

and as things were thus called after the Ideas, the Ideas had a priority and pre-eminence assigned them. The *Idea* of Good, Beautiful, and Wise was the "First Good," the "First Beautiful," the "First Wise." This dignity and distinction were ultimately carried to a large extent. Those Ideas were described as eternal and self-subsisting, forming an "Intelligible World," full of the models or archetypes of created things. But it is not to our purpose here to consider the Platonic Ideas in their theological bearings. In physics they were applied in the same form as in morals. The *primum calidum*, *primum frigidum* were those Ideas of fundamental Principles by participation of which, all things were hot or cold.

This school did not much employ itself in the development of its principles as applied to physical inquiries: but we are not without examples of such speculations. Plutarch's Treatise *Περὶ τοῦ Πρώτου Ψυχροῦ*, "On the First Cold," may be cited as one. It is in reality a discussion of a question which has been agitated in modern times also;—whether cold be a positive quality or a mere privation. "Is there, O Favorinus," he begins, "a First Power and Essence of the Cold, as Fire is of the Hot; by a certain presence and participation of which all other things are cold: or is rather coldness a privation of heat, as darkness is of light, and rest of motion?"

3. *Technical Forms of the Pythagoreans.*—The *Numbers* of the Pythagoreans, when propounded as the explanation of physical phenomena, as they were, are still more obscure than the Ideas of the Platonists. There were, indeed, considerable resemblances in the way in which these two kinds of notions were spoken of. Plato called his Ideas *unities*, *monads*; and as, according to him, Ideas, so, according to the Pythagoreans, Numbers, were the causes of things being what they are.²⁸ But there was this difference, that things shared the nature of the Platonic Ideas "by participation," while they shared the nature of Pythagorean Numbers "by imitation." Moreover, the Pythagoreans followed their notion out into much greater development than any other school, investing particular numbers with extraordinary attributes, and applying them by very strange and forced analogies. Thus the number Four, to which they gave the name of *Tetractys*, was held to be the most perfect number, and was conceived to correspond to the human soul, in some way which appears to be very imperfectly understood by the commentators of this philosophy.

²⁸ Arist. *Metaph.* i. 6.