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The Republic

transl by H. Davis

A 31

Such as are excited in sleep, when the rest of the soul – which is rational, mild, and its governing principle – is asleep, and when that part which is savage and rude, being satisfied with food and drink, frisks about, drives away sleep, and seeks to go and accomplish its practices: in such an one, you know, it dares to do everything, because it is loosed and disengaged from all modesty and prudence: for, if it pleases, it scruples not at the embraces, even of a mother, or of any one else, whether gods, men, or beasts; nor to commit murder, nor abstain from any sort of meat – and in one word, it is wanting neither in folly nor shamelessness. x You speak most truly, replied he. But when a man is in good health, methinks, and lives temperately, and goes to sleep after exciting his reason, and feasting it with noble reasonings and investigations, having thus attained to an internal harmony, and given up the appetites neither to want nor repletion, that they may be at rest, either by joy or grief, but suffer it by itself alone without



interruption to inquire and long to apprehend what it knows not
either something of what has existed, or now exists, or will exist
hereafter; and so also, having soothed the spirited part of the
soul, and not allowed it to be hurried into transports of anger, or
to fall asleep with agitated passion; but after having quieted these
two parts of the soul, and roused to action that third part, in
which wisdom dwells, he will thus take his rest; you know, that by
such an one the truth is best apprehended, and the visions of his
dreams are then least of all portrayed contrary to the law. I am
quite of this opinion, said he. We have digressed indeed a little
too far in talking of these things; but what we want to know is this,
that in every one resides a certain species of desires that are ter-
rible, savage, and irregular, even in some that we deem ever so
moderate; and this indeed becomes manifest in sleep.