

*The island kingdom of Atlantis
as told by the Critias of Plato*



Introduction by Thomas Taylor, Esq.

It is a singular circumstance, that though there is not, perhaps, anything among the writings of the ancients which has more generally attracted the attention of the learned in every age than the Atlantic history of Plato, yet no more than one single passage of about twenty or thirty lines has, prior to my translation of the *Timæus*, appeared in any modern language. Much has been said and written by the moderns respecting the Atlantic island; but the extent of the original source has not even been suspected.

That the authenticity of the following history should have been questioned by many of the moderns, is by no means surprising, if we consider that it is the history of an island and people that are asserted to have existed NINE THOUSAND years prior to Solon; as this contradicts the generally-received opinion respecting the antiquity of the world. However, as Plato expressly affirms, that it is a relation in every respect *true*,¹ and, as Crantor,² the first interpreter of Plato, asserts, “that the following history was said, by the Egyptian priests of his time, to be still preserved inscribed on pillars,”³ it appears to me to be at least as well attested as any other narration in any ancient historian. Indeed, he who proclaims that “truth is the source of every good both to Gods and men,” and the whole of whose works consists in detecting error and exploring certainty, can never be supposed to have wilfully deceived mankind by publishing an extravagant romance as matter of fact, with all the precision of historical detail.

Some learned men have endeavoured to prove that America is the Atlantic island of Plato; and others have thought that the extreme parts of Africa towards the south and west were regarded by Plato in this narration. These opinions, however, are so obviously erroneous, that the authors of them can hardly be supposed to have read this dialogue, and the first part of the *Timæus*; for in these it is asserted that this island, in the space of one day and night, was absorbed in the sea. I only add, that this dialogue is an appendix, as it were, to the *Timæus*, and that it is not complete, Plato being prevented by death from finishing it, as we are informed by Plutarch in his life of Solon.

¹ Πανταπασι γε μιν αληθης.

² Ο πρωτος του Πλατωνος εξηγητης Κραντωρ. *Proc. in Tim.*, p. 24 et mox — Μαρτυρουσι δε και οι προφηται φησι των Αιγυπτιων εν στηλαις ταις επι σωζομεναις ταυτα γεγραφθαι λεγοντες.

³ [Cf. “The Zend Avesta is to Zoroastrianism what the Veda is to Brahmanism,” in the same series.]

The Critias or Atlanticus of Plato

Translated by Thomas Taylor in 1804

Persons of the dialogue

Timæus, Socrates, Critias, Hermocrates

106a Timæus As pleasant, Socrates, as is rest after a long journey, so pleasing to me is the present liberation from an extended discourse. But I beseech THE WORLD, that God, which was in reality generated formerly, **b** though but recently in our discussion, to preserve those things which we have asserted with rectitude, but to inflict on us a becoming punishment if we have involuntarily said anything discordant. But the proper punishment of him who acts disorderly and inelegantly, is to make him act with order and elegance. That we may, therefore, after this speak rightly respecting the generation of the Gods, let us beseech THAT DIVINITY, THE WORLD, to impart to us *the medicine science, which is the most perfect and best of all medicines*. But having prayed, let us deliver, according to our agreement, the following discourse to Critias.

c Critias I receive it, O Timæus: and as you, at the beginning of your discussion, entreated pardon, as being about to speak of great things; in like manner, I at present entreat the same. Indeed I think that I ought **107a** to solicit pardon in a still greater degree for the ensuing discourse, though I nearly know that this my request is very ambitious, and more rustic than is proper; but, at the same time, let us begin the discourse. For who endued with a sound mind will attempt to say that the things which have been asserted by you have not been well said? But that the particulars which remain to be discussed require greater indulgence, as being more difficult, this I will endeavour to show. For he, O Timæus, **b** who discourses concerning the Gods to men, may more easily appear to speak all that is sufficient than he who discourses concerning mortals to you. For the unskilfulness and vehement ignorance of the auditors about things of this kind afford a great *copia verborum*¹ to him who enters on the discussion of them: but we know how we are circumstanced with respect to the Gods. However, that I may more plainly evince what I say, thus attend to me in what follows: it is requisite that all we shall say should become in a certain respect an imitation and a resemblance. But we see the facility and subtilty which **c** take place in the representation exhibited by pictures of divine and human bodies, in order that they may appear to the spectators to be apt imitations. We likewise see, with respect to the earth, mountains, rivers, woods, all heaven, and the revolving bodies which it contains, that at first we are delighted if anyone is able to exhibit but a slender rep-

¹ [Abundance of words, *i.e.*, a rich vocabulary]

resentation to our view; but that afterwards, as not knowing any **d** thing *accurately* about such-like particulars, we neither examine nor blame the pictures, but use an immanifest¹ and fallacious adumbration respecting them. But when anyone attempts to represent our bodies, we acutely perceive what is omitted, through our continual and familiar animadversion of them, and we become severe judges of him who does not perfectly exhibit all the requisite similitudes. It is likewise necessary to consider the same thing as taking place in discourse. For, with respect to things celestial and divine, we are delighted with assertions concerning them that are but in a small degree adapted to their nature; but we accurately examine things mortal and human. And hence it is requisite to pardon whatever in the ensuing discourse may be delivered in an unbecoming manner. For it is proper to think, that to assimilate **108a** mortal concerns to opinion, is not an easy but a difficult task. I have said all this, Socrates, being willing to remind you, and to solicit not less but greater pardon for the following discourse. But if my request shall appear to you to be just, do you willingly impart this gift?

Socrates Why should we not, O Critias, impart it? And besides this, the same pardon must be granted by us to a third. For it is evident that Hermocrates,² who is to speak shortly after, will make the same request. That he, therefore, may make a different exordium, and may not be obliged to repeat what you have said, let him know that pardon **b** is granted him, and let him, therefore, prepare to speak. But I previously announce to you, friend Critias, the conceptions of the theatre.³ For the poet has approved in a wonderful manner the person who spoke in it before; so that you will require abundant pardon in attempting to discharge the office of his successor.

Hermocrates You announce the same thing to me, Socrates, as to him. But depending men, Critias, never erect a trophy. It is, therefore, requisite **c** to proceed in a virile manner to the discourse, and, invoking Pæan and the Muses, to exhibit and celebrate ancient citizens who were excellent men.

Critias O friend Hermocrates, as you are to speak on the following day, having another to speak before you, on this account you are courageous. But he will, perhaps, manifest to you how this is to be accomplished. You, therefore, thus exhorting and encouraging me, I **d** shall obey; and besides those Gods which you have mentioned, I shall invoke others, and especially Mnemosyne. For nearly the greatest reasons and discussions are contained for us in this Divinity. If, then, we can sufficiently remember and relate the narration which was once given by the Egyptian priests, and brought hither by Solon, you know that we shall appear to this theatre to have sufficiently accomplished our part. This, therefore, must now be done, and without any further delay. **e** But first of all we must recollect, that the period of time from which a war is said to have subsisted between all those that dwelt beyond and within the pillars of Hercules, amounts to nine thousand years: and this war it is now requisite for us to discuss. Of those, therefore, that dwelt within the pillars of Hercules, this city was the leader, and is said to have fought in every battle; but of those beyond the pil-

¹ [Not manifest]

² This speech of Hermocrates is not extant.

³ *viz.*, the persons of the dialogue.

lars, the kings of the Atlantic island were the leaders. But this island we said was once larger than Libya and Asia, *but is now a mass of impervious mud, through concussions of the earth; so that those who are sailing in the vast sea can no longer find a passage from hence thither.* The course of our narration, **109a** indeed, will unfold the many barbarous nations and Grecian tribes which then existed, as they may happen to present themselves to our view: but it is necessary to relate, in the first place, the wars of the Athenians and their adversaries, together with the power and the politics of each. And in discoursing of these we shall give the preference to our own people.

b The Gods, then, once were locally allotted¹ the whole earth, but not with contention: for it would be absurd that the Gods should be ignorant of what is adapted to everyone, or that, knowing that which rather belongs to others, they should endeavour, through strife, to possess what is not their own. Likewise, receiving places agreeable to them, from the allotments of justice, they inhabited the various regions of the earth. In consequence of this, too, like shepherds, they nourished **c** us as their possessions, flocks, and herds; with this exception, however, that they did not force bodies to bodies in the same manner as shepherds, who, when feeding their cattle, compel them to come together with blows: but they considered us as a docile and obedient animal; and, as if piloting a pliant ship, employed persuasion for the rudder; and with this conception as the leader, they governed the whole mortal race. Different Gods, therefore, being allotted, adorned different places. But Vulcan and Minerva,² who possess a common nature, both because they are the offspring of the same father, and because, through philosophy and the study of arts, they tend to the same things; these, **d** I say, in consequence of this, received one allotment, *viz.* this region, as being naturally allied and adapted to virtue and prudence. But these Divinities having produced worthy, earth-born men, arranged in their intellectual part the order of a polity. Of these men the names are preserved; but their works, through the extinction of those that received them, and length of time, have disappeared. For the surviving race of men, as has been observed before, are always mountaineers, and void of discipline, who have only heard the names of men that were powerful in the region, and who, besides this, have been acquainted but with few of the transactions of the country. In consequence, therefore, of loving these ancient men, they

¹ As, according to the theology of Plato, there is not one father of the universe only, one providence, and one divine law, but many fathers subordinate to the one first father, many administrators of providence posterior to, and comprehended in, the one universal providence of the demiurgus of all things, and many laws proceeding from one first law, it is necessary that there should be different allotments, and a diversity of divine distribution. The allotment, however, of a divine nature is a government exempt from all passivity, and a providential energy about the subjects of its government.

² Vulcan is that divine power which presides over the spermatic and physical reasons, or productive principles, which the universe contains: for whatever Nature accomplishes by verging towards bodies, Vulcan performs in a divine and exempt manner, by moving Nature, and using her as an instrument in his own proper fabrication; since natural heat has a Vulcanian characteristic, and was produced by Vulcan for the purpose of fabricating a corporeal nature (ἀντι τοῦ ἐν ταῖς φύσεσι). Vulcan, therefore, is that power which perpetually presides over the fluctuating nature of bodies; and hence, says Olympiodorus, he operates with bellows (ἐν φύσει); which occultly signifies his operating in natures. But by earth we must understand matter, which was thus symbolically denominated by the ancients, as we learn from Porphyry, *De antro nympharum*. By Minerva we must understand the summit (κορυφή) of all those intellectual natures that reside in Jupiter, the artificer of the world: or, in other words, she is that deity which illuminates all mundane natures with intelligence. The Athenians, therefore, who are souls of a Minerval characteristic, may be very properly said to be the progeny of Vulcan and the Earth, because Vulcan, who perpetually imitates the intellectual energy of Minerva in his fabrication of the sensible universe, imparts to them through this imitation those *vehicles*, and those *spermatic reasons* through which in conjunction with matter they become inhabitants of this terrestrial abode.

gave the names of them to their children: but **e** they were ignorant of the virtues and laws of those before them; for of these they knew nothing, but what they gathered from certain obscure rumours; and as for many generations they were in want of necessaries, both they and their children directed their attention to the particulars of which they were destitute, discoursed about these, and neglected past **110a** and ancient transactions. For mythology, and an investigation of ancient affairs, commence in cities in conjunction with leisure, when the necessaries of life are procured; but not before. On this account the names of ancient transactions were preserved, without any account of the transactions themselves. But I infer that this was the case, said Solon, because those priests, in their narration of the war at that period, inserted many names similar to those that were adopted afterwards, such as Cecrops, Erechtheus, Erichthonius, Erisichthon, and many other of **b** those names which are commemorated prior to Theseus. This was likewise the case with the names of the women. The figure too and statue of Minerva evinced, that at that period the studies of women and men with respect to war were common, as an armed image was then dedicated to the Goddess; this serving as a document, that among animals of the same species both male and female are naturally able to **c** pursue in common every virtue, which is adapted to their species. But at that time many other tribes of citizens dwelt in this region, who were skilled in the fabricative arts, and in agriculture. The warlike tribe, however, lived from the first separate from divine men, and possessed **d** everything requisite to aliment and education. None of them, however, had any private property; for all of them considered all things as common. They likewise did not think it worthwhile to receive from other citizens beyond a sufficiency of nutriment; and they engaged in all those pursuits which we related yesterday as pertaining to the guardians of our republic. It was likewise plausibly and truly said of our region, that, in the first place, at that time its boundaries extended, on one side to the Isthmus, and on the other to Epirus, as far as to Cithæron and **e** Parnethe. These boundaries are on the descent, having Oropia on the right hand, and limiting Asopus toward the sea on the left. It is likewise said that the whole earth was vanquished by the valour of this region; and that on this account it was at that time able to support the numerous army formed from the surrounding inhabitants. But this it is said was a mighty proof of virtue. For what is now left of this country may contend with any other in fertility of soil, in the goodness **111a** of its fruits, and in pastures accommodated to every species of animals. But then it produced all these, not only thus beautiful, but likewise in the greatest abundance. But how is this credible? And by what arguments can it be shown that these are the remains of the land that then existed? The whole of this region is situated like a long promontory, extending into the sea, from the other continent. This the profound receptacle of the sea every way surrounds. *As, therefore, many and mighty deluges happened in that period of nine thousand years (for so many years have elapsed from that to the present time),* the defluxions of **b** the earth at these times, and during these calamities, from elevated places, did not, as they are elsewhere wont to do, accumulate any hillock which deserves to be mentioned, but, always flowing in a circle, at length vanished in a profundity. The parts, therefore, that are left at present are but as small islands, if compared with those that existed at that time; and may be said to resemble the bones of a diseased body; such of the earth as was soft and fat being washed away, and a thin

body **c** of the country alone remaining. But at that time the land, being unmingled, contained mountains and lofty hills; and the plains, which are now denominated Phellei, were then full of fat earth; and the mountains abounded with woods, of which there are evident tokens even at present. For there are mountains which now only afford nutriment for bees, but formerly, and at no very distant period, the largest trees were cut down from those mountains, as being adapted for buildings; and of these edifices, the coverings still remain. There were likewise many other lofty domestic trees; and most fertile pastures for **d** cattle. This region, too, every year enjoyed prolific rain, which did not then, as now, run from naked earth into the sea, but, being collected in great abundance from lofty places, and preserved for use in certain cavities of the earth, diffused copious streams of fountains and rivers to every part of the country; the truth of which is confirmed by certain sacred remains which are still to be seen in the ancient fountains. And **e** such was the natural condition of this region formerly; besides which, it was cultivated, as it is reasonable to suppose it would be, by real husbandmen, who were men of elegant manners, and of a disposition naturally good; who possessed a most excellent soil, most abundant streams of water, and a most salubrious temperament of air. But the city at that time was built in the following manner: In the first **112a** place, the Acropolis was not then, as it is at present. For now one rainy night having softened the bare land round about, in a remarkable degree, at the same time produced an earthquake; *and thus there happened a THIRD fatal inundation of water, PRIOR to the deluge of Deucalion.*¹ But prior to this, the magnitude of the Acropolis extended as far as to Eridanus and Ilissus, comprehended within itself Pnyx, and Lycabetus, and was bounded in a direction opposite to Pnyx. All the land too was glebous,² except a few places in a more elevated situation which were plain. Its exterior parts on the left hand were inhabited by artists and husbandmen, who cultivated the neighbouring land. But the warlike **b** tribe alone inhabited the elevated parts, about the temple of Minerva and Vulcan, being distributed in one enclosure round the garden as it were of one edifice. For those who raised public buildings, and common banquets for the winter season, together with whatever is adapted to a common polity, and who furnished both these, and temples themselves, **c** without gold and silver, all of this description dwelt in the northern parts of this region. For gold and silver were not employed by anyone at any time; but, pursuing a middle course between arrogance and illiberality, they built moderate houses, in which both they, and the offspring of their offspring growing old, they always left them to others like themselves. But in summer they used gardens, gymnasia, and public banquets, in places situated towards the south. There was likewise one fountain in the place where the Acropolis is now situated, which having **d** been exhausted by earthquakes, small circulating streams alone remain at present. But at that time every part was abundantly supplied with springs of water, which were of a salutary temperament both in summer and winter. In this manner, then, these places were formerly inhabited; and the men of whom we have been speaking were guardians of their own citizens, but leaders of the other willing Greeks. They likewise were especially careful that there might always be the same number of **e**

¹ The deluge of Deucalion appears to be the same with that which is mentioned by Moses; but the Jews had no knowledge of any other.

² [fertile]

men and women who by their age are able to fight, and that this number might not be less than twenty thousand. These men, therefore, being such as we have described, and always justly administering in this deluge of Deucalion appears to be the same with that which is mentioned by Moses; but the Jews had no knowledge of any other manner; both their own affairs and those of all Greece, they were esteemed and renowned beyond every other nation by all Europe and Asia, both for the beauty of their bodies and the all-various virtue of their souls.

In the next place, I shall communicate to you from the beginning the particulars respecting the adversaries of these men, if I am able to **113a** recollect what I heard when I was a boy. But, somewhat prior to this narration, it is proper to observe, that you must not be surprised at often hearing me mention Grecian names of barbarous men. For the cause of this is as follows: Solon intending to insert this narration into his verses, investigated for this purpose the power of names, and found that those first Egyptians who committed these particulars to writing transferred these names into their own tongue. He, therefore, again **b** receiving the meaning of every name, introduced that meaning into our language. And these writings were in the possession of my grandfather, and are now in mine: they were likewise the subject of my meditation while I was a boy. If, therefore, in the course of this narration you hear such names as subsist among us at present, you must not be surprised; for you know the cause. But it will require a long discourse to speak from the beginning, as I did before, concerning the allotment of the **c** Gods, and to show how they distributed the whole earth, here into larger, and there into lesser allotments, and procured temples and sacrifices for themselves. Neptune, indeed, being allotted the Atlantic island, settled his offspring by a mortal woman in a certain part of the island, of the following description: Towards the sea, but in the middle of the island, there was a plain, which is said to have been the most beautiful of all plains, and distinguished by the fertility of the soil. Near this plain, and again in the middle of it, at the distance of fifty stadia, there was a very low mountain. This was inhabited by one of those men who in the beginning sprung from the earth, and whose name was **d** Evenor. This man living with a woman called Leucippe had by her Clites, who was his only daughter. But when the virgin arrived at maturity, and her father and mother were dead, Neptune¹ being captivated with her beauty had connection with her, and enclosed the hill on which she dwelt with spiral streams of water; the sea and the land at the same time alternately forming about each other lesser and larger zones. Of these, two were formed by the land, and three by the sea; and these zones, as if made by a turner's wheel, were in all parts **e** equidistant from the middle of the island, so that the hill was inaccessible to men. For at that time there were no ships, and the art of sailing was then unknown. But Neptune, as being a divinity, easily adorned the island in the middle; caused two fountains of water to spring up from under the earth, one cold and the other hot; and likewise bestowed all-various and sufficient aliment from the earth. He also **114a** begat and educated five male twins; and having distributed all the Atlantic island into ten parts, he bestowed upon his first-born son his maternal habitation and the surrounding land; this being the larg-

¹ A dæmoniactal Neptune, or a dæmon belonging to the order of Neptune, by contributing to the procreation of the offspring of Clites, is, in mythological language, said to have been captivated with her beauty, and to have had connection with her. See the first note to the *Life of Plato* by Olympiodorus.

est and the best division. He likewise established this son king of the whole island, and made the rest of his sons governors. But he gave to each of them dominion over many people, and an extended tract of land. Besides this, too, he gave all of them names.

And his first-born son, indeed, who was the king of all the rest, he called Atlas, whence the **b** whole island was at that time denominated Atlantic. But the twin son that was born immediately after Atlas, and who was allotted the extreme parts of the island, towards the pillars of Hercules, as far as to the region which at present from that place is called Gadirc, he denominated according to his native tongue Gadirus, but which we call in Greek Eumelus.

Of his second twin offspring, he called one Ampheres, and the other Eudæmon.

The first-born of his third offspring he denominated Mneseus, and the second Autochthon.

The elder of his **c** fourth issue he called Elasippus, and the younger Mestor.

And, lastly, he denominated the first-born of his fifth issue Azaes, and the second Diaprepes.

All these and their progeny dwelt in this place, for a prodigious number of generations, ruling over many other islands, and extending their empire, as we have said before, as far as to Egypt and Tyrrhenia. But the race of Atlas was by far the most honourable; and **d** of these, the oldest king always left the kingdom, for many generations, to the eldest of his offspring. These, too, possessed wealth in such abundance as to surpass in this respect all the kings that were prior to them; nor will any that may succeed them easily obtain the like. They had likewise everything provided for them which both in a city and every other place is sought after as useful for the purposes of life. And they **e** were supplied, indeed, with many things from foreign countries, on account of their extensive empire; but the island afforded them the greater part of everything of which they stood in need. In the first place, the island supplied them with such things as are dug out of mines in a solid state, and with such as are melted: and orichalcum,¹ which is now but seldom mentioned, but then was much celebrated, was dug out of the earth in many parts of the island, and was considered as the most honourable of all metals except gold. Whatever, too, the woods afford for builders the island produced in abundance. There were likewise **115a** sufficient pastures there for tame and savage animals; together with a prodigious number of elephants. For, there were pastures for all such animals as are fed in lakes and rivers, on mountains, and in plains. And, in like manner, there was sufficient aliment for the largest and most voracious kind of animals. Besides this, whatever of odoriferous the **b** earth nourishes at present, whether roots, or grass, or wood, or juices, or gums, flowers, or fruits, these the island produced, and produced them well. Again, the island bore mild and dry fruits, such as we use for food, and of which we make bread (aliment of this kind being denominated by us leguminous), together with such meats, drinks, and ointments, as trees afford. Here, likewise, there were trees, whose fruits are used for the sake of sport and pleasure, and which it is difficult to conceal;

¹ It is uncertain what this orichalcum was: perhaps it was the same with *platina*.

together with such dainties as are used as the remedies of satiety, and are grateful to the weary. All these an island which once existed, bore sacred, beautiful, and wonderful, and in infinite abundance. **c** The inhabitants, too, receiving all these from the earth, constructed temples, royal habitations, ports, docks, and all the rest of the region, disposing them in the following manner: In the first place, those who resided about the ancient metropolis united by bridges those zones of the sea which we before mentioned, and made a road both to the external parts and to the royal abode. But the palace of the king was from the first immediately raised in this very habitation of the God and **d** their ancestors. This being adorned by one person after another in continued succession, the latter of each always surpassing the former in the ornaments he bestowed, the palace became at length astonishingly large and beautiful. For they dug a trench as far as to the outermost zone, which commencing from the sea extended three acres in breadth, and fifty stadia in length. And that ships might sail from this sea to that zone as a port, they enlarged its mouth, so that it might be sufficient to **e** receive the largest vessels. They likewise divided by bridges those zones of the earth which separated the zones of the sea, so that with one three-banked galley they might sail from one zone to the other; and covered the upper part of the zones in such a manner that they might sail under them. For the lips of the zones of earth were higher than the sea. But the greatest of these zones, towards which the sea directed its course, was in breadth three stadia: the next in order was of the same dimension. But, of the other two, the watery circle was in breadth two stadia; and that of earth was again equal to the preceding circle of water: **116a** but the zone which ran round the island in the middle was one stadium in breadth. The island which contained the palace of the king was five stadia in diameter. This, together with the zones, and the bridge which was every way an acre in breadth, they inclosed with a wall of stone, and raised towers and gates on the bridges according to the course of the **b** sea. Stones, too, were dug out from under the island, on all sides of it, arid from within and without the zones: some of which were white, others black, and others red: and these stone quarries, on account of the cavity of the rock, afforded two convenient docks. With respect to the edifices, some were of a simple structure, and others were raised from stones of different colours; thus by variety pursuing pleasure, which was allied to their nature. They likewise covered the superficies of the wall which inclosed the most outward zone with brass, using it for this purpose as an ointment; but they covered the superficies of that wall which inclosed the interior zone with tin: and lastly, they covered that **c** which inclosed the acropolis with orichalcum, which shines with a fiery splendour.

The royal palace within the acropolis was constructed as follows: In the middle of it there was a temple, difficult of access, sacred to Clites and Neptune, and which was surrounded with an inclosure of gold. In this place assembling in the beginning, they produced the race of ten kings; and from the ten divisions of the whole region here collected every year, they performed seasonable sacrifices to each. But the temple **d** of Neptune was one stadium in length, and three acres in breadth; and its altitude was commensurate to its length and breadth. There was something, however, barbaric in its form. All the external parts of the temple, except the summit, were covered with silver; for that was covered with gold. With respect to the internal parts, the roof was entirely formed from ivory, variegated with gold, silver, and orichalcum

but as to all the other parts, such as the walls, pillars, and pavement, **e** these were adorned with orichalcum. Golden statues, too, were placed in the temple; and the God himself was represented standing on a chariot, and governing six-winged horses; while, at the same time, through his magnitude, he touched the roof with his head. An hundred Nereids upon dolphins were circularly disposed about him; for at that time this was supposed to be the number of the Nereids. There were likewise many other statues of private persons dedicated within the temple. Round the temple, on the outside, stood golden images of all the women and men that had descended from the ten kings: together with many other statues of kings and private persons, which had been dedicated from the city, and from foreign parts that were in subjection to the Atlantic island. There was an altar, too, which accorded in magnitude and construction with the other ornaments of the temple; and in like manner, the palace was adapted to the magnitude of the **117a** empire, and the decorations of the sacred concerns. The inhabitants, likewise, used fountains both of hot and cold water, whose streams were copious, and naturally salubrious and pleasant in a wonderful degree. About the fountains, too, edifices were constructed, and trees planted, adapted to these fontal waters. Receptacles of water, likewise, were **b** placed round the fountains, some of which were exposed to the open air, but others were covered, as containing hot baths for the winter season. Of these receptacles, some were appropriated to the royal family, and others, apart from these, to private individuals; and again, some were set apart for women, and others for horses and other animals of the yoke; a proper ornament at the same time being distributed to each. They likewise brought defluent¹ streams to the grove of Neptune, together with all-various trees of an admirable beauty and height, through the fecundity of the soil: and thence they derived these streams to the exterior circles, by conducting them through channels over the bridges. **c** But in each island of these exterior circles there were many temples of many Gods, together with many gardens, and gymnasias apart from each other, some for men, and others for horses. But about the middle of the largest of the islands there was a principal hippodrome, which was a stadium in breadth, and the length of which extended round the whole circle, for the purpose of exercising the horses. On all sides of the hippodrome stood the dwellings of the officers of the guards. But the **d** defence of the place was committed to the more faithful soldiers, who dwelt in the smaller circle, and before the acropolis; and the most faithful of all the soldiers were assigned habitations within the acropolis, and round the royal abodes. The docks, likewise, were full of three-banked galleys, and of such apparatus as is adapted to vessels of this kind. And in this manner the parts about the royal palaces were disposed. But having passed beyond the external ports, which were **e** three in number, a circular wall presented itself to the view, beginning from the sea, and every way distant from the greatest of the circles and the port by an interval of fifty stadia. This wall terminated in the mouth of the trench which was towards the sea. The whole space, too, inclosed by the wall was crowded with houses; and the bay and the greatest harbour were full of ships and merchants that came from all parts. Hence, through the great multitude that were here assembled, there was an all-various clamour and tumult both by day and night. And thus we have

¹ [flowing down]

nearly related the particulars respecting the city and the ancient habitation, as they were then unfolded by the Egyptian **118a** priests. In the next place, we shall endeavour to relate what was the nature, and what the arrangement, of the rest of the region.

First, then, every place is said to have been very elevated and abrupt which was situated near the sea; but all the land round the city was a plain, which circularly invested the city, but was itself circularly inclosed by mountains which extended as far as to the sea. This plain too was smooth and equable; and its whole length, from one side to the other, was three thousand stadia; but, according to its middle from the sea **b** upwards, it was two thousand stadia. The whole island, likewise, was situated towards the south, but from its extremities was exposed to the north. Its mountains were then celebrated as surpassing all that exist at present in multitude, magnitude, and beauty; and contained many villages, whose inhabitants were wealthy. Here, too, there were rivers, lakes, and meadows, which afforded sufficient nutriment for all tame and savage animals; together with woods, various both in multitude and kind, and in abundance adequate to the several purposes to which they are subservient. This plain, therefore, both by nature and the labours of **c** many kings in a long period of time, was replete with fertility. Its figure, too, was that of a square, for the most part straight and long; but on account of the trench which was dug round it, it was deficient in straightness. The depth, breadth, and length of this trench are incredible, when compared with other labours accomplished by the hands of men: but, at the same time, we must relate what we have heard. Its depth was one acre; and its breadth everywhere a stadium. **d** And as it was dug round the whole plain, its length was consequently ten thousand stadia.¹ This trench received the streams falling from the mountains, and which, circularly flowing round the plain towards the city, and being collected from different parts, at length poured themselves from the trench into the sea. Ditches one hundred feet in breadth, being cut in a right line from this part, were again sent through the plain into the trench near the sea: but these were separated from each other by an interval of one hundred stadia. The inhabitants brought wood to the city from the mountains, and other seasonable articles, in twofold vessels, through the trenches; for the trenches intersected each other obliquely, and towards the city. Every year, too, they twice collected the fruits of the earth; in winter using the waters from Jupiter, and in summer bringing the productions of the earth through the streams deduced from the trenches. With respect to the multitude of men in the plain useful for the purposes of war, it was **119a** ordered that a commander-in-chief should be taken out of each allotment. But the magnitude of each allotted portion of land was ten times ten stadia; and the number of all the allotments was sixty thousand. There is said to have been an infinite number of men from the mountains and the rest of the region; and all of them were distributed according to places and villages into these allotments, under their respective leaders. The commander in chief, therefore, of each division was ordered to bring into the field of battle a sixth part of the war-chariots, the whole amount of which was ten thousand, together with two horses and two charioteers: and again, it was decreed

¹ That is, 1250 miles. This trench, however, was not a more surprising effort of human industry than is the present wall of China.

that he **b** should bring two horses yoked by the side of each other, but without a seat, together with a man who might descend armed with a small shield, and who after the charioteer might govern the two horses: likewise, that he should bring two heavy-armed soldiers, two slingers, three light-armed soldiers, three hurlers of stones, and three ejaculators, together with four sailors, in order to fill up the number of men sufficient for one thousand two hundred ships. And in this manner were the warlike affairs of the royal city disposed. But those of the other nine cities were disposed in a different manner, which it would **c** require a long time to relate. The particulars respecting the governors were instituted from the beginning as follows: Each of the ten kings possessed absolute authority both over the men and the greater part of the laws in his own division, and in his own city, punishing and putting to death whomsoever he pleased. But the government and communion of these kings with each other were conformable to the mandates given by Neptune; and this was likewise the case with their laws. These mandates were delivered to them by their ancestors inscribed on a pillar of orichalcum, which was erected about the middle of the island, in the **d** temple of Neptune. These kings, therefore, assembled together every fifth, and alternately every sixth year, for the purpose of distributing an equal part both to the even and the odd; and, when assembled, they deliberated on the public affairs, inquired if anyone had acted improperly, and, if he had, called him to account for his conduct. But when they were about to sit in judgment on anyone, they bound each other by the following compact: As, prior to this judicial process, there were hulls in the temple of Neptune, free from all restraint, **e** they selected ten of these, and vowed to the God, they would offer a sacrifice which should be acceptable to him, *viz.* a victim taken without iron, and hunted with clubs and snares. Hence, whatever bull was caught by them they led to the pillar, and cut its throat on the summit of the column, agreeably to the written mandates. But on the pillar, besides the laws, there was an oath, supplicating mighty imprecations against **120a** those that were disobedient. When, therefore, sacrificing according to their laws, they began to burn all the members of the hull, they poured out of a full bowl a quantity of clotted blood for each of them, and gave the rest to the fire; at the same time lustrating the pillar. After this, drawing out of the bowl in golden cups, and making a libation in the fire, they took an oath that they would judge according to the laws inscribed on the pillar, and would punish anyone who prior to this should be found guilty; and likewise that they would never willingly transgress anyone of the written mandates. They added, that they **b** would neither govern, nor be obedient to anyone who governed, contrary to the prescribed laws of their country. When everyone had thus supplicated both for himself and those of his race, after he had drunk, and had dedicated the golden cup to the temple of the God, he withdrew to the supper, and his necessary concerns. But when it was **c** dark, and the fire about the sacrifice was abated, all of them, invested with a most beautiful azure garment, and sitting on the ground near the burnt victims, spent the whole night in extinguishing the fire of the sacrifice, and in judging and being judged, if any person had accused some one of them of having transgressed the laws.

When the judicial process was finished, and day appeared, they wrote the decisions in a golden table, which together with their garments they dedicated as monuments, in the temple of the God. There were also many other laws respecting sacred con-

cerns, and such as were peculiar to the several kings; but the greatest were the following: That they should never wage war against each other, and that all of them should **d** give assistance if any person in some one of their cities should endeavour to extirpate the royal race. And as they consulted in common respecting war and other actions, in the same manner as their ancestors, they assigned the empire to the Atlantic family. But they did not permit the king to put to death any of his kindred, unless it seemed fit to more than five out of the ten kings. Such then being the power, and of such magnitude, at that time, in those places, Divinity transferred it from thence to these parts, as it is reported, on the following occasion: For **e** many generations, the Atlantics, as long as the nature of the God was sufficient for them, were obedient to the laws, and benignantly affected toward a divine nature, to which they were allied. For they possessed true, and in every respect magnificent conceptions; and employed mildness in conjunction with prudence, both in those casual circumstances which are always taking place, and towards each other. Hence, despising everything except virtue, they considered the concerns of the present life as trifling, and therefore easily endured them; and were of opinion that abundance of riches and other possessions was **121a** nothing more than a burthen. Nor were they intoxicated by luxury, nor did they fall into error, in consequence of being blinded by incontinence; but, being sober and vigilant, they acutely perceived that all these things were increased through common friendship, in conjunction with virtue; but that, by eagerly pursuing and honouring them, these external goods themselves were corrupted, and, together with them, virtue and common friendship were destroyed. From reasoning of this kind, and from the continuance of a divine nature, all the particulars which we have previously discussed, were increased among them. But when that portion of divinity, or divine destiny, which they enjoyed, vanished from among them, in consequence of being frequently mingled with much of a mortal nature and human **b** manners prevailed, then, being no longer able to bear the events of the present life, they acted in a disgraceful manner. Hence, to those who were capable of seeing, they appeared to be base characters, men who separated things most beautiful from such as are most honourable: but by those who were unable to perceive the true life, which conducts to felicity, they were considered as then in the highest degree worthy and blessed, in consequence of being filled with an unjust desire of possessing, and transcending in power. But Jupiter, the God of Gods, who governs by law, and who is able to perceive everything of this kind, when he saw that an equitable race was in a miserable condition, **c** and was desirous of punishing them, in order that by acquiring temperance they might possess more elegant manners, excited all the Gods to assemble in their most honourable habitation, whence, being seated as in the middle of the universe, he beholds all such things as participate of generation: and having assembled the Gods, he thus addressed them: . . .

[The remainder of the text is wanting]

