STRANGER: On the same principle as before, although the name is now discovered to have a twofold meaning. For the distinction of ruling with law or without law, applies to this as well as to the rest.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: The division made no difference when we were looking for the perfect State, as we showed before. But now that this has been separated off, and, as we said, the others alone are left for us, the principle of law and the absence of law will bisect them all.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That would seem to follow, from what has been said.

STRANGER: Then monarchy, when bound by good prescriptions or laws, is the best of all the six, and when lawless is the most bitter and oppressive to the subject.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: The government of the few, which is intermediate between that of the one and many, is also intermediate in good and evil; but the government of the many is in every respect weak and unable to do either any great good or any great evil, when compared with the others, because the offices are too minutely subdivided and too many hold them. And this therefore is the worst of all lawful governments, and the best of all lawless ones. If they are all without the restraints of law, democracy is the form in which to live is best; if they are well ordered, then this is the last which you should choose, as royalty, the first form, is the best, with the exception of the seventh, for that excels them all, and is among States what God is among men.

YOUNG SOCRATES: You are quite right, and we should choose that above all.

STRANGER: The members of all these States, with the exception of the one which has knowledge, may be set aside as being not Statesmen but partisans, —upholders of the most monstrous idols, and themselves idols; and, being the greatest imitators and magicians, they are also the greatest of Sophists.

YOUNG SOCRATES: The name of Sophist after many windings in the argument appears to have been most justly fixed upon the politicians, as they are termed.

STRANGER: And so our satyric drama has been played out; and the troop of Centaurs and Satyrs, however unwilling to leave the stage, have at last been separated from the political science.

YOUNG SOCRATES: So I perceive.

STRANGER: There remain, however, natures still more troublesome, because they are more nearly akin to the king, and more difficult to discern; the examination of them may be compared to the process of refining gold.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What is your meaning?

STRANGER: The workmen begin by sifting away the earth and stones and the like; there remain in a confused mass the valuable elements akin to gold, which can only be separated by fire,—copper, silver, and other precious metal; these are at last refined away by the use of tests, until the gold is left quite pure.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes, that is the way in which these things are said to be done.

STRANGER: In like manner, all alien and uncongenial matter has been separated from political science, and what is precious and of a kindred nature has been left; there remain the nobler arts of the general and the judge, and the higher sort of oratory which is an ally of the royal art, and persuades men to do justice, and assists in guiding the helm of States:—How can we best clear away all these, leaving him whom we seek alone and unalloyed?

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is obviously what has in some way to be attempted.

STRANGER: If the attempt is all that is wanting, he shall certainly be brought to light; and I think that the illustration of music may assist in exhibiting him. Please to answer me a question.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What question?

STRANGER: There is such a thing as learning music or handicraft arts in general?

YOUNG SOCRATES: There is.

STRANGER: And is there any higher art or science, having power to decide which of these arts are and are not to be learned;—what do you say?

YOUNG SOCRATES: I should answer that there is.

STRANGER: And do we acknowledge this science to be different from the others?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: And ought the other sciences to be superior to this, or no single science to any other? Or ought this science to be the overseer and governor of all the others?

YOUNG SOCRATES: The latter.

STRANGER: You mean to say that the science which judges whether we ought to learn or not, must be superior to the science which is learned or which teaches?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Far superior.

STRANGER: And the science which determines whether we ought to persuade or not, must be superior to the science which is able to persuade?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Of course.

STRANGER: Very good; and to what science do we assign the power of persuading a multitude by a pleasing tale and not by teaching?

YOUNG SOCRATES: That power, I think, must clearly be assigned to rhetoric.

STRANGER: And to what science do we give the power of determining whether we are to employ persuasion or force towards any one, or to refrain altogether?

YOUNG SOCRATES: To that science which governs the arts of speech and persuasion.

STRANGER: Which, if I am not mistaken, will be politics?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Very good.

STRANGER: Rhetoric seems to be quickly distinguished from politics, being a different species, yet ministering to it.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: But what would you think of another sort of power or science?

YOUNG SOCRATES: What science?

STRANGER: The science which has to do with military operations against our enemies—is that to be regarded as a science or not?

YOUNG SOCRATES: How can generalship and military tactics be regarded as other than a science?

STRANGER: And is the art which is able and knows how to advise when we are to go to war, or to make peace, the same as this or different?

YOUNG SOCRATES: If we are to be consistent, we must say different.

STRANGER: And we must also suppose that this rules the other, if we are not to give up our former notion?

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: And, considering how great and terrible the whole art of war is, can we imagine any which is superior to it but the truly royal?

YOUNG SOCRATES: No other.

STRANGER: The art of the general is only ministerial, and therefore not political?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Exactly.

STRANGER: Once more let us consider the nature of the righteous judge.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Very good.

STRANGER: Does he do anything but decide the dealings of men with one another to be just or unjust in accordance with the standard which he receives from the king and legislator,—showing his own peculiar virtue only in this, that he is not perverted by gifts, or fears, or pity, or by any sort of favour or enmity, into deciding the suits of men with one another contrary to the appointment of the legislator?

YOUNG SOCRATES: No; his office is such as you describe.

STRANGER: Then the inference is that the power of the judge is not royal, but only the power of a guardian of the law which ministers to the royal power?

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: The review of all these sciences shows that none of them is political or royal. For the truly royal ought not itself to act, but to rule over those who are able to act; the king ought to know what is and what is not a fitting opportunity for taking the initiative in matters of the greatest importance, whilst others should execute his orders.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: And, therefore, the arts which we have described, as they have no authority over themselves or one another, but are each of them concerned with some special action of their own, have, as they ought to have, special names corresponding to their several actions.

YOUNG SOCRATES: I agree.

STRANGER: And the science which is over them all, and has charge of the laws, and of all matters affecting the State, and truly weaves them all into one, if we would describe under a name characteristic of their common nature, most truly we may call politics.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Exactly so.

STRANGER: Then, now that we have discovered the various classes in a State, shall I analyse politics after the pattern which weaving supplied?

YOUNG SOCRATES: I greatly wish that you would.

STRANGER: Then I must describe the nature of the royal web, and show how the various threads are woven into one piece.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Clearly.

STRANGER: A task has to be accomplished, which, although difficult, appears to be necessary.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Certainly the attempt must be made.

STRANGER: To assume that one part of virtue differs in kind from another, is a position easily assailable by contentious disputants, who appeal to popular opinion.

YOUNG SOCRATES: I do not understand.

STRANGER: Let me put the matter in another way: I suppose that you would consider courage to be a part of virtue?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Certainly I should.

STRANGER: And you would think temperance to be different from courage; and likewise to be a part of virtue?

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: I shall venture to put forward a strange theory about them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What is it?

STRANGER: That they are two principles which thoroughly hate one another and are antagonistic throughout a great part of nature.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How singular!

STRANGER: Yes, very—for all the parts of virtue are commonly said to be friendly to one another.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes.

STRANGER: Then let us carefully investigate whether this is universally true, or whether there are not parts of virtue which are at war with their kindred in some respect.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Tell me how we shall consider that question.

STRANGER: We must extend our enquiry to all those things which we consider beautiful and at the same time place in two opposite classes.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Explain; what are they?

STRANGER: Acuteness and quickness, whether in body or soul or in the movement of sound, and the imitations of them which painting and music supply, you must have praised yourself before now, or been present when others praised them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Certainly.

STRANGER: And do you remember the terms in which they are praised?

YOUNG SOCRATES: I do not.

STRANGER: I wonder whether I can explain to you in words the thought which is passing in my mind.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Why not?

STRANGER: You fancy that this is all so easy: Well, let us consider these notions with reference to the opposite classes of action under which they fall. When we praise quickness and energy and acuteness, whether of mind or body or sound, we express our praise of the quality which we admire by one word, and that one word is manliness or courage.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How?

STRANGER: We speak of an action as energetic and brave, quick and manly, and vigorous too; and when we apply the name of which I speak as the common attribute of all these natures, we certainly praise them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: And do we not often praise the quiet strain of action also?

YOUNG SOCRATES: To be sure.

STRANGER: And do we not then say the opposite of what we said of the other?

YOUNG SOCRATES: How do you mean?

STRANGER: We exclaim How calm! How temperate! in admiration of the slow and quiet working of the intellect, and of steadiness and gentleness in action, of smoothness and depth of voice, and of all rhythmical movement and of music in general, when these have a proper solemnity. Of all such actions we predicate not courage, but a name indicative of order.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Very true.

STRANGER: But when, on the other hand, either of these is out of place, the names of either are changed into terms of censure.

YOUNG SOCRATES: How so?

STRANGER: Too great sharpness or quickness or hardness is termed violence or madness; too great slowness or gentleness is called cowardice or sluggishness; and we may observe, that for the most part these qualities, and the temperance and manliness of the opposite characters, are arrayed as enemies on opposite sides, and do not mingle with one another in their respective actions; and if we pursue the enquiry, we shall find that men who have these different qualities of mind differ from one another.

YOUNG SOCRATES: In what respect?

STRANGER: In respect of all the qualities which I mentioned, and very likely of many others. According to their respective affinities to either class of actions they distribute praise and blame,—praise to the actions which are akin to their own, blame to those of the opposite party—and out of this many quarrels and occasions of quarrel arise among them.

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: The difference between the two classes is often a trivial concern; but in a state, and when affecting really important matters, becomes of all disorders the most hateful.

YOUNG SOCRATES: To what do you refer?

STRANGER: To nothing short of the whole regulation of human life. For the orderly class are always ready to lead a peaceful life, quietly doing their own business; this is their manner of behaving with all men at home, and they are equally ready to find some way of keeping the peace with foreign States. And on account of this fondness of theirs for peace, which is often out of season where their influence prevails, they become by degrees unwarlike, and bring up their young men to be like themselves; they are at the mercy of their enemies; whence in a few years they and their children and the whole city often pass imperceptibly from the condition of freemen into that of slaves.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What a cruel fate!

STRANGER: And now think of what happens with the more courageous natures. Are they not always inciting their country to go to war, owing to their excessive love of the military life? they raise up enemies against themselves many and mighty, and either utterly ruin their native-land or enslave and subject it to its foes?

YOUNG SOCRATES: That, again, is true.

STRANGER: Must we not admit, then, that where these two classes exist, they always feel the greatest antipathy and antagonism towards one another?

YOUNG SOCRATES: We cannot deny it.

STRANGER: And returning to the enquiry with which we began, have we not found that considerable portions of virtue are at variance with one another, and give rise to a similar opposition in the characters who are endowed with them?

YOUNG SOCRATES: True.

STRANGER: Let us consider a further point.

YOUNG SOCRATES: What is it?

STRANGER: I want to know, whether any constructive art will make any, even the most trivial thing, out of bad and good materials indifferently, if this can be helped? does not all art rather reject the bad as far as possible, and accept the good and fit materials, and from these elements, whether like or unlike, gathering them all into one, work out some nature or idea?

YOUNG SOCRATES: To, be sure.

STRANGER: Then the true and natural art of statesmanship will never allow any State to be formed by a combination of good and bad men, if this can be avoided; but will begin by testing human natures in play, and after testing them, will entrust them to proper teachers who are the ministers of her purposes—she will herself give orders, and maintain authority; just as the art of weaving continually gives orders and maintains authority over the carders and all the others who prepare the material for the work, commanding the subsidiary arts to execute the works which she deems necessary for making the web.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Quite true.

STRANGER: In like manner, the royal science appears to me to be the mistress of all lawful educators and instructors, and having this queenly power, will not permit them to train men in what will produce characters unsuited to the political constitution which she desires to create, but only in what will produce such as are suitable. Those which have no share of manliness and temperance, or any other virtuous inclination, and, from the necessity of an evil nature, are violently carried away to godlessness and insolence

and injustice, she gets rid of by death and exile, and punishes them with the greatest of disgraces.

YOUNG SOCRATES: That is commonly said.

STRANGER: But those who are wallowing in ignorance and baseness she bows under the yoke of slavery.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Quite right.

STRANGER: The rest of the citizens, out of whom, if they have education, something noble may be made, and who are capable of being united by the statesman, the kingly art blends and weaves together; taking on the one hand those whose natures tend rather to courage, which is the stronger element and may be regarded as the warp, and on the other hand those which incline to order and gentleness, and which are represented in the figure as spun thick and soft, after the manner of the woof—these, which are naturally opposed, she seeks to bind and weave together in the following manner:

YOUNG SOCRATES: In what manner?

STRANGER: First of all, she takes the eternal element of the soul and binds it with a divine cord, to which it is akin, and then the animal nature, and binds that with human cords.

YOUNG SOCRATES: I do not understand what you mean.

STRANGER: The meaning is, that the opinion about the honourable and the just and good and their opposites, which is true and confirmed by reason, is a divine principle, and when implanted in the soul, is implanted, as I maintain, in a nature of heavenly birth.

YOUNG SOCRATES: Yes; what else should it be?

STRANGER: Only the Statesman and the good legislator, having the inspiration of the royal muse, can implant this opinion, and he, only in the rightly educated, whom we were just now describing.