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PYTHAGOREAN FRAGMENTS.

FROM TIMÆUS LOCURUS.

Thus says Timæus the Locrian.—The causes of all things are two; Intellect, of those which are produced according to Reason; and Necessity, of those which necessarily exist according to the powers of bodies. Of these the first is of the nature of good, and is called God, the principle of such things as are most excellent. Those which are consequent, and concauses rather than causes, may be referred to Necessity, and they consist of Idea or Form, and Matter, to which may be added the Sensible (world), which is as it were the offspring of these two. The first of these is an essence ungenerated, immoveable, and stable, of the nature of Same, and the intelligible exemplar of things generated which are in a state of perpetual change: and this is called Idea or Form, and is to be comprehended only by Mind. But Matter is the receptacle of Form, the mother and female principle of the generation of the third essence, for, by receiving the likenesses upon itself, and being stamped with Form, it perfects all things, partaking of the nature of generation. And this Matter, he says, is eternal, moveable, and of its own proper nature, without form or figure, yet susceptible of receiving every form: it is divisible also about bodies, and is of the nature of Different. They also call Matter, Place and Situation. These two, therefore, are contrary principles; Idea or Form is of the nature of Male and Father; but Matter of the nature of Female and Mother; and things which are of the third nature are the offspring of the two. Since then there are three natures, they are comprehended in three different ways; Idea, which is the object of science, by Intellect; Matter, which is not properly an object of comprehension, but only of analogy, by a spurious kind of reasoning; but things compounded of the two are the objects of sensation, and opinion or appearance. Therefore, before the heaven was made, there existed in reality Idea, and Matter, and God the demiurgus of the better nature; and since the nature of Elder (Continuance) is more worthy than that of Younger (Novelty,) and Order than of Disorder; God in his goodness seeing that Matter was continually receiving Form and changing in an omnifarious and disordered manner, undertook to reduce it to order and put a stop to its indefinite changes, by circumscribing it with determinate figure: that there might be corresponding distinctions of bodies, and that it might not be subject to continual variations of its own accord. Therefore he fabricated this world out of all the matter, and constituted it the boundary of essential nature, comprising all things within itself, one, only-begotten, perfect, with a Soul and Intellect (for an animal so constituted is superior to one devoid of Soul and Intellect): he gave it also a spherical body, for such of all other forms is the most perfect. Since, therefore, it was God's pleasure to render this his production most perfect, he constituted it a God, generated indeed, but indestructible by any other cause than by the God who made it, in case it should be his pleasure to dissolve it.

FROM PLATO.

You say that, in my former discourse, I have not sufficiently explained to you the nature of the First. I purposely spoke enigmatically, that in case the tablet should

have happened with any accident, either by land or sea, a person, without some previous knowledge of the subject, might not be able to understand its contents. This, then is the explanation, About the king of all things, all things are, and all things are on account of Him, and He is the cause of all good things. But the second is about things of the second kind, and the third about things of the third kind. Therefore the human soul, from its earnest desire to know what these things may be, examines those within itself which are akin to them, none of which it possesses in sufficient perfection. Such (imperfection) however is not the case with regard to the King and those natures of which I spoke,—Plat. Ep. II. p. 312.

FROM PLATO.

Conjuring the God of all things, the ruler of those which are, and are about to be, and the sovereign father of the ruler and cause.—Plat. Ep. VI. p. 323.

FROM AMELIUS.

Amelius makes the Demiurgus triple, and the three Intellects the three Kings—Him that exists, Him that possesses, Him that beholds. And these are different; therefore the First Intellect exists essentially as that which exists. But the Second exists as the Intelligible in him, but possesses that which is before him, and partakes altogether of that, wherefore it is the Second. But the Third exists as the Intelligible in the Second as did the Second in the First, for every Intellect is the same with its conjoined Intelligible, and it possesses that which is in the Second, and beholds or regards that which is the First: for by how much greater the remove, by so much the less intimate is that which possesses. These three Intellects, therefore, he supposes to be the Demiurgi, the same with the three kings of Plato, and with the three whom Orpheus celebrates under the names of Phanes, Ouranus, and Cronus, though, according to him, the Demiurgus is more particularly Phanes.—Proc. in Tim. II. 93.

FROM ONOMACRITUS.

Onomacritus, in the Orphics, says, that Fire, and Water, and Earth, were the first principles of all things.—Sextus. Hyp. III. 4. 136.—Phys. IX. 5. 6. 620.

FROM ION.

This, says Ion, is the beginning of my discourse. All things are three, and nothing more or less; and the virtue of each one of these three is a triad consisting of Intellect, Power, and Chance.

FROM PHILOPONUS.

Parmenides holds Fire and Earth primary principles: but Ion of Chios, the tragedian, placed them after Air.—Philoponus.

FROM PLUTARCHUS.

The moist nature, being the first principle and origin of all things from the beginning made the three first bodies, Earth, Air, and Fire.—Plut. de. Is.

FROM OCELLUS.

There are three boundaries, Generation, Summit, Termination.—I. 4.

FROM OCELLUS.

The first triad consists of Beginning, Middle, and End.—Lyd. de Mens. p. 20.

FROM PLATO.

Some say that all things consist of those which are in the course of generation, those generated, and those about to be generated; the first by nature, the second by art, and the third by chance.—Plat. de Leg. X.

FROM ARISTOTELES.

All things are three: for as the Pythagoreans say, the Universe and all things are bounded by three: for the End, the Middle, and the Beginning, include the enumeration of every thing, and they fulfil the number of the triad.—Aristot. de Cœlo. I.

FROM ARISTOTELES.

The good and contemplative become so through three things; and these three are Nature, Habit, and Reason.—Aristot. Polit. VII.

FROM DAMASCIUS.

All things, therefore, are three, but not one; Hyparxis, Power, and Energy.—Damas. Quæst. c. 39.

COSMOGONY OF THE TYRRHENIANS.

A certain person among them, well versed in these matters, wrote a history, in which he says: That God, the demiurgus of all things, for the sake of giving dignity to his productions, was pleased to employ twelve thousand years in their creation; and extended these years over twelve divisions, called houses. In the first thousand years he created the heaven the earth; in the second he made all this apparent firmament above us, and called it heaven; in the third, the sea and all the waters in the earth; in the fourth, the great lights, the sun and the moon, together with the stars; in the fifth, every soul of birds, and reptiles, and quadrupeds, in the air, and in the earth, and in the waters: in the sixth, man. It appears, therefore, that the first six thousand years were consumed before the formation of man; and during the other six thousand years the human race will continue, so that the full time shall be completed even to twelve thousand years.—Suid. v. Tyrrhenia.

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