

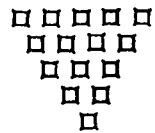
“DIVINE ARITHMETIC.”

**A SUBJECT
LONG SINCE FORGOTTEN.**

A TRANSLATION

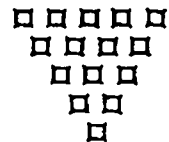
BY

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THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY.^r

BY
PROCLUS
(The Platonist).



Introduction.


□ □

In walking home with a friend one night, he exclaimed: "But you cannot deny that Greeks were liars." "No, I cannot," I answered, "but I can assert that no race loved the truth with a greater ardour than they did, nor do our two statements necessarily contradict one another."

The following pages will, I think, amply support my statement.

THE TRANSLATOR.

I.

1.  VERY plurality[†] in some manner participates of unity itself.[†]

2. For if it participated[‡] it not at all, neither would the whole—nor each of the many that constitute that plurality be one. And there would be some plurality outside it ; and so forth to infinity. And each infinity would again constitute an infinite plurality.

The Universe
is
One,
and
not two
or
more.

3. No thing would, by any means, participate of one, neither as regards its whole self, nor in respect to each within it. The infinite would be throughout all, everywhere.

* * *

4. But each of many, whichever way it be taken, must be either one or not one, either many or nothing.
5. But if each be nothing the sum thereof is nothing ; and if many, each consists of an infinity of infinities.

* * *

6. This, however, is impossible. No thing in being is constituted out of an infinity of infinities.
7. No thing is greater than the infinite, for that which is constituted out of all is greater than each ; nor is it possible to constitute anything out of nothing.
8. Therefore all, in some manner, participate Oneness.

† Or the ONE, or Oneness.

II.

1. *ALL that participates Oneness, is both one and not One.*
2. If it be not Oneness itself, it must participate thereof; if it be anything other than Oneness, it has experienced[†] Oneness in proportion to its participation thereof, and *persists so as to become One.*
3. If it be nothing but Oneness itself, it alone is One, and does not participate Oneness, but must be Oneness itself.
4. But if it be anything but that, which is not One, it participates Oneness, it is both one and not One, NOT Oneness itself, but one, as participating Oneness.

All, save
the
Universe
is
not One.

* * *

5. This latter therefore is not one, nor that which is One.
6. But participating Oneness is one, and is not One *per se*; inasmuch as it is something besides Oneness.
7. That whereby it is multiplied is not One, but that whereto it is subject is one.
8. Therefore all that participates Oneness, is both one and not One.

† *πέπονθε.*

† Refers to Foot Notes.

‡ Refers to Glossary.

III.

Why all
else is one
but not
One.

1. *ALL that becomes one, does so by participation of Oneness.*
2. *And it is one, in so far as it experiences participation of Oneness.*
3. For if those which are not one, become one, they *per se* somehow come into contact and associate with one another, and become one, but not being that which is One, await the presence of Oneness.
4. They, then, participate Oneness, and in a measure experience "becoming One."
5. If they be already One, they do not become that which they already are.
6. If they did, they would do so out of nothing, out of the negation that Oneness is foremost, * * * †

† The text is broken off at the end of the paragraph, and seems incomplete from here.

IV.

Distinction
between
the
One, and
anything
united.

1. *ALL which is united, is other than Oneness per se.*
2. If it be united, then it must in some measure participate Oneness, and is so said to be united.
3. But that which participates Oneness is both one and not One.
4. But Oneness itself is not both.
5. If it were both one and not One, then that within it, common to both, would be another, and so on indefinitely, and there would be no Oneness, wherefrom it would be possible to start.
6. All would be one and not One, therefore Oneness is different from that which is united.
7. Were Oneness identical with that which is united, plurality whereof the united is constituted would be indefinite.

V.

All plurality
inferior
to the
One.

1. *EVERY plurality is inferior or subsequent to Oneness.*
2. For if there be a plurality prior to the Oneness, Oneness would participate that plurality, and plurality would not participate Oneness.
3. If, that is to say, that plurality were a quantity prior to becoming one.
4. It does not participate of what is not.
5. Because that which participates Oneness, is one and not One.

6. Oneness can by no manner of means be below the primary plurality.
7. But there cannot be a plurality that does not participate Oneness at all.
8. Therefore plurality is not prior to Oneness.
9. Were it simultaneous with Oneness, they, by nature, would also be co-ordinate with one another,
10. *Nothing in time prevents either Oneness per se from being many, or plurality from being one*, as things directly contra-distinguished by nature, if indeed, neither of them be prior, nor subsequent to the other.
11. But then plurality by itself would not be Oneness, and each therein would not be one, and so forth indefinitely, which is impossible.

* * *

12. Therefore, by its own nature, it participates Oneness, and *nothing can be comprehended concerning that which is not one*.
13. It has been shown that being not One, consists of countless infinities.

* * *

14. So plurality participates Oneness in every way.
15. Now if this oneness be Oneness *per se*, it can nowise participate plurality, and plurality in all cases must be subsequent to Oneness, and though participating Oneness, it is not participated by Oneness.
16. And if Oneness also participated plurality with respect to pre-existence, as one dependent on the other by participation, it would be not One, the One would be multiplied, and like plurality be united by Oneness.
17. Therefore Oneness is associated with plurality, and plurality with Oneness.
18. But those that come together, and in a measure associate with one another, are either brought together by another, which is prior thereto, or they bring themselves together and are not opposites.

* * *

19. Opposites do not attract one another.
20. If, therefore, Oneness and plurality be opposed, and plurality were a plurality in a manner that was not One, and Oneness were a Oneness in a manner that was not plurality, and the one were not begotten in the other, one would then at the same time be two.

* * *

21. But if there is to be something which brings them together, it must be prior thereto, and is either One, or not One.
22. But if it be not one, it is either many or nothing.
23. But it cannot be many, or there would be plurality prior to Oneness, nor can it be nothing.

24. For how can nothing bring them together?
25. It can then only be One.
26. Nor can this Oneness be many, otherwise it would be boundless.
27. *It is, therefore, Oneness per se, wherefrom all plurality proceeds.*

CONCERNING A UNIT.†

VI.

The unit
and the
united
compared.

1. **A**LL plurality consists either of things that are united, or of units.
 2. Each of many, when it is not a plurality merely, is clearly, in each case, again a plurality.
 3. If it be not merely a plurality, it is either united or consists of units.
 4. It is united, if it participate Oneness.
 5. But if it be that whereof the primarily united consists, units.
 6. If it be Oneness *per se*, it is the first to participate itself, and is primarily united,
- * * *
7. But this consists of units.
 8. For if it consisted of things united, those again would be united and so forth indefinitely.
 9. The primarily united must therefore consist of units.
 10. And we come to the beginning of things.

† *Eras.*

CONCERNING PRODUCER^r AND PRODUCTION.

VII.

Producer
superior
to its
production.

1. **A**NYTHING that produces another is superior to the nature of that produced.
 2. It is either superior, inferior or equal.
 3. The production either has power, and can produce another, or it exists as entirely barren.
 4. If it exist as entirely barren, it is to this extent inferior to the producer, and is unequal to that which is productive, and being inactive, is unequal to that which has power to create.
 5. But if it can produce others, and even if it produce something equal to itself, and so forth in every case, then all would be equal to one another, and there would be none superior to others, and the subsequent would be ever equal to the producer, subsisting it; but if it produce something unequal (and superior to itself), even then it would not be equal to that which produces itself.
- * * *
6. The creation of equals is the property of equal powers.
 7. But those arising therefrom are not equal to one another; even though the producer be equal to that prior thereto.

8. Thereto the subsequent is unequal.
9. Therefore the production cannot be equal to the producer.
10. Nor can the producer ever be inferior.
- * * *
11. For if it give essence to the production, it also provides therein power, in accordance with that essence.
- * * *
12. And it can, by itself, do all that is done by those subsequent thereto, if it be productive of power therein.
13. And if this be so, it could also make itself more powerful.
14. And neither incapacity, nor the want of will, would prevent the presence of creative power.
- * * *
15. All directed by the Good itself, is by nature desirable; so if it were possible to perfect anything more perfect, it would have to be perfected prior to that which is subsequent thereto.
16. Therefore the production is neither equal, nor superior to the producer.
17. Therefore, the producer is everywhere superior to the nature of its production.

CONCERNING THE FOREMOST GOOD, WHICH IS ALSO
CALLED ΤΑΓΑΘΟΝ.

VIII.

1. *THE foremost or highest good, which is none other than Τάγαθόν, incites all that participate it.*
2. If all things desire the Good, it is clear that the primary Good must be beyond things that are.
3. Were the same in any being, and that being were identical with Τάγαθόν, it would no longer be incited by the primary good.
4. And the desire would be inferior to that whereby it was desired, because it would have to desire other than itself; or the two would have to be separate, the being to participate, and the Good to be participated thereby.
- * * *
5. What good is there indeed in anything that participates, and which the participator alone desires, and which is not simply the Good, which all desire?
6. This is, then, the desire common to all.
7. That which is in anything that is begotten, belongs to the participant.
8. The highest good then is nothing else but Good, and if you add thereto you will depreciate the same by that addition—what good can you do, in the place of the simply good?
9. For that addition is not the highest good but inferior thereto, and will depreciate the Good by its own inferior nature.

AS REGARDS THAT WHICH IS FREE OR
SELF-SUFFICIENT.

IX.

1. *ALL that is free, whether virtually or actually, is superior to that which is not free, and dependent on some other cause for its source of perfection.*
2. If all things by nature desire the Good, and one furnish the same, and another be inferior thereto, the former has with it the cause of the Good.
* * *
3. The latter is without it.
4. Then the nearer it is to that furnishing the desire, by so much is it superior to the inferior that is separated therefrom, and which receives the perfection of its pre-existence from elsewhere.
5. Since it is inferior and similar, the free must be still more similar to the source of perfection.
* * *
6. Participation^f is inferior to the Good, and though not the priormost good itself, it is in some way related thereto, inasmuch as it is able to possess the Good by its own means.
7. But that which participates through another, is widely removed from the highest good, which is nothing but good.

X.

1. *THE self-sufficient is inferior to the simply good.*
2. For what else is the self-sufficing, other than that which possesses the Good, both within and without itself?
3. And this is complete with Good, and shares it, but is not the simply Good itself.
* * *
4. It has been demonstrated[†] that this (foremost good), is superior either to participation, or to perfect being.
5. If, therefore, the self-sufficient have perfected itself with the Good, that whereof it is perfected is superior to the same, and above the self-sufficient.
6. Nor is the simply good inferior to anything.
* * *
7. Nor is the self-sufficient incited by any other.
8. If its desire be lacking in the Good, it is not self-sufficient, and though perfect with the Good, it is not the Good *per se*.

Why
the
perfect
is
other
than
the
Good.

† (VII.)

CONCERNING CAUSE.†

XI.

1. *ALL things are preceded by one cause,† the first.*
2. Either there is no first cause of all that are, or causes are in a circle, or the way up is boundless, and one cause is the cause of another, in a way that would make it impossible to establish the presubsistence of essence.
* * *
3. And if nothing were the cause of things, there would be no order, neither of the secondary, the first, the perfect nor the perfected ; nor of those that arrange, nor of things that are arranged, nor of those that beget nor of those begotten, neither of acts nor experience, nor would there be any knowledge of anything.
* * *
4. For the work of knowledge is the deeper wisdom of causes,† and we then talk of understanding, when we know the causes of things. But if causes preceded one another in a circle, the same causes would be both prior and ulterior, and more potent and less efficient.
5. But all that produces another, is superior to the nature of that produced.
6. It does not signify whether the cause be in touch with the effect to accomplish its purpose, through a greater or lesser number of intermediate causes.
* * *
7. And the cause thereof must be more potent than all in between (cause and effect).
8. And the more the intermediate causes, the greater the cause.
9. But if the sum of causes were boundless, and there were ever again something else behind everything, there could be no knowledge.
10. For there is no knowledge of the boundless.
11. And if we be ignorant concerning the causes, neither can we understand the things that follow therefrom.
12. And if there must be a cause of things that are, both effects must be distinguished from causes, and the ascent must not be infinite ; and there must be one prime cause, in which all things that are, have their root.
13. Some things must be closer thereto, and others further away.
14. And it has been demonstrated that the beginning of all things must be ONE, because all plurality is inferior to Oneness.

† And according to Aristotle and prop. (VII.) it is so.

XII.

Why
the
first cause
must
be the
Good.

1. **T**HE *beginning, and foremost cause of all things, is the Good.*
2. If all things proceed from one cause, that cause must be called the Good, or something superior thereto.
3. But if that other be superior to the Good, must not something or nothing prior thereto, arrive therefrom, unto beings and their natures?
4. If nothing, the statement is absurd.
5. And we cannot retain it any longer in the order of cause.
6. There must be something from the first cause, omnipresent in other causes, different from the first, upon which all things depend, and whereby each that is, is.

* * *

7. And if there be communion with such beings as there is with the Good, there must be something superior to the Good, in beings, arriving from that priormost cause.
8. There is, however, nothing superior to, and above the Good, so that which is hypothetically superior to the Good, must give to the secondary something inferior to that which it receives from the Good.

* * *

9. And what could become superior to Goodness?
10. Since we say that that greater good must participate the Good.
11. If then the not Good is not to be called superior, it must be said to be entirely secondary to the Good.
12. And if all things—all of them—be subsequent to the Good, how can it still be possible for something to be prior to that cause?
13. And if it be incited by that, how much more so by the Good?
14. And if it be not incited, how is it incited by the cause of all, since it proceeds therefrom?
15. If it be a good upon which all beings depend, the Good is the priormost source and cause of all.

XIII.

1. **E**VERY good, tends to unite those that participate thereof—
every union is good—and the Good is identical with
Oneness.
2. If the Good protect all beings (therefore too it exists as a
desire in all), it saves and holds together the essence of all.
3. All is protected by Oneness, it is the scattering of essence that
confounds all.
4. The Good fashions into one, and comprehends in unity
those amongst whom it is present.
5. And if Oneness bring and keep things together, its presence
perfects all.
- * * *
6. That which unites, is, therefore, a good.
7. And if the union be good and the Good *per se* unifies,
the simply Good and the simply One are identical, and
make all things one and good.
8. Hence indeed, those that in any manner fall away from
the Good, are immediately deprived of a participation
of Oneness.
9. Those without a share of Oneness are full of disagreement,
and are in this manner deprived of the Good.
10. Therefore goodness is a union, and a union a goodness, and
Oneness^f the foremost Good.

Identity
of
the One
and
the Good.

T H E
L I F E O F P R O C L U S,
B Y M A R I N U S*;
O R,
C O N C E R N I N G F E L I C I T Y.

WHEN I consider the magnitude of mind, and dignity of character belonging to Proclus, a philosopher of our time, and attend to those requisites, and that power of composition which those ought to possess who undertake a description of his life; and

* Marinus, the author of the ensuing life, was the disciple of Proclus, and his successor in the Athenian school. His philosophical writings were not very numerous, and have not been preserved. A commentary ascribed to him, on Euclid's data, is still extant; but his most celebrated work, appears to have been, the present life of his master. It is indeed in the original elegant and concise; and may be considered as a very happy specimen of philosophical biography. Every liberal mind must be charmed and elevated with the grandeur and sublimity of character, with which Proclus is presented to our view. If compared with modern philosophical heroes, he appears to be a being of a superior order; and we look back with regret on the glorious period, so well calculated for the growth of the philosophical genius, and the encouragement of exalted merit. We find in his life, no traces of the common frailties of depraved humanity; no instances of meanness, or instability of conduct: but he is uniformly magnificent, and constantly good. I am well aware that this account of him will be considered by many as highly exaggerated; as the result of weak enthusiasm, blind superstition, or gross deception: but this will never be the persuasion of those, who know by experience what elevation of mind and purity of life the Platonic philosophy is capable of procuring; and who truly understand the divine truths contained in his works. And the testimony of the multitude, who measure the merit of other men's characters by the baseness of their own, is surely not to be regarded. I only add, that our Philosopher flourished 412 years after Christ, according to the accurate chronology of Fabricius: and I would recommend those who desire a variety of critical information concerning Proclus, to the Prolegomena prefixed by that most learned man to his excellent Greek and Latin edition of this work, printed at London in 1703.

lastly, when I regard my own poverty of diction, I am inclined to believe it more proper to refrain from such an undertaking, not to leap over the fosse (according to the proverb), and to decline a discourse involved in so much difficulty and danger. But my scruples are something diminished when I consider, on the other hand, that even in temples, those who approach to the altars do not all sacrifice alike; but that some are solicitously employed in preparing bulls, goats, and other things of a similar kind, as not unworthy the beneficence of the Gods to whom those altars belong: likewise that they compose hymns, some of which are more elegant in verse, but others in prose; while some, who are destitute of all such gifts, and sacrifice with nothing more perhaps than a cake and a small quantity of bread, with frankincense, and who finish their invocations with a short address to the particular divinity they adore, are not less heard than others. While I thus think with myself, I am afraid, according to Ibycus *, lest I should not offend against the Gods (for these are his words) but against a wise man, and thus obtain the praise of men.

For I do not think it lawful, that I who was one of his familiars, should be silent concerning his life; and should not, according to my utmost ability, relate such particulars concerning him as are true, and which perhaps ought to be published in preference to others. And indeed by such a neglect I shall not perhaps obtain the esteem and honour of mankind, who will not entirely ascribe my conduct to the desire of avoiding ostentation, but will suppose I avoided such a design from indolence, or some, more dreadful disease of the soul. Incited, therefore, by all these considerations, I have taken upon me to relate some illustrious particulars of this philosopher, since they are almost infinite, and may be depended on for their undoubted reality.

I shall begin therefore not according to the usual manner of writers, who are accustomed to distribute their discourse into chapters; but I consider that the felicity of this blessed man ought, with the greatest propriety, to be placed as the foundation of this treatise. For I regard him as the most happy of those men who were celebrated in former ages; I do not say happy only from the felicity of wisdom, though he

* Plato in Phædro. Meminit et Plutarch. VIII. Sympos. Suidas in μέτραι. Fabricius.

possessed this in the highest degree of all men; nor because he abundantly enjoyed the goods of an animal life; nor again on account of his fortune, though this belonged to him in a most eminent degree, for he was supplied with a great abundance of all such things as are called external goods: but I call him happy, because his felicity was perfect, complete in all parts, and composed from each of the preceding particulars. Having then in the first place distributed * virtues according to their kinds into natural, moral, and political, and also into those of a sublimer rank, which are wholly conversant with purification and contemplation, and are therefore called Cathartic and Theoretic, and also such as are denominated Theurgic, by which we acquire a similitude with some particular divinity; but omitting such as are superior to these, as beyond the reach of man, we shall begin from such as are more natural, and which are first in the progressions of the human soul, though not first in the nature of things.

This blessed man, then, whose praise is the subject of this treatise, naturally possessed, from the hour of his birth, all those physical virtues which fall to the lot of mankind; the traces of which were manifest in the latest period of his life, and appeared to surround and invest his body after the manner of a tenacious shell. In the first place, he was endued with a singular perfection of sensation, which they denominate corporeal prudence; and this was particularly evident in the nobler senses of seeing and hearing, which are indeed given by the gods to men for the purpose of philosophizing, and for the greater convenience of the animal life; and which remained entire to this divine man through the whole of his life. Secondly, he possessed a strength of body which was not affected by cold, and which was neither weakened nor disturbed by any vicious or negligent diet, nor by any endurance of labours, though it was exhausted day and night, while he was employed in prayer, in perusing the works of others, in writing books himself, and in conversing with his familiars; all which he performed with such expedition, that he appeared to study but one thing alone. But a power of this kind may with propriety be called fortitude of body, from the singular strength employed in such exertions.

* For a full account of the distribution of the virtues according to the Platonists, consult the sentences of Porphyry, and the Prolegomena of Fabricius to this work.

4 THE LIFE OF PROCLUS.

The third corporeal virtue with which he was endued was beauty, which, when compared with temperance, the authors of these appellations have very properly considered as possessing a similitude of nature. For as we consider temperance as consisting in a certain symphony and consent of the powers of the soul, so corporeal beauty is understood to consist in a certain agreement of the organical parts. He was indeed of a most pleasing aspect, not only because he was endued with this excellent proportion of body, but because the flourishing condition of his soul beamed through his corporeal frame like a living light, with splendors too wonderful for language to explain. And indeed he was so beautiful that no painter could accurately describe his resemblance; and all the pictures of him which were circulated, although very beautiful, were far short of the true beauty of the original. But the fourth corporeal virtue which he possessed was health, which they affirm corresponds to justice in the soul; and that this is a certain justice in the disposition of the corporeal parts, as the other in those of the soul. For justice is nothing more than a certain habit, containing the parts of the soul in their proper duty. Hence, that is called health by physicians, which conciliates the jarring elements of the body into union and consent; and which Proclus possessed in such perfection, that he affirmed he was not ill above twice or thrice, in the course of so long a life as seventy-five years. But a sufficient proof of this is evident from hence, that, in his last illness, he was entirely ignorant what the disorders were which invaded his body, on account of the great rarity of their incursions.

Such then were the corporeal goods which Proclus possessed, and which may be called the forerunners, and as it were messengers, of those forms into which we have distributed perfect virtue. But the first powers and progeny of his soul, which he naturally possessed, previous to instruction, and those parts of virtue with which he was adorned, and which Plato reckons the elements of a philosophic nature*, must excite the wonder of any one who considers their excellent quality. For he was remarkable for his memory and ingenuity; he was of a disposition magnificent, gentle, and friendly; and a compa-

* See the sixth book of his Republic, and the Epinomis.