

Demop. Yes, if you had truth in your pocket to bless us with whenever we asked for it. But what you possess are only metaphysical systems in which nothing is certain but the headaches they cost. Before one takes anything away one must have something better to put in its place.

Phil. I wish you would not continually say that. To free a man from error does not mean to take something from him, but to give him something. For knowledge that something is wrong is a truth. No error, however, is harmless; every error will cause mischief sooner or later to the man who fosters it. Therefore do not deceive any one, but rather admit you are ignorant of what you do not know, and let each man form his own dogmas for himself. Perhaps they will not turn out so bad, especially as they will rub against each other and mutually rectify errors; at any rate the various opinions will establish tolerance. Those men who possess both knowledge and capacity may take up the study of philosophy, or even themselves advance the history of philosophy.

Demop. That would be a fine thing! A whole nation of naturalised metaphysicians quarrelling with each other, and _eventualiter_ striking each other.