the first place, no one is to have any private property beyond what is absolutely essential. Secondly, no one is to have the kind of house or store-room which cannot be entered by anyone who feels like it. For their subsistence, which should meet the needs of self-disciplined and courageous warrior-athletes, they should impose a levy on the rest of the citizens, and receive an annual payment for their role as guardians which leaves them with neither a surplus nor a deficiency. They should live a communal life, eating together like soldiers in camp. As for gold and silver, they should be told they already have in their souls, all the time, the divine gold and silver given to them by the gods. They have no need of human gold in addition, and it is sacrilege to contaminate the divine gold they possess by adding to it a mixture of the perishable gold, since the gold in circulation among ordinary people has been the cause of much evil, whereas their own gold is pure. To them alone, out of the city’s population, is it forbidden to handle or touch gold or silver, or be beneath the same roof, or wear it as jewellery, or drink from gold or silver cups. In this way they will be kept safe, and they will keep the city safe. Once they start acquiring their own land, houses, and money, they will have become householders and farmers instead of guardians. From being the allies of the other citizens they will turn into hostile masters. They will spend their whole lives hating and being hated, plotting and being plotted against. Their fears of enemies inside the city will be much more numerous and more acute than their fears of enemies outside the city. Both they themselves and the city will be heading at full speed towards imminent destruction. For all these reasons, shall we say that our guardians are to be provided with the housing and way of life we have described? Are these the laws we should enact, or not?"

‘They certainly are,’ said Glaucon.

417 At this point Adeimantus interrupted us. ‘How will you defend yourself, Socrates, against the charge that you are not making these men very happy, and that they have only themselves to blame? The city in fact belongs to them, yet they derive no benefit from it. Other people have acquired land, built themselves beautiful great houses, and are now collecting the furniture to go with them; they make their own sacrifices to the gods; they entertain foreign visitors; and they are also the owners of the things you’ve just been talking about – gold, silver and everything which is regarded as necessary for people who are going to be happy. Our men just seem to sit there in the city, like hired bodyguards. All they do is guard it.’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘and working just for their keep at that. Unlike the others, they receive no pay over and above their food, so if they feel like going abroad as private individuals, they won’t be able to. They can’t give presents to mistresses, or spend money on anything else they choose, on the things people who are generally regarded as happy spend money on. You left that, and a whole lot more along the same lines, out of your accusation.’

‘Very well,’ he said, ‘you can take those as being part of the accusation as well.’

420 ‘What is our defence, then? Is that your question?’

‘Yes.’

‘We shall find our answer, I think, if we carry on down the same road. We shall say that we wouldn’t be at all surprised if even our guardians were best off like this, but that in any case our aim in founding the city is not to make one group outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city
as happy as possible. We thought we would be most likely to find justice in a city of this kind, and most likely to find injustice in the city with the worst institutions, and that looking at these would give us the answer to our original question. What we are doing at the moment, we believe, is not separating off a few of the inhabitants, and making them happy, but constructing a complete city, and making that happy. We'll have a look at its opposite later. Imagine we were putting the colours on a statue of a man, and someone came along and told us we were doing it wrong, since we weren't using the most beautiful colours for the most beautiful parts of the living creature. The eyes, the most beautiful feature, had been coloured black, not purple. We would regard it as a quite reasonable defence to say to him: "Hang on a minute. You surely don't think, do you, that we should make the eyes – or any of the other parts of the body – so beautiful that they don't even look like eyes. The thing to ask yourself is whether by giving the right colours to everything we are making the whole thing beautiful." It's the same with us. You mustn't start forcing us to give the guardians the kind of happiness which will turn them into anything other than guardians. We could perfectly easily dress our farmers in purple robes, and give them gold jewellery to wear, and tell them to work the land when they feel like it. We could let our potters recline on banquetting couches, passing the wine to the right and feasting in front of their fire, with their potters' wheels beside them for when they really felt like doing some pottery. We could make everyone else happy in the same kind of way, so that the whole city would be happy. You mustn't ask us to do that. If we do as you suggest, the farmer will not be a farmer, the potter will not be a potter, nor will anyone else continue to fulfil any of the roles which together give rise to a city.

'For most of the population it is not that important. If our cobblers are no good, if they stop being proper cobblers and only pretend to be when they are not, the city won't come to much harm. But if the guardians of our laws and our city give the impression of being guardians, without really being guardians, you can see that they totally destroy the entire city, since they alone provide the opportunity for its correct management and prosperity. If we are making real guardians, people who are incapable of harming the city, whereas the person who criticises us is making them into farmers of some kind, who are not so much running a city as presiding over a jolly banquet at a public festival, then he is not talking about a city at all. The question we have to ask ourselves is this. What is our aim in appointing the guardians? Is it to provide the greatest possible happiness for them? Or does our aim concern the whole city? Aren't we seeing if we can provide the greatest degree of happiness for that? Isn't that what we should be compelling these auxiliaries and guardians to do? Shouldn't we be persuading them – and everyone else likewise – to be the best possible practitioners of their own particular task? And when as a result the city prospers and is well established, can't we then leave it to each group's own nature to give it a share of happiness?'

'I'm sure you're right,' he said.

'In that case,' I said, 'I want to ask another question, closely related to the last one. Are you going to think that reasonable as well?'

'What question, exactly?'

'D 'I wonder if there aren't some things which can corrupt other skilled workers as well, so that they too turn bad.'

'What sort of things?'

'Wealth and poverty,' I said.

'And how do they corrupt them?'

'Like this. Do you think a potter who becomes rich will still be prepared to practise his craft?'

'No.'

'Does he grow more lazy and careless than he was before?'

'Yes. Much more.'

'He becomes a worse potter, in fact?'

'Again, much worse.'

'On the other hand, if poverty stops him equipping himself with tools or anything else he needs for his business, will what he produces suffer? And will his sons, or anyone else he teaches, turn out worse craftsmen as a result of his teaching?'

'Of course.'

'So both these things, poverty and wealth, have a damaging effect both on what craftsmen produce and on the craftsmen themselves.'

'It looks like it.'

'We've found another class of things, apparently, for our guardians to watch out for. They must do everything they can to prevent them creeping into the city without their noticing.'

'What sort of things do you mean?'

'Wealth and poverty,' I said. 'One produces luxury, idleness and

1 Our image of Greek statues is one of unpainted stone. This, however, is the fault of time, which has left the stone but removed the paint.
'What should we call them?' he asked.
The others need some grander name,' I said. 'Each of them is "cities upon cities, but no city," as the quip goes. At the very least two, opposed to one another. A city of the poor, and a city of the rich. Each of these contains many more, and if you treat them as a single city, you will achieve nothing, whereas if you treat them as several cities, offering one group the money and power—or even the people themselves—of another group, you will always have plenty of allies and few enemies. As long as your city lives the disciplined life we have just laid down for it, it will be a great city. Not in reputation, I don't mean, but great in fact, even if it is a city with only a thousand men to fight for it. You will have a job to find a single city which is great in this way, either among Greeks or non-Greeks, though you will find plenty, many times the size of this one, which give the illusion of greatness. Don't you agree?'

'Emphatically,' he said.

'In that case,' I said, 'this could also be an excellent marker, or limit, for our rulers to show them how big they should make the city, and the amount of land they should mark out for a city this size, before saying "no" to any more.'

'What is the limit?' he asked.

'This, I would guess. As long as any increase in size is unlikely to stop the city remaining united, they should let it go on increasing. But not beyond that point.'

'Yes, that's a good approach,' he said.

'In which case we shall give our guardians one further instruction. They are to guard in every way against the city being small, but also against its giving the appearance of greatness. It should be no more than adequate in size, and united.'

'A trivial task for them, no doubt.'

'Yes,' I said. 'Almost as trivial as the requirement we mentioned earlier,'

for an inferior child of the guardians to be sent to join the other classes, and for an outstanding child from those classes to join the guardians. This was intended to show that among the rest of the citizen body they should assign each individual to the one task he is naturally fitted for, so that by applying himself to his own one task each may become a single person

\[1\] Sports were the man of leisure's regular concern, whereas it was a controversial question whether the handling of weapons required special training.
rather than many people, and in this way the entire city may grow to be a single city rather than many cities."

'Oh, fine,' he said. 'Even simpler than our first directive.'

'You may be thinking, my dear Adeimantus, that we give them a great long list of weighty instructions. But we don't do that. The instructions are all trivial, provided they keep a careful eye on the "first and great commandment." Though "great" isn't really the right word. More of a minimum requirement.'

'And what is that requirement?' he asked.

'Education and upbringing,' I said. 'If the guardians are well educated, and grow up into men of sound judgment, they will have no difficulty in seeing all this for themselves, plus other things we are saying nothing about — such as taking wives, marriage, and having children. They will see the necessity of making everything as nearly as possible "shared among friends," in the words of the proverb.'

'Yes, that would be best,' he said.

'Once it gets off to a good start,' I said, 'our regime will be a kind of virtuous circle. If you can keep a good system of upbringing and education, they produce naturally good specimens. These in their turn, if they receive a good education, develop into even better specimens than their predecessors. Better in general, and better in particular for reproduction.

The same is true in the animal kingdom.'

'I'm sure you're right,' he said.

'To put it briefly, then, the overseers of our city must keep a firm grip on our system of education, protecting it above all else, and not allowing it to be destroyed accidentally. They must reject any radical innovation in physical or musical education, preserving them as far as they can unchanged. They should regard with apprehension anyone who tells them that

The latest song, fresh from the singer's lips,
Has most appeal to men.'

People who approve of this might easily think the poet meant a new style of song, rather than just new songs. But that is not the sort of thing they

\footnote{Said with reference to the proverb 'the fox knows many things, the hedgehog one great thing.'}

\footnote{The proverb was 'friends will hold things in common', and is said to have originated in the unusually close-knit Pythagorean communities of southern Italy.}

\footnote{An adaptation of Homer, \textit{Odyssey} 1.351–352.}
they should; giving up their seats to them; standing up when they come in; respect for their parents; their hair-styles, clothes, shoes and general appearance. All those sorts of things. Don’t you agree?"

“Yes, I do.”

“I think it’s absurd to make laws about these things. They aren’t the result of spoken or written rules. And even if they were, they wouldn’t last.”

“Of course not.”

c “It certainly looks, Adeimantus, as if everything follows from the direction a person’s education takes. Like always produces like, doesn’t it?”

“Naturally.”

“And I imagine we’d say the final result, for better or worse, is something unique, complete and vigorous.”

“What else?”

“Well, for my part,” I said, “in this situation I wouldn’t go so far as to try and pass laws about this kind of thing.”

“I’m sure you’re right,” he said.

“But then what on earth are we to do about business dealings?” I asked.

d “The contracts various parties make with one another in the market-place, for example: Or contracts with builders, cases of slander or assault, the bringing of lawsuits and the selection of juries, the payment or collection of any tariffs due in markets or ports, and the general regulation of markets, city or harbours? Can we really bring ourselves to legislate for any of these?”

“No,” he said. “If we’ve got the right sort of citizens, it’s a waste of time telling them what to do. I imagine they can easily develop most of the necessary legislation for themselves.”

c “Yes, my friend,” I said. “Provided, that is, god grants them the safe preservation of the laws we have described so far.”

“The alternative,” he said, “is for them to spend their whole lives enacting and amending detailed legislation of this kind, in the belief that they will hit on the ideal solution.”

“You mean their lives will be like those of people who are ill, and who lack the self-discipline required to give up their unhealthy way of life.”

“Precisely.”

e “What a delightful life those people lead! Their medical treatment achieves nothing, except to increase the complications and severity of their ailments, yet they live in constant hope that each new medicine recommended will be the one which will make them healthy.”
dishonesty in business dealings and all the areas I have just been talking about. They don't realise they are cutting off the Hydra's head.'

'Though that's exactly what they are doing,' he said.

'Well, if it were up to me,' I said, 'I wouldn't have thought the true lawgiver should concern himself with these details of the laws and the constitution — either in a badly-governed or a well-governed city. In one it is pointless, and achieves nothing; in the other, some of the legislation can be devised by absolutely anyone, while the rest follows automatically from our previous arrangements.'

In that case,' he asked, 'what area of lawmaking have we still got left?'

And I said, 'We haven't got any. But Apollo at Delphi has — the most important, the finest and the most fundamental pieces of legislation.'

'What are those?'

'The foundation of temples. Sacrifices. Other acts of service performed for gods, demigods and heroes. The burial places of the dead, and the observance which must be paid to those below to keep them favourable. We do not know about this kind of thing, and when we found our city, if we have any sense, the only advice we shall follow, the only authority we shall recognise, is the traditional authority. And I take it that in these matters Apollo, making his pronouncements seated on the stone which forms the earth's navel, is the ancestral authority for the whole of mankind.'

'You are right,' he said. 'That must be our approach.'

In that case, son of Ariston your city can now be regarded as founded. The next step is to look inside it, and for that you are going to need a pretty powerful light. You can provide your own, or get your brother and Polemarchus and the others to help you. Then perhaps we shall find some way of seeing just where in the city justice is, where injustice is, what the difference is between the two, and which of them people who are going to be happy must possess, whether all the gods and all mankind realise they possess it or not.'

'Oh, no, you don't,' said Glaucion. 'You told us you were going to look for justice. You said it was impious not to do everything you possibly could to support justice.'

10 The oracle of Apollo at Delphi was authoritative on religious questions for the entire Greek world — questions which were not as a rule so sharply differentiated from other kinds of political questions as they are in this passage. It was also consulted before the founding of any colony. The sanctuary contained a stone, the 'navel-stone', which was thought to mark the centre of the earth.
‘How about its knowledge of making things out of bronze, or any other knowledge of that kind?’

‘No, nothing like that,’ he said.

‘Nor the knowledge of how to grow crops from the soil, since that’s called farming.’

‘So I believe.’

‘Is there, then,’ I asked, ‘among any of the citizens of this city we have just founded, any branch of knowledge which makes decisions about the city as a whole — deciding on the best approach to itself and to other cities — and not about one particular element in the city?’

‘There most certainly is.’

‘What is this knowledge, and in which group is it to be found?’

‘It is the knowledge possessed by the guardians,’ he said. ‘And it is to be found in the rulers, whom we have just been calling the perfect guardians.’

‘And what is the label you give your city on the strength of this knowledge?’

‘I call it sound in judgment, and truly wise.’

‘So which do you think our city will have more of? Metalworkers, or these true guardians?’

‘Metalworkers,’ he said. ‘Far more.’

‘Of all the groups which have a branch of knowledge of their own, and which are identified as a group, wouldn’t the guardians be the smallest?’

‘Easily the smallest.’

‘In which case, the wisdom of a city founded on natural principles depends entirely on its smallest group and element — the leading and ruling element — and the knowledge that element possesses. The class which can be expected to share in this branch of knowledge, which of all branches of knowledge is the only one we can call wisdom, is by its nature, apparently, the smallest class.’

‘That’s very true,’ he said.

‘Well, that’s one of the four things we were looking for. And we’ve not only found it, I’m not quite sure how, but also found whereabouts in the city it is located.’

‘Nothing much wrong with the way it was found as far as I’m concerned,’ he said.

‘Courage, next. It is not hard to see both the thing itself and the part of

\footnote{They were distinguished as ‘full guardians’ at 414b.}

the city in which it is located, the part which gives the city the name “courageous.”’

‘Explain.’

‘No one classifying a city as cowardly or brave would look at any other part of it than the part which makes war in the city’s defence, and serves in its army.’

‘Yes, that’s the only part anyone would look at,’ he said.

‘I think the reason for that,’ I said, ‘is that the cowardice or bravery of the rest of the population would not be enough to make the city itself cowardly or brave.’

‘No, it wouldn’t.’

‘Does that mean a city’s courage, as well as its wisdom, lies in a part of itself, because it has in that part a power capable of preserving, in all situations, the opinion that what is to be feared is just what the lawgiver listed and classified as such in the course of their education? Or isn’t that what you call courage?’

‘I didn’t altogether follow that. Say it again.’

‘I mean that courage is a kind of preservation,’ I said.

‘Preservation? Of what?’

‘Of the opinion formed by education, under the influence of law, about which things are to be feared. When I talked about its preservation in all situations, I meant keeping it intact, through pains, pleasures, desires and fears, without rejecting it. I can give you an analogy, if you would like.’

‘I would.’

‘When dyers want to dye wool purple,’ I said, ‘you know they start by selecting, from wools of various colours, the ones which are naturally white. They give these a lengthy preliminary preparation, so that they will absorb as much of the colour as possible. Only then do they do the dyeing. Anything dyed in this way is colour-fast. No washing, with or without detergent, can remove the colour from it. But when things are dyed in some other way, whether the wool is some other colour, or whether it is white but dyed without preparation, you know what happens.’

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘They look faded and ridiculous.’

‘That’s the kind of thing you must imagine we too were doing, to the best of our ability, when we selected our soldiers and gave them their musical, poetic and physical education. You must realise that all we were trying to do was organise things so that they would absorb our laws as completely as possible, like a dye. We wanted them to possess the right character and upbringing, so that their views on danger and other things
would be colour-fast, incapable of being washed out by any of the detergents which are such good solvents. Not by pleasure, which is a better solvent than any soda or lye. Nor by pain, fear or desire, which are stronger than any other detergent. This kind of power and preservation I call courage — the preservation, in all situations, of correct and lawful belief about what is to be feared and what is not. That's my definition, unless you have some objection to it.

'No, I have no objection,' he said. 'I take it that when a slave or an animal has a correct opinion on these subjects, an opinion which is not the result of education, you do not regard this as properly lawful, and you give it some name other than courage.'

'Precisely,' I said.

'In that case, I accept your definition of courage.'

'Take it as a definition of courage in a city,' I said, 'and you will be right. We can give a better account of courage some other time, if you like. At the moment, though, we are investigating justice, not courage. And for that purpose I think this is enough.'

'Yes. You are right.'

d 'That leaves two things to for us to identify in our city,' I said. 'One is self-discipline. The other is the object of our entire investigation, justice.'

'Yes.'

'Well, is there some way we can find justice without having to bother about self-discipline?'

'I don't know,' he said. 'I wouldn't want it to make its appearance too soon, if that means giving up the search for self-discipline. If I have any say in the matter, please examine self-discipline first.'

'Well, if it's not wrong of me, I'm quite happy to do that.'

e 'Start looking, then.'

'I shall have to,' I said. 'My first impression is that it is more like a harmony or musical mode than the other two.'

'In what way?'

'Self-discipline, I take it, is a kind of order. They say it is a mastery of pleasures and desires, and a person is described as being in some way or other master of himself. And there are other clues of the same sort in the way it is talked about, aren't there?'

'Indeed there are,' he said.

'But isn't the phrase "master of himself" an absurdity? The master of 431 himself must surely also be slave to himself, and the slave to himself must be master of himself. It's the same person being talked about all the time.'

'Of course.'

'What this way of speaking seems to me to indicate is that in the soul of a single person there is a better part and a worse part. When the naturally better part is in control of the worse, this is what is meant by "master of himself."' It is a term of approval. But when as a result of bad upbringing or bad company the better element, which is smaller, is overwhelmed by the mass of the worse element, this is a matter for reproach. They call a person in this condition a slave to himself, undisciplined.'

'Yes, I think that is what it indicates,' he said.

'Now, if you take a look at this new city of ours, you will find one of these situations prevailing. You will admit that it can quite legitimately be called master of itself, if something in which the better rules the worse can be called self-disciplined and master of itself.'

'Yes, when I take a look at our city,' he said, 'you are right.'

c 'But you do also find the whole range and variety of desires, pleasures and pains. Particularly in children, women, slaves, and among so-called free men, in the majority of ordinary people.'

'You certainly do.'

'Whereas simple, moderate desires, which are guided by rational calculation, using intelligence and correct belief, are things you come across only among a few people, those with the best natural endowment and the best education.'

'True,' he said.

'Well, do you see the same qualities in your city? And are the desires of the ordinary majority controlled by the desires and wisdom of the discerning minority?'

'Yes, they are.'

'So if any city can be called the master of its pleasures and desires, and master of itself, this one can.'

'It certainly can,' he said.

'In which case, can't we also call it self-disciplined in all these respects?'

'Very much so.'

'What is more, if agreement is to be found among rulers and ruled in any city about which of them is to rule, it is to be found in this one, don't you think?'

out this passage is 'stronger than himself', which is an idiom in Greek but not in English. Correspondingly, the phrase translated 'slave of himself' has the literal meaning 'weaker than himself'.

A less secure manuscript reading would be translated 'not properly permanent' rather than 'not properly lawful'.

113 The literal meaning of the phrase translated 'master of himself' here and through-
'I couldn't agree more.'

'Well then, when they agree in this way, in which of the two groups of citizens will you say the self-discipline is located? In the rulers? Or in the ruled?'

'In both, I suppose.'

'See what a plausible prediction we made just now,' I said, 'when we compared self-discipline to a harmony of some sort?'

'Explain.'

'It is not the same as courage and wisdom. Each of those was located in a particular part, and yet one of them made the whole city wise, and the other made it brave. Self-discipline does not operate in the same way. It extends literally throughout the entire city, over the whole scale, causing those who are weakest — in intelligence, if you like, or in strength, or again in numbers, wealth or anything like that — together with those who are strongest and those in between, to sing in unison. So we would be quite justified in saying that self-discipline is this agreement about which of them should rule — a natural harmony of worse and better, both in the city and in each individual.'

'I quite agree,' he said.

'Very well. Three of the qualities have been identified in our city. Or such is our impression, at any rate. What can the remaining quality be, which allows a city to share in excellence? Because clearly, this is going to be justice.'

'Clearly.'

'Now, Glauc, this is the moment for us to position ourselves, like huntsmen, in a ring round the thicket. We must concentrate, and make sure justice does not escape. We don't want it to vanish and disappear from view. It's obviously here somewhere, so keep your eyes open, and try your hardest to see where it is. If you see it first, give me a shout.'

'Some hope,' he said. 'No, I'm afraid the only help I'm going to be to you is if you want a follower, someone who can see things when they are pointed out to him.'

'Say a prayer, then, and follow me.'

'I will. Just you lead the way,' he said.

'The place is impervious,' I said, 'and full of shadows. And it's certainly dark. Not an easy place to dislodge our quarry from. Still, we must go on.'

'Yes, we must.'

And then I caught sight of it. 'Aha! Over here, Glauc,' I cried. 'This looks like the trail. I think our quarry is not going to escape us, after all.'

At 430c.
person tried to do both jobs, do you think in general that changes of this sort would do much harm to the city?

'Yes, not really,' he said.

'But I imagine it's different when someone who is naturally a craftsman or money-maker of some other kind is puffed up by wealth, popularity, strength, or something like that, and tries to enter the warrior class, or when one of the warriors tries to enter the decision-making and guardian class, without being up to it. If these people exchange tools and positions in society, or if one person tries to do all these jobs at the same time, then I think you will agree with me that this change and interference on their part is destructive to the city.'

'Yes, it certainly is.'

'It is the interference of our three classes with one another, then, and interchange between them, which does the greatest harm to the city, and can rightly be called the worst crime against it.'

'Absolutely.'

'Isn't "injustice" the name for the greatest crime against one's own city?'

'Of course.'

'That, then, is what injustice is. Conversely, its opposite — the ability of the commercial, auxiliary and guardian classes to mind their own business, with each of them performing its own function in the city — this will be justice, and will make the city just.'

'Yes, I think that's exactly how it is,' he said.

'I don't think we can be too sure about it just yet,' I said. 'If the same characteristic turns up in each individual human being, and is agreed to be justice there too, then we shall accept it, since there will be no alternative. If not, we shall have to look for something else. For the moment, though, let's complete our original enquiry. We thought if we started with some large object which had justice in it, and tried to observe justice there, that would make it easier to see what justice was like in the individual.'

We chose a city as this large object, and that's why we founded the best city we could, in the confident belief that it is in the good city that justice is to be found. Now let us apply our findings there to the individual. If they agree, well and good. If we come to some other conclusion about the individual, then we shall go back to the city again, and test it on that. If we look at the two side by side, perhaps we can get a spark from them.
Like rubbing dry sticks together. If that makes justice appear, we shall have confirmed it to our satisfaction.'

'The question', he said. ‘That is what we must do.’

‘Very well, then,’ I said. ‘If you have two things – one larger, one smaller – and you call them by the same name, are they like or unlike in respect of that which gives them the same name?’

‘Like,’ he said. 

b ‘So the just man in his turn, simply in terms of his justice, will be no different from a just city. He will be like the just city.’

‘He will.’

‘In the case of the city, we decided it was just because each of the three types of nature in it was performing its own function. And we decided it was self-disciplined, brave and wise as a result of other conditions and states of the same three types.’

c ‘True.’

‘In that case, my admirable friend, if the individual too has these same elements in his soul, we shall feel entitled to expect that it is because these elements are in the same condition in him as they were in the city that he is properly titled by the same names we gave the city.’

‘Yes, inevitably,’ he said.

‘Well! Here’s another simple little question we seem to have blundered into,’ I said. ‘About the soul, this time. Does it contain these three elements within it? Or doesn’t it?’

‘Not such a little question, if you ask me. Maybe, Socrates, there is some truth in the saying that the good never comes easily.’

d ‘So it seems. And I have to tell you, Glaucon, that in my view we are certainly not going to find a precise answer to our enquiry by the kind of methods we are using at the moment in our argument. There is a way of getting there, but it is longer and more time-consuming. Still, we may be able to get an answer which is no worse than our earlier answers and investigations.’

‘Can’t we be content with that?’ he said. ‘For my part, I would reckon that was enough to be going on with.’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I’d be more than satisfied with that, too.’

‘No weakening, then,’ he said. ‘Carry on with the enquiry.’

e ‘Very well. Do we have no choice but to agree that in each of us are found the same elements and characteristics as are found in the city? After all, where else could the city have got them from? It would be ludicrous to imagine that the spirited element in cities has come into being from anywhere other than the individual citizens – where the citizens in fact possess this reputation. People in Thrace, for example, or Scythia, or pretty well anywhere in the North. The same goes for love of learning, which can be regarded as the outstanding characteristic of our region.

Or the commercial instinct, which you could say was to be found principally among the Phoenicians and people in Egypt.’

‘Yes, it would be totally ludicrous to imagine these qualities came from anywhere else.’

‘That’s the way it is, then,’ I said. ‘No problem in recognising that.’

‘None at all.’

‘What is a problem, though, is this. Do we do each of these things with the same part of ourselves? Or, since there are three elements, do we do different things with different elements? Is there one element in us for learning, another for feeling spirited, and yet a third for our desire for pleasures of food, sex, and things like that? Or do we do each of these things, when we embark upon them, with our entire soul? Those are questions to which it will be hard to give a convincing answer.’

‘I agree,’ he said.

‘So, let us try to ascertain whether they are the same as each other or different. And let’s go about it like this.’

‘Like what?’

‘It’s obvious that nothing can do two opposite things, or be in two opposite states, at the same time, in relation to the same object. So if this is what we find happening in these elements, we shall know there was not just one element involved, but more than one.’

‘Fair enough.’

‘Now, concentrate.’

‘I am,’ he said. ‘Carry on.’

‘Is it possible,’ I asked, ‘for one thing to be at the same time, and with the same part of itself, at rest and in motion?’

‘No.’

‘Can we be even more precise about what we are agreeing, to avoid argument later on? Imagine a man standing still, but moving his head and

19 The allusion is explained in Book 6, 504a-d.
his hands. If anyone said the same man was at the same time both at rest and in motion, then I don’t think we would regard that as a legitimate claim. What he should say is that one part of him is at rest, and another part is in motion, shouldn’t he?

‘Yes, he should.’

‘He could amuse himself with an even more ingenious example. If he said, of a spinning top with its centre fixed in one place, or of anything else rotating on the same spot, that the whole thing is both at rest and in motion, we would not accept that. In cases like this, the parts in respect of which they are both stationary and in motion are not the same parts. We would say they possess both a vertical axis and a circumference. With respect to the axis they are at rest, since they remain upright. With respect to the circumference they are rotating. And if, while they are still revolving, the vertical axis inclines to right or left, or front or back, then they can’t be at rest at all.’

‘True,’ he said.

‘So we’re not going to be at all intimidated by examples of this kind. It will do nothing to persuade us that it is in any way possible for one thing, in the same part of itself, with respect to the same object, to be at the same time in two opposite states, or to be or do two opposite things.’

‘It certainly won’t persuade me,’ he said.

‘All the same,’ I said, ‘we don’t want to have to work our way through every objection of this kind, spending hours establishing that they are not valid. So let us proceed from here on the assumption that this is the situation, with the proviso that if this isn’t how things turn out to be, all our conclusions based on this assumption will have been destroyed.’

‘Yes, that is what we should do,’ he said.

‘Very well. Now, think about things like saying “yes” and saying “no”, desire and rejection, or attraction and repulsion. Wouldn’t you classify all those as pairs of opposites? Whether they are activities or states will be irrelevant for our purposes.’

‘Yes, as opposites.’

‘What about hunger and thirst,’ I said, ‘and desires in general? Or wanting and being willing? Wouldn’t you find all those a place among the categories we just mentioned? Won’t you say, for example, that the soul of the person who desires something either reaches out for what it desires, or draws what it wants towards itself? Or to the extent that it is willing to have something provided for it, that it mentally says “yes” to it, as if in reply to a question, as it stretches out towards the realisation of its desire?’

‘Yes.’

‘What about not wanting, being unwilling, and not desiring? Won’t we classify them with rejection and refusal, with all the corresponding opposites, in fact?’

‘Of course.’

‘That being so, can we say that the desires form a class, and that the most striking of them are the ones we call thirst and hunger?’

‘We can.’

‘And that one is a desire for drink, the other a desire for food?’

‘Yes.’

‘Well, then, is thirst, considered simply as thirst, a desire in the soul for anything more than we have just said? For example, is thirst thirst for a warm drink or a cold drink? For a large drink or a small one? Or, to put it briefly, is it for any particular kind of drink at all? Or does the addition of a little bit of warmth to the thirst produce the desire for cold as well? And does the addition of cold produce desire for warmth? If the presence of largeness makes the thirst a large one, will it produce the desire for a large drink? And will a small thirst produce the desire for a small one? But thirst itself cannot possibly be a desire for anything other than its natural object, which is purely and simply drink — any more than hunger can be a desire for anything other than food.’

‘That’s right,’ he said. ‘Each and every desire, in itself, is a desire only for the thing which is its natural object. The additional element in each case is what makes it a desire for this or that particular kind of object.’

‘We don’t want to be interrupted by objections we haven’t considered,’ I said. ‘So here’s one. No one desires drink, but rather good drink. No one desires food, but rather good food, since everyone desires good things. So if thirst is a desire, it must be a desire for something good. Either a drink, or whatever else it is a desire for. The same goes for the other desires.’

‘Well,’ he said, ‘you might think there was something in this objection.’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘but if you take all the things which are such as to be related to something else, I think that qualified instances are related to qualified objects, whereas the things themselves are each of them related only to an object which is just itself.’

‘I don’t understand,’ he said.

‘What don’t you understand? That it is the nature of what is greater to be greater than something?’

‘No, I understand that.’

‘Greater than what is smaller?’
'Yes.'
'And what is much greater than what is much smaller?'
'Yes.'
'And what was once greater than what was once smaller, and what will be greater than what will be smaller?'
'Obviously,' he said.
'And the same with more in relation to less, double in relation to half, and all those sorts of things? Or heavier in relation to lighter, faster in relation to that which is slower? Or hot in relation to cold, for that matter, or anything of that sort?'
'Certainly.'
'What about branches of knowledge? Doesn't the same principle apply? There is knowledge in itself, which is knowledge simply of that which can be learnt – or of whatever it is we are to suppose that knowledge is knowledge of. Then there is this or that branch of knowledge, which is knowledge of this or that specific subject. The kind of thing I mean is this. When a knowledge of housebuilding came into being, did it differ from other branches of knowledge? Was that why it was called knowledge of building?'
'Yes, of course.'
'Because it was a specific branch of knowledge, different from all the other branches?'
'Yes.'
'And was it not because it was knowledge of some specific subject that it became a specific branch of knowledge? And the same with the other branches of skill and knowledge?'
'True.'
'Well, if you understood it this time,' I said, 'that is what you must take me to have meant just now. I said that when things are such as to stand in some relation to something else, the things just by themselves are related to objects just by themselves, while qualified instances are related to qualified objects. That's not in any way to say they are like the things they are in relation to – that the knowledge of health and disease is healthy or diseased, or that the knowledge of good and bad is good or bad. Rather, since the knowledge here is not of that which just is the object of knowledge, but of some qualified object – in this case what is healthy or diseased – the knowledge itself turned out to be a specific branch of knowledge as well. This is why it was no longer simply called knowledge, but rather, because of this specific addition, medical knowledge.'
desire, hunger, thirst, and the turmoil of the other desires can be called
the irrational and desiring element, the companion of indulgence and
pleasure.'

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘that would be a perfectly natural conclusion for us to
come to.’

‘Let’s take it, then, that we have established the presence of these two
elements in the soul. How about spirit, the thing which makes us behave
in a spirited way? Is that a third element? If not, its nature must be the
same as one of the others. Which?’

‘The second, maybe. The desiring element.’

‘As against that,’ I said, ‘there’s a story I once heard which I think can
guide us here. Leontius, the son of Aglaeon, was on his way up to town
from the Piraeus. As he was walking below the north wall, on the outside,
he saw the public executioner with some dead bodies lying beside him.
He wanted to look at the bodies, but at the same time he felt disgust and
held himself back. For a time he struggled, and covered his eyes. Then
desire got the better of him. He rushed over to where the bodies were, and
forced his eyes wide open, saying, “There you are, curse you. Have a really
good look. Isn’t it a lovely sight?”’

‘Yes, I’ve heard that story, too,’ he said.

‘It shows that anger can sometimes be at war with the desires, which
implies that they are two distinct and separate things.’

‘Yes, it does show that,’ he said.

‘Aren’t there lots of other situations as well – whenever people are
forced into doing things by their desires against the advice of their reason
– when they curse themselves, and are furious with the bit of them which
forces them to do these things? It’s as if there’s a civil war going on inside
someone like this, with spirit acting as an ally of reason. Spirit siding with
the desires, on the other hand, when reason has declared its opposition,
is not the kind of thing I imagine you’d ever claim to have seen, either in
yourself or in anybody else.’

‘No, I certainly haven’t,’ he said.

‘Think about someone who realises he is in the wrong. Isn’t it the case
that the better his character, the less he is capable of feeling anger at
having to endure hunger, or cold, or anything like that at the hands of
someone he regards as entitled to inflict these things on him? Isn’t it his
spirit, as I say, which refuses to raise any objection?’

‘Yes, that’s true.’

‘How about someone who thinks he is being wronged? While this is
going on, doesn’t he boil with rage at hunger, cold and any hardships of

this kind? Doesn’t he ally himself with what he thinks is just, and endure
all these things until he wins through, refusing to give up his justified
indignation until he either achieves his aim, or dies, or is called back and
pacified by the reason within him, like a dog being recalled by a shep-
herd?’

‘Yes, that’s a very close parallel with what you were talking about. What
is more, in our city we specified that the auxiliaries should be obedient
dogs to the city’s shepherd rulers.’

‘Good,’ I said. ‘You understand exactly what I’m talking about. But
there’s another point too you might notice about it.’

‘What is that?’

‘It’s the opposite of our suggestion about the spirited element a few
moments ago. We thought then it was desirous in character, whereas now
we regard it as anything but. In the civil war of the soul, it is far more
likely to take up arms on the side of the rational part.’

‘Absolutely,’ he said.

‘Is it something independent of the rational element as well, or is it
some form of the rational element? Are there not three elements in the
soul, but only two, the rational and the desiring? Or is the soul like the
city? The city was held together by three classes, commercial, auxiliary
and decision-making. Does the soul also contain this third, spirited,
element, which is auxiliary to the rational element by nature, provided it
is not corrupted by a poor upbringing?’

‘Yes, it does contain a third element,’ he said. ‘It must do.’

‘Yes, provided this can be shown to be something distinct from the
rational element, just as it was shown to be something distinct from the
desiring element.’

‘That’s easily shown,’ he said. ‘You can see it in young children. Right
from the time they are born, they are full of spirit, though most of them,
if you ask me, only achieve some degree of rationality late in life. And
some never at all.’

‘How right you are. Even in animals you can see that what you are
talking about applies. And apart from these examples, there is the evidence
of Homer, in the line I think we quoted earlier:

He smote his chest, and thus rebuked his heart. 22

21 417a.
22 Odyssey 20.17, quoted together with line 18 at 390d. The citation develops the compari-
son of spirit to a dog, since Odysseus is quoting the heart that bays like a dog
within him and longs for revenge.
In that passage Homer clearly portrays two different elements. The part which has reflected rationally on what is better and what is worse has some sharp words to say to the element which is irrationally angry."

'You are certainly right,' he said.

'There we are, then,' I said. 'We have made it to dry land—not without difficulty—and we are pretty well agreed that the soul of each individual contains the same sorts of thing, and the same number of them, as a city contains.'

'True.'

'The immediate and inescapable conclusion is that the individual is wise in the same way, and using the same part of himself, as the city when it was wise.'

'Of course.'

'Also that the thing which makes the individual brave, and the way in which he is brave, is the same as the thing which makes the city brave, and the way in which it is brave. That in everything to do with virtue the two of them are the same.'

'Yes, that is inescapable.'

'So a just man is just, I think we shall say, Glaucen, in the same way a city was just.'

'That too follows with complete certainty.'

'We haven't at any point forgotten, I hope, that the city was just when each of the three elements in it was performing its own function.'

'No, I don't think we have forgotten that,' he said.

'In that case, we must also remember that each one of us will be just, and perform his own proper task, when each of the elements within him is performing its proper task.'

'Yes, we must certainly remember that.'

'Isn't it appropriate for the rational element to rule, because it is wise and takes thought for the entire soul, and appropriate for the spirited element to be subordinate, the ally of the rational element?'

'Yes.'

'Wont a combination, as we said,23 of musical and physical education make these two elements concordant? They will bring the rational part to a higher pitch, with their diet of improving stories and studies, while at the same time toning down the spirited part by gentle encouragement, calming it by means of harmony and rhythm.'

23 411b-412a.
"In that case," I said, "do we find justice looking at all blurred round the edges? Does it seem any different to us from what it was when it showed up in the city?"

"Not to me it doesn't."

e "If there is anything in our soul which is still inclined to dispute this," I said, "we can appeal to everyday life for final confirmation."

"What do you mean, everyday life?"

"Well, imagine we were discussing this city and the man who by his nature and upbringing resembles it, and we had to agree whether we thought a man like this would embezzle a sum of gold or silver deposited with him for safe keeping. Could anyone, do you suppose, possibly imagine such a man to be more likely to do this than people who were different from him?"

"No," he said. "I don't suppose anyone could."

"Would this man have anything to do with temple-robbery, theft and betrayal? Either of his friends in private life, or of his city in public life?"

"No, he wouldn't."

"What is more, he would be utterly reliable in keeping oaths and other sorts of agreement."

"Of course."

"Then again adultery, neglect of parents, failure in religious observance — he'd be the last person you'd expect to find with those faults."

"Absolutely the last," he said.

b "Is the reason for all this that when it comes to ruling and being ruled, each of the elements within him performs its own function?"

"Yes, that is the reason. The sole reason."

"In which case, do you still want justice to be anything more than this power which can produce both men and cities of this calibre?"

"No, that's more than enough for me," he said.

"In that case, we have seen the final realisation of our dream — our suspicion that our very first attempt at founding our city might possibly, with a bit of divine guidance, have hit upon both the origin, and some sort of model, of justice."

"Yes, we certainly have seen its realisation."

"So this principle, Glaucon — that if you are a shoemaker by nature, you should confine yourself to making shoes, if you are a carpenter you should confine yourself to carpentry, and so on — really was a kind of image of justice. Which is why it was so useful to us."

"Apparently so."

b "But the truth is that although justice apparently was something of this kind, it was not concerned with the external performance of a man's own function, but with the internal performance of it, with his true self and his own true function, forbidding each of the elements within him to perform tasks other than its own, and not allowing the classes of thing within his soul to interfere with one another. He has, quite literally, to put his own house in order, being himself his own ruler, mentor and friend, and tuning the three elements just like three fixed points in a musical scale top, bottom and intermediate. And if there turn out to be any intervening elements, he must combine them all, and emerge as a perfect unity of diverse elements, self-disciplined and in harmony with himself. Only then does he act, whether it is a question of making money, or taking care of his body, or some political action, or contractual agreements with private individuals. In all these situations he believes and declares that a just and good action is one which preserves or brings about this state of mind, and that wisdom is the knowledge which directs the action. That an unjust action, in its turn, is any action which tends to destroy this state of mind, and that ignorance is the opinion which directs the unjust action."

"You are absolutely right, Socrates."

"Well then," I said, "if we were to say we had found the just man and the just city, and what justice really was in them, we couldn't be said to be totally wide of the mark, in my view."

"We most certainly couldn't," he said.

"Is that what we are going to say, then?"

"We are."

"Let's leave it at that, then," I said. "Since the next thing we have to look into, I imagine, is injustice."

"Obviously."

"Injustice, on this definition, must be some sort of civil war between these three elements, a refusal to mind their own business, and a determination to mind each other's, a rebellion by one part of the soul against the whole. The part which rebels is bent on being ruler in it when it is not equipped to be, its natural role being that of slave to what is of the ruling class. Something like this is what we shall say, I think. And we shall add that the disorder and straying of the three elements produce injustice, indiscipline, cowardice, ignorance — evil of every kind, in fact."

c "We shall not say something like this," he said. "We shall say exactly this."
'Very well,' I said. 'Now that we have a clear picture of injustice and justice, do we also have a clear picture of unjust actions and acting unjustly? And similarly of just actions?'

'Explain.'

'Well,' I said, 'the effect on the soul of actions which are just and unjust is really no different from the effect on the body of actions which are healthy and unhealthy.'

'In what way?'

'Things which are healthy produce health, presumably. And things which are unhealthy produce disease.'

'Yes.'

'So does acting justly produce justice, and acting unjustly produce injustice?'

'It's bound to.'

'Producing health is a question of arranging the elements in the body so that they control one another – and are controlled – in the way nature intends. Producing disease is a question of their ruling and being ruled, one by another, in a way nature does not intend.'

'True.'

'Does it follow, then,' I asked, 'that producing justice in its turn is a question of arranging the elements in the soul so that they control one another – and are controlled – in the way nature intends? Is producing injustice a question of their ruling and being ruled, one by another, in a way nature does not intend?'

'Indeed it is,' he said.

'In which case, virtue would apparently be some sort of health, beauty and vigour in the soul, while vice would be disease, ugliness and weakness.'

'That is so.'

'Doesn't it follow also that good behaviour leads to the acquisition of virtue, and bad behaviour to the acquisition of vice?'

'Inevitably.'

'The only question now remaining for us to answer, it seems, is which is more profitable. Just actions, good behaviour and being just – whether the just person is known to be just or not? Or unjust actions, and being unjust – even if the unjust person gets away with it, and never reforms as a result of punishment?'

'You're right,' I said. 'It's an absurd question. Still, now that we've got to the point of being able to see as clearly as possible that this is how things are, this isn't the moment to take a rest.'

'No,' he said. 'The last thing we should do is show any hesitation.'

'This way, then, if you want to see what I believe to be the forms taken by vice. The ones worth looking at, anyway.'

'I'm right behind you,' he said. 'Speak on.'

'Well, now that we've got this far in our discussion,' I said, 'it looks from my vantage-point as if there is a single form of virtue, and any number of forms of vice, of which four are worth mentioning.'

'Please explain,' he said.

'If you think how many types of political regime there are with their own specific form,' I said, 'that's probably how many types of soul there are.'

'And how many is that?'

'Five types of political regime,' I said, 'and five types of soul.'

'Tell me which they are,' he said.

'All right. I would say that one type of regime is this one we have just described, though there are two names it might be given. It might be called monarchy, if one exceptional individual emerges among the rulers, or aristocracy if several emerge.'

'True.'

'This one, then, I class as a single form,' I said. 'It makes no difference whether it is several who emerge, or an individual. Given the upbringing and education we have described, they would not disturb any of the important laws of the city.'

'No. That wouldn't be sensible,' he said.