

PLATONIC PARADOXES.

A NEW SONG.

AIR—The tight little Island.

IN how many strange ways
 Human nature displays
 The caprices that enter her pate, O!
 To which view you'll be led
 If some pages you've read
 In the Oxford translation of Plato.
 What a wonderful writer is Plato!
 And how well Jowett's pen can translate, O!
 But I clearly discover
 On reading him over
 Some very odd notions in Plato.

The fears of the brave
 Make us always look grave,
 And the mean little tricks of the great, O!

So the foolish things too
 That the wise say and do
 Are ridiculous even in Plato.
 Upon some points I quite go with Plato,
 In the same way as Addison's Cato :
 But some marvellous flaws
 As to justice and laws
 Mark the model Republic of Plato.

Every honest man grieves
 At the number of thieves
 That our social temptations create, O !
 And our hearts are all sore
 For the wretchedly poor ;
 And I'm sure the same feelings had Plato.
 But the system propounded by Plato,
 These deplorable ills to abate, O !
 Was to break off with Mammon,
 Have all things in common :
 "Private property's gammon"—said Plato.

There can never be theft
 When no property's left
 To give Meum and Tuum their weight, O !
 And when all's a dead level,
 Starvation and revel
 Alike are excluded by Plato.

These Communist doctrines of Plato
Have again come in fashion of late, O !
 But the makers of money,
 The hoarders of honey,
Won't be pleased with these projects of Plato.

 Then the struggles and strife
 Which attend married life,
And oft turn early love into hate, O !
 Its profligate courses,
 Desertions, Divorces,
Must have hurt the fine feelings of Plato.
But a very bad cure proposed Plato
(For I don't think him here *the potato*),
 "Make the man and the woman,
 Like property, *common* ;—
And the children as well : " added Plato.

 No folks were to wed
 That were not thorough-bred,
And each wedding should last a short date, O !
 And if children appeared
 Not quite fit to be reared,
They were never acknowledged by Plato.

'Twas a delicate question with Plato,
Upon which he dislikes to dilate, O !
But we all of us know
Where the puppy-dogs go
When the litter's too many for Plato.

On this question that vexes
Us as to the sexes,
Our author don't long hesitate, O !
Women's duties and rights,
Whether beauties or frights,
Are completely conceded by Plato.
But the pace here adopted by Plato
Seems to move at too rapid a rate, O !
All must go to the wars
And be servants of Mars,
Both the women and men, under Plato.

On another small point
He appears out of joint,
Though perhaps it admits of debate, O !
Shall philosophers solely
Rule over us wholly,
Or our kings be the pupils of Plato ?

Suppose them as clever as Plato,
How would Darwin or Mill rule the state, O!
Should you think Epicurus
A good Palinurus,
Or would England be governed by Plato?

A philosopher's schemes
Are made up of fond dreams
And of idle Utopian prate, O!
For while Theory preaches,
'Tis Practice that teaches,
And corrects the wild crotchets of Plato.
So the model Republic of Plato
Must submit to the general fate, O!
Lay the book on the shelf,
And each man make HIMSELF
What a Christian would wish for in Plato.

NOTE.—While we thus venture, under the allowed garb of ridicule, to record some plain truths as to certain extravagant views suggested by Plato in his Republic, we should do injustice to our own feelings if we did not at the same time express the pleasure and admiration which have been excited in us by the remarkable Translation of that author that has just issued from the Clarendon Press. This work by Professor Jowett is one of the most splendid and valuable gifts to Literature and Philosophy that have for a long time been offered. Its first or most obvious excellence is the perfect ease and grace of the translation, which is thoroughly English, and yet entirely exempt from any phrase or feature at variance with the Hel-

lenic character. Very few translations, other than the Bible, read like an original: but this is one of them. It has other and more recondite excellences. It is the work, almost the life-labour, we believe, of a profound scholar, a thoughtful moralist and metaphysician, and a most successful instructor of youth: and it is manifest that the complete success that has attended his execution of the task is itself the means of concealing the diligence, industry, and ability with which philological and interpretative difficulties must have been solved or overcome. It is a great matter, even for the best scholars, to possess such a guide and help in the study of the original; and to others, desirous of knowing thoroughly and appreciating worthily the wise thoughts and literary beauties of one of the greatest writers that ever lived, the boon is inestimable.