TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GREEK OF THE FOLLOWING TREATISES OF PLOTINUS; VIZ. ON SUICIDE. WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM PORPHYRY AND PROCLUS

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Translations from the Greek of the following Treatises of Plotinus; Viz. On Suicide. With Additional Notes from Porphyry and Proclus by Thomas Taylor

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THOMAS TAYLOR

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GREEK OF THE FOLLOWING TREATISES OF PLOTINUS; VIZ. ON SUICIDE. WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM PORPHYRY AND PROCLUS

Trieste

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GREEK

OF SOME

TREATISES OF PLOTINUS:

ON SUICIDE, &c.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GREEK

OF THE FOLLOWING

TREATISES OF PLOTINUS;

VIZ.

ON SUICIDE,

TO WHICH IS ADDED

AN EXTRACT FROM THE HARLEIAN MS. OF THE SCHOLIA OF OLYMPIODORUS ON THE PHÆDO OF PLATO RESPECTING SUICIDE, ACCOMPANIED BY THE GREEK TEXT;

TWO BOOKS ON TRULY EXISTING BEING;

AND EXTRACTS FROM HIS TREATISE ON THE MANNER IN WHICH THE MULTITUDE OF IDEAS SUBSISTS, AND CONCERNING

THE GOOD;

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM

PORPHYRY AND PROCLUS.

BY

THOMAS TAYLOR,

TRANSLATOR OF PLATO, ARISTOTLE, ETC. ETC.

Φευγωμεν συν νηυσι φιλην ες πατριδα γαιαν.

Iliad, ii. 140.

"Haste, let us fly, and all our sails expand,
To gain our dear, our long-lost native land."

Πατρις δε ημιν οθεν παρηλθομεν, και πατηρ εκει.

PLOTIN. *de Pulchritud.*, p. 57.

"Our [true] country [*i.e.* truly existing being] is that from whence we came, and where our father lives."

LONDON:

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RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

PREFACE.

OF Plotinus, who for the sublimity of his genius and the profundity of his conceptions has been no less justly than unanimously dignified by his followers with the appellation of *the great*, I have elsewhere given the life from Porphyry[a], who of all his disciples was the most learned and the best.

I rejoice, therefore, in the opportunity which is now afforded me of adding a translation of the following books to those which I have already published of this most extraordinary man[b]. For this

[a] In his Life of Plotinus, of which the reader will find the substance in the Introduction to my Translation of Select Works of Plotinus, 8vo. 1817.

[b] For the sake of those who have not, but may wish to have, all that I have translated of the works of Plotinus, prior to the present work, the following list is added of those translations:

On the Beautiful, a paraphrased translation. 12mo. 1787.

That Intelligibles are not external to Intellect, and concerning *the Good*.

On Intelligible Beauty. See my History of the Restoration of the Platonic Theology at the end of vol. ii. of my Proclus on Euclid. 4to. 1788.

Five Books, entitled: On Felicity; On the Nature and Origin of Evil; On Providence; On Nature, Contemplation, and the One; and On the Descent of the Soul. 8vo. 1794.

Select Works, viz. On the Virtues; On Dialectic; On Matter;

opportunity I am indebted to the patronage of a gentleman (Charles Attwood, Esq.) who, through his great abilities and worth, and a sagacity which, in the present age, is rare in the extreme, has been led to admire and study the writings of Plato, "the mighty, magnificent, and immortal philosopher of Athens." This gentleman did me also the honour to patronize my translation of a work of Proclus respecting Providence and the Subsistence of Evil; and of such a man, I may truly say with *Heraclitus*, that "*his praise is equivalent to that of a countless multitude.*"

Εις εμοι μυριοι πολλοι.

Porphyry informs us, in the above-mentioned Life, that during the six years in which he was the companion as well as disciple of Plotinus, many questions of a very abstruse nature were discussed in their philosophical conversations, which, at the joint request of Porphyry and Amelius, Plotinus committed to writing, and produced from their in-

Against the Gnostics; On the Impassivity of Incorporeal Natures; On Eternity and Time; On the Immortality of the Soul; On the Three Hypostases that rank as the Principles of Things; On Intellect, Ideas, and Real Being; On the Essence of Soul; On the Generation and Order of Things after the First; On Gnostic Hypostases, and that which is beyond them; That the Nature which is beyond Being is not Intellective; and What that is which is Primarily, and also that which is Secondarily, Intellective; and On the Good, or the One. 8vo. 1817.

vestigation two elaborate and admirable books *On truly existing being, demonstrating that it is everywhere one and the same whole.* Though these books, from the brevity of the diction with which they are composed, and which, also, equally applies to all the writings of Plotinus, and from the very occult nature of their subject, are beyond the comprehension of the multitude, yet the man of intellect, who is only moderately skilled in the philosophy of Plato, will find many beautiful passages in them which he will immediately understand, and many sublime truths to which he will immediately assent. In short, what I have elsewhere said[1] of this most extraordinary man, who was the first that brought to light the divine wisdom of Plato, after it had been in oblivion for five hundred years, will be admitted by every one whose mental eye, in Homeric language, has been purged from mortal mists,

[1] *i. e.* In my panegyric on the most eminent intellectual philosophers of antiquity, in my Dissertation on the Philosophy of Aristotle, from which the following lines respecting Plotinus are extracted:

"Genius sublime! whilst bound in mortal ties,
Thy soul had frequent commerce with the skies,
And oft you loos'ned the lethargic folds
By which th' indignant mind dark matter holds.
What depth of thought, what energy is thine!
What rays of intellect in ev'ry line!
The more we fathom thy exalted mind,
A stronger light, a greater depth we find."