Brief General Notes on Neoplatonism

1. Most important authentic (pagan) Neoplatonists of antiquity (for us): Plotinus and Proclus
2. What is Neoplatonism? A systematic philosophy based on the leading theological ideas of the Platonic dialogues
3. Organization of the works of Plotinus—the six “Enneads” (groups of nine). The works of Plotinus were cast into this form after the author’s death by his biographer and editor, Porphyry
4. (In the works of Plotinus I have perused lately) he relies, of the works of Plato, most on the Symposium, Republic, and Timaeus)
5. The Neoplatonic hierarchy of causality:
   a. The Good or One
   b. Mind-Being
   c. Soul
   d. Body
   e. Matter
6. The One is beyond perception or thought, and is the origin of all
7. All things emanate from and return in some manner to the One
8. Time is the life of soul, eternity is the life of Mind
9. We (humans) live partly on the level of soul, partly on the level of mind—thus, partly in time, partly in eternity
10. Virtue is to live in Mind
11. Evil does not affect our souls insofar as they are in themselves, but only insofar as they are involved with body
12. Souls have freedom of will
13. Individual souls are reincarnated, and live future lives that justly compensate the manner of their present lives
14. The evil principle is matter, or pure formlessness