5 out nail', as the proverb says. It is characteristic of a tyrant to dislike every one who has dignity or independence; he wants to be alone in his glory, but any one who claims a like dignity or asserts his independence encroaches upon his prerogative, and is hated by him as 10 an enemy to his power. Another mark of a tyrant is that he likes foreigners better than citizens, and lives with

⁶³ Cp. vi. 1319^b 27.

them and invites them to his table; for the one are enemies, but the others enter into no rivalry with him.

Such are the notes of the tyrant and the arts by which he preserves his power; there is no wickedness too great for him. All that we have said may be summed up under three heads, which answer to the three aims of the tyrant. 15 These are, (1) the humiliation of his subjects; he knows that a mean-spirited man will not conspire against anybody: (2) the creation of mistrust among them; for a tyrant is not overthrown until men begin to have confidence in one another; and this is the reason why tyrants are at war with the good; they are under the idea that their power is endangered by them, not only because 20 they will not be ruled despotically, but also because they are loyal to one another, and to other men, and do not inform against one another or against other men: (3) the tyrant desires that his subjects shall be incapable of action, for no one attempts what is impossible, and they will not attempt to overthrow a tyranny, if they are powerless. Under these three heads the whole policy of 25 a tyrant may be summed up, and to one or other of them all his ideas may be referred: (1) he sows distrust among his subjects; (2) he takes away their power; (3) he humbles them.

This then is one of the two methods by which 30 tyrannies are preserved; and there is another which proceeds upon an almost opposite principle of action. The nature of this latter method may be gathered from a comparison of the causes which destroy kingdoms, for as one mode of destroying kingly power is to make the office of king more tyrannical, so the salvation of a tyranny is to make it more like the rule of a king. But of one thing 35 the tyrant must be careful; he must keep power enough to rule over his subjects, whether they like him or not,

try to bring together all the elements which accord with the ideas of the several constitutions; but this is a mistake of theirs, as I have already remarked¹⁰ when speaking of the destruction and preservation of states. We will now set forth the principles, characteristics, and aims of such states.

⁴⁰ 2 The basis of a democratic state is liberty; which,
 1317^b according to the common opinion of men, can only be enjoyed in such a state;—this they affirm to be the great end of every democracy.¹¹ One principle of liberty is for all to rule and be ruled in turn, and indeed democratic justice is the application of numerical not proportionate
 5 equality; whence it follows that the majority must be supreme, and that whatever the majority approve must be the end and the just. Every citizen, it is said, must have equality, and therefore in a democracy the poor have more power than the rich, because there are more of them, and the will of the majority is supreme. This,
 10 then, is one note of liberty which all democrats affirm to be the principle of their state. Another is that a man should live as he likes.¹² This, they say, is the privilege of a freeman, since, on the other hand, not to live as a man likes is the mark of a slave. This is the second characteristic of democracy, whence has arisen the claim of
 15 men to be ruled by none, if possible, or, if this is impossible, to rule and be ruled in turns; and so it contributes to the freedom based upon equality.

Such being our foundation and such the principle from which we start, the characteristics of democracy are as
 20 follows:—the election of officers by all out of all; and that all should rule over each, and each in his turn over

¹⁰ v. 1309^b 18—1310^a 36.

¹² Cp. v. 1310^a 31.

¹¹ Cp. Plato, *Rep.* viii. 557 sqq.

classes out of which a state is composed—the poor and the rich—that is to be deemed law, on which both or the greater part of both agree; and if they disagree, that which is approved by the greater number, and by those who have the higher qualification. For example, suppose that there are ten rich and twenty poor, and some measure is approved by six of the rich and is disapproved by fifteen of the poor, and the remaining four of the rich join with the party of the poor, and the remaining five of the poor with that of the rich; in such a case the will of those whose qualifications, when both sides are added up, are the greatest, should prevail. If they turn out to be equal, there is no greater difficulty than at present, when, if the assembly or the courts are divided, recourse is had to the lot, or to some similar expedient. But, although it may be difficult in theory to know what is just and equal, the practical difficulty of inducing those to forbear who can, if they like, encroach, is far greater, for the weaker are always asking for equality and justice, but the stronger care for none of these things.]

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4 Of the four kinds of democracy, as was said in the previous discussion,¹⁸ the best is that which comes first in order; it is also the oldest of them all. I am speaking of them according to the natural classification of their inhabitants. For the best material of democracy is an agricultural population;¹⁹ there is no difficulty in forming a democracy where the mass of the people live by agriculture or tending of cattle. Being poor, they have no leisure, and therefore do not often attend the assembly, and not having the necessities of life they are always at work, and do not covet the property of others. Indeed, they find their employment pleasanter than the cares of

¹⁸ iv. 1292^b 22–1293^a 10.

¹⁹ Cp. iv. 1292^b 25–33.

rule, instead of giving up anything to his neighbour, ought rather to take away his power; and the father should make no account of his son, nor the son of his father, nor friend of friend; they should not bestow a thought on one another in comparison with this higher object, for the best is the most eligible and 'doing well' is 40 the best. There might be some truth in such a view if we 1325^b assume that robbers and plunderers attain the chief good. But this can never be; their hypothesis is false. For the actions of a ruler cannot really be honourable, unless he is as much superior to other men as a husband is to a wife, or a father to his children, or a master to his slaves. And 5 therefore he who violates the law can never recover by any success, however great, what he has already lost in departing from virtue. For equals the honourable and the just consist in sharing alike, as is just and equal. But that the unequal should be given to equals, and the unlike to those who are like, is contrary to nature, and nothing which is contrary to nature is good. If therefore, there is 10 any one⁸ superior in virtue and in the power of performing the best actions, him we ought to follow and obey, but he must have the capacity for action as well as virtue.

If we are right in our view, and happiness is assumed to be virtuous activity, the active life will be the best, 15 both for every city collectively, and for individuals. Not that a life of action must necessarily have relation to others, as some persons think, nor are those ideas only to be regarded as practical which are pursued for the sake of practical results, but much more the thoughts and contemplations which are independent and complete in 20 themselves; since virtuous activity, and therefore a certain kind of action, is an end, and even in the case of external actions the directing mind is most truly said to act

⁸ Cp. iii. 1284^b 32 and 1288^a 28.