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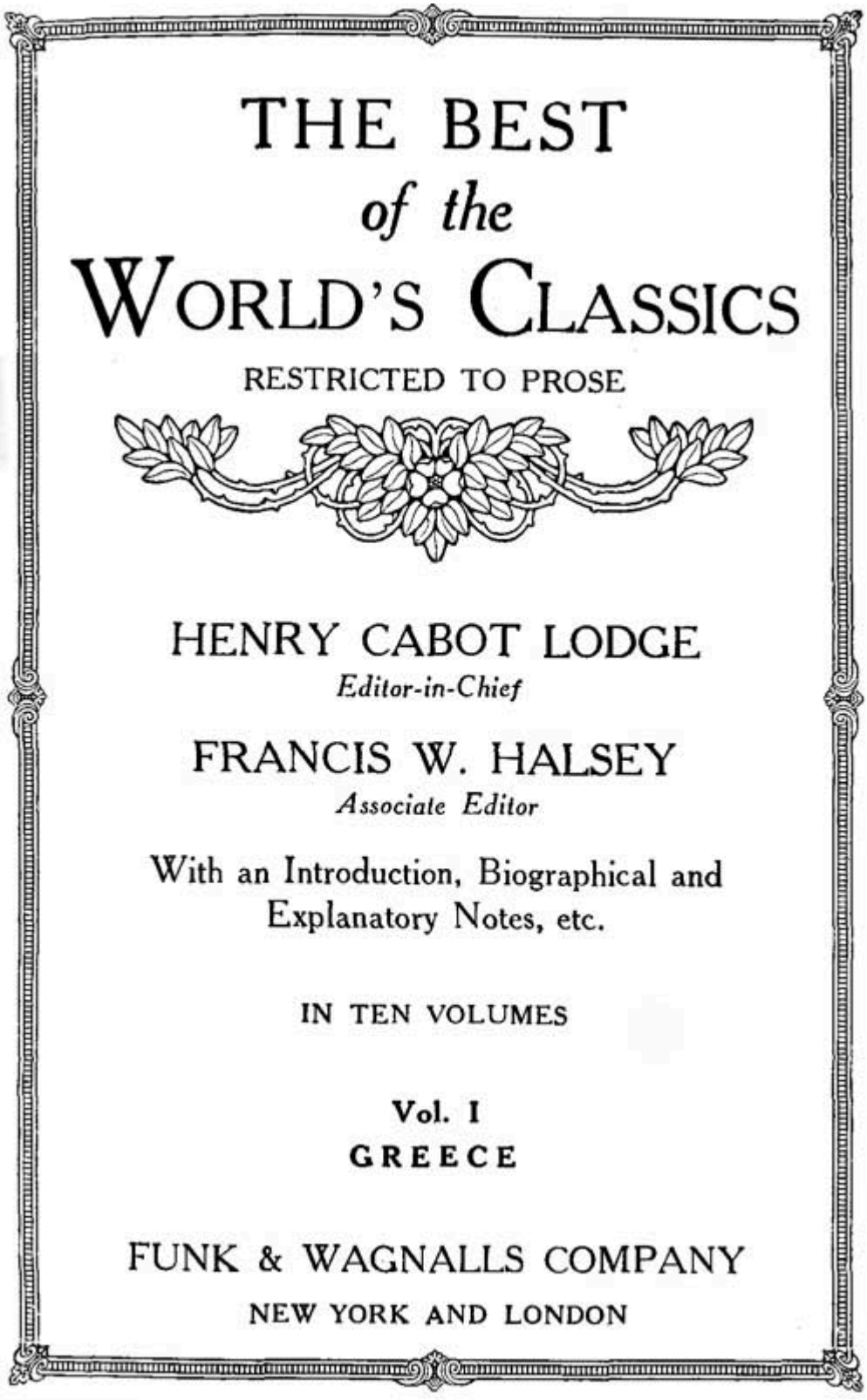
HENRY CABOT LODGE



THE BEST

of the

WORLD'S CLASSICS

RESTRICTED TO PROSE

HENRY CABOT LODGE

Editor-in-Chief

FRANCIS W. HALSEY

Associate Editor

With an Introduction, Biographical and Explanatory Notes, etc.

IN TEN VOLUMES

Vol. I

GREECE

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY

NEW YORK AND LONDON

The Best of the World's Classics

VOL. I

GREECE

484 B.C.—200 A.D.

INTRODUCTION [v]

Ever since civilized man has had a literature he has apparently sought to make selections from it and thus put his favorite passages together in a compact and convenient form. Certain it is, at least, that to the Greeks, masters in all great arts, we owe this habit. They made such collections and named them, after their pleasant imaginative fashion, a gathering of flowers, or what we, borrowing their word, call an anthology. So to those austere souls who regard anthologies as a labor-saving contrivance for the benefit of persons who like a smattering of knowledge and are never really learned, we can at least plead in mitigation that we have high and ancient authority for the practise. In any event no amount of scholarly deprecation has been able to turn mankind or that portion of mankind which reads books from the agreeable habit of making volumes of selections and finding in them much pleasure, as well as improvement in taste and knowledge. With [vi] the spread of education and with the great increase of literature among all civilized nations, more especially since the invention of printing and its vast multiplication of books, the making of volumes of selections comprizing what is best in one's own or in many literatures is no longer a mere matter of taste or convenience as with the Greeks, but has become something little short of a necessity in this world of many workers, comparatively few scholars, and still fewer intelligent men of leisure. Anthologies have been multiplied like all other books, and in the main they have done much good and no harm. The man who thinks he is a scholar or highly educated because he is familiar with what is collected in a well-chosen anthology, of course, errs grievously. Such familiarity no more makes one a master of literature than a perusal of a dictionary makes the reader a master of style. But as the latter pursuit can hardly fail to enlarge a man's vocabulary, so the former adds to his knowledge, increases his stock of ideas, liberalizes his mind and opens to him new sources of enjoyment.

The Greek habit was to bring together selections of verse, passages of especial merit, [vii] epigrams and short poems. In the main their example has been followed. From their days down to the "Elegant Extracts in Verse" of our grandmothers and grandfathers, and thence on to our own time with its admirable "Golden Treasury" and "Oxford Handbook of Verse," there has been no end to the making of poetical anthologies and apparently no diminution in the public appetite for them. Poetry indeed lends itself to selection. Much of the best poetry of the world is contained in short poems, complete in themselves, and capable of transference bodily to a volume of selections. There are very few poets of whose quality and genius a fair idea can not be given by a few judicious selections. A large body of noble and beautiful poetry, of verse which is "a joy forever," can also be given in a very small compass. And the mechanical attribute of size, it must be remembered, is very important in making a successful anthology, for an essential quality of a volume of selections is that it should be easily portable, that it should be a book which can be slipt into the pocket and readily carried about in any wanderings whether [viii] near or remote. An anthology which is stored in one or more huge and heavy volumes is practically valueless except to those who have neither books nor access to a public library, or who think that a stately tome printed on calendered paper and "profusely

illustrated" is an ornament to a center-table in a parlor rarely used except on solemn or official occasions.

I have mentioned these advantages of verse for the purposes of an anthology in order to show the difficulties which must be encountered in making a prose selection. Very little prose is in small parcels which can be transferred entire, and therefore with the very important attribute of completeness, to a volume of selections. From most of the great prose writers it is necessary to take extracts, and the chosen passage is broken off from what comes before and after. The fame of a great prose writer as a rule rests on a book, and really to know him the book must be read and not merely passages from it. Extracts give no very satisfactory idea of "Paradise Lost" or "The Divine Comedy," and the same is true of extracts from a history or a novel. It is possible by spreading prose selections through a series of small volumes to overcome the mechanical difficulty and thus make [ix]
the selections in form what they ought above all things to be—companions and not books of reference or table decorations. But the spiritual or literary problem is not so easily overcome. What prose to take and where to take it are by no means easy questions to solve. Yet they are well worth solving, so far as patient effort can do it, for in this period of easy printing it is desirable to put in convenient form before those who read examples of the masters which will draw us back from the perishing chatter of the moment to the literature which is the highest work of civilization and which is at once noble and lasting.

Upon that theory this collection has been formed. It is an attempt to give examples from all periods and languages of Western civilization of what is best and most memorable in their prose literature. That the result is not a complete exhibition of the time and the literatures covered by the selections no one is better aware than the editors. Inexorable conditions of space make a certain degree of incompleteness inevitable when he who is gathering flowers traverses so vast a garden, and is obliged to confine the results of his [x]
labors within such narrow bounds. The editors are also fully conscious that, like all other similar collections, this one too will give rise to the familiar criticism and questionings as to why such a passage was omitted and such another inserted; why this writer was chosen and that other passed by. In literature we all have our favorites, and even the most catholic of us has also his dislikes if not his pet aversions. I will frankly confess that there are authors represented in these volumes whose writings I should avoid, just as there are certain towns and cities of the world to which, having once visited them, I would never willingly return, for the simple reason that I would not voluntarily subject myself to seeing or reading what I dislike or, which is worse, what bores and fatigues me. But no editor of an anthology must seek to impose upon others his own tastes and opinions. He must at the outset remember and never afterward forget that so far as possible his work must be free from the personal equation. He must recognize that some authors who may be mute or dull to him have a place in literature, past or present, sufficiently assured to [xi]
entitle them to a place among selections which are intended above all things else to be representative.

To those who wonder why some favorite bit of their own was omitted while something else for which they do not care at all has found a place I can only say that the editors, having suppressed their own personal preferences, have proceeded on certain general principles which seem to be essential in making any selection either of verse or prose which shall possess broader and more enduring qualities than that of being a mere exhibition of the editor's personal taste. To illustrate my meaning: Emerson's "Parnassus" is extremely interesting as an exposition of the tastes and preferences of a remarkable man of great and original genius. As an anthology it is a failure, for it is of awkward size, is ill arranged and contains selections made without system, and which in many cases baffle all attempts to explain their appearance. On the other hand, Mr. Palgrave, neither a very remarkable man nor a great and original genius, gave us in the first "Golden Treasury" a collection which has no interest whatever as reflecting the tastes of the editor, [xii]
but which is quite perfect in its kind. Barring the disproportionate amount of Wordsworth which includes some of his worst things—and which, be it said in passing, was due to Mr. Palgrave's giving way at that point to his personal enthusiasm—the "Golden

Treasury" in form, in scope, and in arrangement, as well as in almost unerring taste, is the best model of what an anthology should be which is to be found in any language.

Returning now to our questioner who misses some favorite and finds something else which he dislikes, the only answer, as I have just said, is that the collection is formed on certain general principles, as any similar collection of the sort must be. This series is called "The Best of the World's Classics," and "classics" is used not in the narrow and technical sense, but rather in that of Thoreau, who defined classics as "the noblest recorded thoughts of mankind." Therefore, the first principle of guidance in selection is to take examples of the great writings which have moved and influenced the thought of the world, and which have preeminently the quality of "high seriousness" as required by [xiii] Aristotle. This test alone, however, would limit the selections too closely. Therefore the second principle of choice is to make selections from writers historically important either personally or by their writings. The third rule is to endeavor to give selections which shall be representative of the various literatures and the various periods through which, the collection ranges. Lastly, and this applies, of course, only to passages taken from the writers of England and the United States, the effort has been to give specimens of the masters of English prose, of that prose in its development and at its best, and to show, so far as may be, what can be accomplished with that great instrument, and what a fine style really is as exhibited in the best models. Everything contained in these volumes is there in obedience to one at least of these principles, many in obedience to more than one, some in conformity to all four.

No one will become a scholar or a master of any of the great literatures here represented by reading this collection. Literature and scholarship are not to be had so cheaply as that. Yet is there much profit to be had from these little volumes. They contain many passages [xiv] which merit Dr. Johnson's fine saying about books: "That they help us to enjoy life or teach us to endure it." To the man of letters, to the man of wide reading, they will at least serve to recall, when far from libraries and books, those authors who have been the delight and the instructors of a lifetime. They will bring at least the pleasures of memory and that keener pleasure which arises when we meet a poem or a passage of prose which we know as an old and well-loved friend, remote from home, upon some alien page.

To that larger public whose lives are not spent among books and libraries, and for whose delectation such a collection as this is primarily intended, these volumes rightly read at odd times, in idle moments, in out-of-the-way places, on the ship or the train, offer much. They will bring the reader in contact with many of the greatest intellects of all time. They contain some of the noblest thoughts that have passed through the minds of our weak and erring race. There is no man who will not be the better, for the moment at least, by reading what Cicero says about old age, Seneca about death, and Socrates about love, to [xv] go no further for examples than to

> "The glory that was Greece,
> And the grandeur that was Rome."

Moreover, the bowing acquaintance which can be formed here may easily offer attractions which will lead to a close and intimate friendship, with all that the word implies in the case of a great author or a great book. It seems to me, for example, as if no one who read here the too brief extracts from Erasmus or from Cervantes, to take at random two writers widely separated in thought, could fail to pursue the acquaintance thus begun, so potent are the sympathetic charm, the wit, the wisdom and the humor of both these great men. There is, at least, variety in these little volumes, and while many things in them may not appeal to us, they may to our neighbors. That which "is dumb to us may speak to him."

Again, let it be noticed that there is much more than the "high seriousness" which is the test of the greatest prose as of the finest poetry. Humor and pathos, tragedy and comedy, all find their place and glimpses of the pageant of human history flit through the pages. It [xvi] would seem as if it were impossible to read extracts from Thucydides and Tacitus and

Gibbon and not long to go to their histories and learn all that could be said by such men about the life of man upon earth, about Athens and Rome and the rise and fall of empires. Selections are unsatisfying and the better they are the more unsatisfying they become. But this is in reality their great merit. They have much beauty in themselves, they awaken pleasant memories, they revive old delights, but, above all, if rightly read they open the gates to the illimitable gardens whence all the flowers which have here been gathered may be found blooming in radiance, unplucked and unbroken and rooted in their native soil.

The most important part of the collection is that which gives selections from those writers whose native tongue is English. No translation even of prose can ever quite reproduce its original, and as a rule can not hope to equal it. There are many translations, notably the Elizabethan, which are extremely fine in themselves and memorable examples of English prose. Still they are not the original writings. Something escapes in the translation into [xvii] another tongue, an impalpable something which can not be held or transmitted. The Bible stands alone, a great literary monument of the noblest and most beautiful English, which has formed English speech and become a part of the language as it is of the thought and emotion of the people who read "King James'" version in all parts of the globe. Yet we know that the version which the people, so fortunate in its possession, wisely and absolutely decline to give up in exchange for any revision is neither an accurate nor a faithful reproduction of its original. Therefore, putting aside the English Bible as wholly by itself, it may be safely said that the soul of a language and the beauties of style which it is capable of exhibiting can only be found and studied in the productions of writers who not only think in the language in which they write, but to whom that speech is native, the inalienable birthright and heritage of their race or country. In such writers we get not only the thought, the humor, or the pathos, all that can be transferred in a translation, but also the pleasure to the ear akin to music, the sense of form, the artistic gratification which form brings, all those attributes which are possible in the highest [xviii] degree to those only to whom the language is native.

For these reasons, as will be readily understood, in making selections from those writers whose native tongue is English, specimens have been given of all periods from the earliest time and occasionally of authors who would not otherwise find a place in such a collection, for the purpose of tracing in outline the development of English prose and the formation of an English style which, like all true and great styles, is peculiar to the language and can not be reproduced in any other. This is not the place, nor would it be feasible within any reasonable limits to narrate the history of English prose. But in these selections it is possible to follow its gradual advance from the first rude and crude attempts through the splendid irregularities of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the establishment of a standard of style in the eighteenth and thence onward to the modifications and changes in that standard which extend to our own time.

The purpose of this collection is not didactic. If it were it would be a school-book and not [xix] an anthology in the Greek sense, where the first principle was to seek what was of literary value, artistic in expression, and noble in thought. Yet the mere bringing together of examples of prose from the writings of the great masters of style can not but teach a lesson never more needed than now.

I do not mean by this to suggest imitation of any writer. Nothing is more dangerous, especially when the style of the writer imitated is peculiar and strongly marked. That which is valuable and instructive is the opportunity given here for a study of fine English styles, and in this way to learn the capabilities of the language and the general principles which have governed the production of the best English prose. We have in the English language an unequaled richness of vocabulary far surpassing in extent that of any other tongue. It possesses a great literature and a body of poetry unrivaled in modern times. It is not only one of the strongest bonds of union in the United States, but it is the language in which our freedom was won and in which our history and our laws are written. It is our greatest heritage. To weaken, corrupt or deprave it would be a misfortune without [xx] parallel to our entire people. Yet we can not disguise from ourselves the fact that the

fertility of the printing-press, the multiplication of cheap magazines, and the flood of printed words poured out daily in the newspapers all tend strongly in this direction. This is an era of haste and hurry stimulated by the great inventions which have changed human environment. Form and style in any art require time, and time seems the one thing we can neither spare nor wisely economize. Yet, in literature above all arts, to abandon form and style is inevitably destructive and entails misfortunes which can hardly be estimated, for loose, weak and vulgar writing is a sure precursor of loose, weak and vulgar thinking. If form of expression is cast aside, form in thought and in the presentation of thought is certain to follow. Against all this the fine English prose amply represented in these selections offers a silent and convincing protest to every one who will read it attentively.

We can begin with the splendid prose of the age of Elizabeth and of the seventeenth century. It is irregular and untamed, but exuberant and brilliant, rich both in texture and [xxi] substance. We find it at its height in the strange beauties of Sir Thomas Browne, in the noble pages of Milton, stiff with golden embroidery, as Macaulay says, and in the touching and beautiful simplicity of Bunyan's childlike sentences. Thence we pass to the eighteenth century, when English prose was freed from its involutions and irregularities and brought to uniformity and to a standard. The age of Anne gave to English prose balance, precision and settled form. There have been periods of greater originality, but the eighteenth century at least lived up to Pope's doctrine, set forth in the familiar line:

> "What oft was thought but ne'er so well exprest."

As there is no better period to turn to for instruction than the age of Anne, so, if we must choose a single writer there is no better master to be studied than Swift. There have been many great writers and many fine and beautiful styles since the days of the terrible Dean of St. Patrick's, from the imposing and finely balanced sentences of Gibbon to the subtle delicacy of Hawthorne and the careful finish of Robert Louis Stevenson. But in Swift [xxii] better than in any one writer can we find the lessons which are so sorely needed now. He had in the highest degree force, clearness and concentration all combined with a marvelous simplicity. Swift's style may have lacked richness, but it never failed in taste. There is not a line of false fine-writing in all his books. Those are the qualities which are so needed now, simplicity and clearness and a scrupulous avoidance of that would-be fine writing which is not at all fine but merely vulgar and insincere.

The writing in our newspapers is where reform is particularly needed. There are great journals here and there which maintain throughout a careful standard of good and sober English. Most of them, unhappily, are filled in the news columns at least with a strange jargon found nowhere else, spoken by no one and never used in daily life by those who every night furnish it to the compositors. It is happily compounded in about equal parts of turgid fine writing, vulgar jauntiness and indiscriminate slang.

I can best show my meaning by example. A writer in a newspaper wished to state that a [xxiii] man who had once caused excitement by a book of temporary interest and who, after the days of his notoriety were over, lived a long and checkered career, had killed himself. This is the way he said it:

> His life's work void of fruition and dissipated into emptiness, his fondest hopes and ambitions crumbled and scattered, shunned as a fanatic, and unable to longer wage life's battle, Hinton Rowan Helper, at one time United States consul general to Buenos Ayres, yesterday sought the darkest egress from his woes and disappointments—a suicide's death.
>
> In an unpretentious lodging-house in Pennsylvania avenue, near the Capitol, the man who as much, if not more than any other agitator, is said to have blazed the way to the Civil War, the writer who stirred this nation to its core by his anti-slavery philippics, and the promoter with the most gigantic railroad enterprise projected in the history of the world, was found gript in the icy hand of death. The brain which gave birth to his historic writings

had willed the stilling of the heart which for three-quarters of a century had palpitated quick and high with roseate hopes.

That passage, taken at hazard from a newspaper, is intended, I think, to be fine writing of an imposing and dramatic kind. Why could not the writer have written it, a little more [xxiv] carefully perhaps, but still in just the language which he would have used naturally in describing the event to his wife or friend? Simply stated, it would have been far more solemn and impressive than this turgid, insincere account with its large words, its forced note of tragedy and its split infinitive. Let me put beneath it another description of a death-bed:

> The blood and spirits of Le Fevre, which were waxing cold and slow, and were retreating to their last citadel, the heart—rallied back,—the film forsook his eyes for a moment,—he looked up wishfully into my Uncle Toby's face,—then cast a look upon his boy,—and that ligament, fine as it was,—was never broken.
>
> Nature instantly ebbed again,—the film returned to its place,—the pulse fluttered,—stopt,—went on,—throbbed,—stopt again,—moved,—stopt,—shall I go on? No.

This famous passage is neither unintentional sentiment nor unaffected pathos. The art is apparent even in the punctuation. The writer meant to be touching and pathetic and to awaken emotions of tenderness and pity and he succeeded. The description is all he meant it to be. The extract from the newspaper arouses no emotion, unless it be [xxv] resentment at its form and leaves us cold and unmoved. The other is touching and pitiful. Observe the manner in which Sterne obtains his effect, the perfect simplicity and good taste of every word, the reserve, the gentleness, the utter absence of any straining for effect. The one description died the day it appeared. The other has held its place for a century and a half. Are not the qualities which produced such a result worth striving for?

Let me take another haphazard selection from a description of a young girl entitled as such to every one's kindness, courtesy and respect. In it occurs this sentence: "The college girl is grammatical in speech, but she has the jolliest, chummiest jargon of slang that ever rolled from under a pink tongue." That articulate sounds come from beneath the tongue is at least novel and few persons are fortunate enough to be able to talk with that portion of their mouths. But I have no desire to dwell either upon the anatomical peculiarities of the sentence or upon its abysmal vulgarity. It is supposed to be effective, it is what is appropriately called "breezy," it is a form of words which can be heard nowhere in the speech of men and women. Why should it be consigned to print? It is [xxvi] possible to describe a young girl attractively and effectively in much simpler fashion. Let me give an example, not a famous passage at all, from another writer:

> She shocked no canon of taste; she was admirably in keeping with herself, and never jarred against surrounding circumstances. Her figure, to be sure—so small as to be almost childlike and so elastic that motion seemed as easy or easier to it than rest—would hardly have suited one's idea of a countess. Neither did her face—with brown ringlets on either side and a slightly piquant nose, and the wholesome bloom, and the clear shade of tan, and the half dozen freckles, friendly remembrancers of the April sun and breeze—precisely give us the right to call her beautiful. But there was both luster and depth in her eyes. She was very pretty; as graceful as a bird and graceful much in the same way; as pleasant about the house as a gleam of sunshine falling on the floor through a shadow of twinkling leaves, or as a ray of firelight that dances on the wall while evening is drawing nigh.

Contrast this with the newspaper sentence and the sensation is one of pain. Again I say, observe the method by which Hawthorne gets his effect, the simplicity of the language, the balance of the sentences, the reserve, the refinement, and the final imaginative touch [xxvii] in the charming comparison with which the passage ends.

To blame the hard working men who write for the day which is passing over them because they do not write like Sterne and Hawthorne would be as absurd as it would be unjust. But they ought to recognize the qualities of fine English prose, they ought to remember that they can improve their readers by giving them good, simple English, pure and undefiled, and they ought not to debauch the public taste by vulgar fine writing and even more vulgar light writing. In short, they ought to write for the public as they would talk to their wives and children and friends; a little more formally and carefully perhaps, but in the same simple and direct fashion.

For the prolific authors of the flood of stories, which every month bears on its broad bosom many tons of advertisements, no such allowance need be made. They are not compelled to furnish copy between daylight and dark. They need a course of study in English prose more than anyone else, and they would profit by the effort. As a class they [xxviii] seem to be like the young man in Du Maurier's picture, who, being asked if he had read Thackeray, replies, "No. I nevah read novels; I write them."

In this age of quickening movement and restless haste it is, above all things, important to struggle against the well-nigh universal inclination to abandon all efforts for form and style. They are the great preservers of what is best in literature, the salt which ought never to lose its savor. Those who use English in public speech and public writing have a serious responsibility too generally forgotten and disregarded. I would fain call attention to it altho no single man can hope to effect much by any plea he can make in behalf of the use of good English, whether written or spoken. Yet no one, I think, can read the great masterpieces of English prose and not have both lesson and responsibility brought home to him. He would be insensible, indeed, if he did not feel after such reading that he was a sharer in a noble heritage which it behooved him to guard and cherish. If this series serves no other purpose, it will exhibit to those who read it some of the splendors and the [xxix] beauties of English prose. It will at least open the gates of literature and perhaps lead its readers to authors they have not known before, or recall the words of writers who have entered into their lives and thoughts and thus make them more mindful of the ineffable value to them and their children of the great language which is at once their birthright and their inheritance.

HENRY CABOT LODGE.

Washington, D. C., July 15, 1909.

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VOL. I—GREECE

GREECE

484 B.C.—200 A.D.

HERODOTUS [3]

Born in Asia Minor, probably in 484 B.C.; died in Italy, probably in 424; commonly called the "Father of History"; assisted in the expulsion of the tyrant Lygdamis from Halicarnassus; traveled in Persia, Egypt, and Greece; lived afterward in Samos and Athens, settling in Thurii, Italy, about 444 B.C.; his history of the Persian invasion of Greece, extending to 479 B.C., was first printed in Greek by Aldus Manutius in 1502, but a Latin version had appeared in 1474.[1]

I

SOLON'S WORDS OF WISDOM TO CRŒSUS[2]

When all these conquests had been added to the Lydian empire, and the prosperity of Sardis[3] was now at its height, there came thither, one after another, all the sages of Greece living at the time, and among them Solon, the Athenian. He was on his travels, having left Athens to be absent ten years, under the pretense of wishing to see the world, [4] but really to avoid being forced to repeal any of the laws which at the request of the Athenians he had made for them. Without his sanction the Athenians could not repeal them, as they had bound themselves under a heavy curse to be governed for ten years by the laws which should be imposed on them by Solon.

On this account, as well as to see the world, Solon set out upon his travels, in the course of which he went to Egypt to the court of Amasis,[4] and also paid a visit to Crœsus at Sardis. Crœsus received him as his guest, and lodged him in the royal palace. On the third or fourth day after, he bade his servants conduct Solon over his treasuries and show him all their greatness and magnificence. When he had seen them all, and so far as time allowed inspected them, Crœsus addrest this question to him: "Stranger of Athens, we have heard much of thy wisdom and of thy travels through many lands, from love of knowledge and a wish to see the world. I am curious therefore to inquire of thee, whom [5] of all the men that thou hast seen thou deemest the most happy?"

This he asked because he thought himself the happiest of mortals; but Solon answered him without flattery, according to his true sentiments, "Tellus of Athens, sire." Full of astonishment at what he had heard Crœsus demanded sharply, "And wherefore dost thou deem Tellus happiest?" To this the other replied: "First, because his country was flourishing in his days, and he himself had sons both beautiful and good, and he lived to see children born to each of them, and these children all grew up; and further, because after a life spent in what our people look upon as comfort, his end was surpassingly glorious. In a battle between the Athenians and their neighbors near Eleusis, he came to the assistance of his countrymen, routed the foe, and died upon the field most gallantly. The Athenians gave him a public funeral on the spot where he fell, and paid him the highest honors."

Thus did Solon admonish Crœsus by the example of Tellus, enumerating the manifold particulars of his happiness. When he had ended, Crœsus inquired a second time, who after Tellus seemed to him the happiest, expecting that at any rate he would be given the second place. "Cleobis and Bito," Solon answered: "they were of Argive race; their fortune was enough for their wants, and they were besides endowed with so much bodily strength that they had both gained prizes at the games. Also, this tale is told of them: There was a great festival in honor of the goddess Juno at Argos, to which their mother [6] must needs be taken in a car. Now, the oxen did not come home from the field in time; so the youths, fearful of being too late, put the yoke on their own necks, and themselves

drew the car in which their mother rode. Five and forty furlongs did they draw her, and stopt before the temple. This deed of theirs was witnessed by the whole assembly of worshipers, and then their life closed in the best possible way. Herein, too, God showed forth most evidently how much better a thing for man death is than life. For the Argive men stood thick around the car and extolled the vast strength of the youths; and the Argive women extolled the mother who was blest with such a pair of sons; and the mother herself, overjoyed at the deed and at the praises it had won, standing straight before the image, besought the goddess to bestow on Cleobis and Bito, the sons who had so mightily honored her, the highest blessing to which mortals can attain. Her prayer ended, they offered sacrifice and partook of the holy banquet, after which the two youths fell asleep in the temple. They never woke again, but so passed from the earth. The Argives, looking on them as among the best of men, caused statues of them to be made, which they gave to the shrine at Delphi."

When Solon had thus assigned these youths the second place Crœsus broke in angrily, "What, stranger of Athens! is my happiness then so utterly set at naught by thee that thou dost not even put me on a level with private men?"

"O Crœsus," replied the other, "thou askedst a question concerning the condition of man, of one who knows that the Power above us is full of jealousy, and fond of troubling our [7] lot. A long life gives one to witness much, and experience much oneself, that one would not choose. Seventy years I regard as the limit of the life of man. In these seventy years are contained, without reckoning intercalary months, twenty-five thousand and two hundred days. Add an intercalary month to every other year, that the seasons may come round at the right time, and there will be, besides the seventy years, thirty-five such months, making an addition of one thousand and fifty days. The whole number of the days contained in the seventy years will thus be twenty-six thousand two hundred and fifty, whereof not one but will produce events unlike the rest. Hence man is wholly accident.

"For thyself, O Crœsus, I see that thou art wonderfully rich, and art the lord of many nations; but with respect to that whereon thou questionest me, I have no answer to give, until I hear that thou hast closed thy life happily. For assuredly he who possesses great store of riches is no nearer happiness than he who has what suffices for his daily needs, unless it so hap that luck attend upon him, and so he continue in the enjoyment of all his good things to the end of life. For many of the wealthiest men have been unfavored of fortune, and many whose means were moderate have had excellent luck. Men of the former class excel those of the latter but in two respects; these last excel the former in many. The wealthy man is better able to content his desires, and to bear up against a sudden buffet of calamity. The other has less ability to withstand these evils (from which, [8] however, his good luck keeps him clear), but he enjoys all these following blessings: he is whole of limb, a stranger to disease, free from misfortune, happy in his children, and comely to look upon.

"If in addition to all this he ends his life well, he is of a truth the man of whom thou art in search, the man who may rightly be termed happy. Call him, however, until he die, not happy but fortunate. Scarcely indeed can any man unite all these advantages: as there is no country which contains within it all that it needs, but each while it possesses some things lacks others, and the best country is that which contains the most, so no single human being is complete in every respect—something is always lacking. He who unites the greatest number of advantages, and retaining them to the day of his death, then dies peaceably—that man alone, sire, is in my judgment entitled to bear the name of 'happy.' But in every matter it behooves us to mark well the end: for oftentimes God gives men a gleam of happiness, and then plunges them into ruin."

Such was the speech which Solon addrest to Crœsus, a speech which brought him neither largess nor honor. The king with much indifference saw Solon depart, since the former thought that a man must be an arrant fool who made no account of present good, but bade men always wait and mark the end.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Herodotus, at a certain period in his life, came under the influence of Pericles and his contemporaries, but it is clear from his writings that he received from Attic thought and style little definite inspiration. J. P. Mahaffy has likened him to Goldsmith in his aloofness from his environment. Often ridiculed by his friends for simplicity, Goldsmith far exceeded his clever critics in directness and pathos, and thus gained a place in literature which contemporaries never dreamed would be his. The narrative of Herodotus, adds Mahaffy, gives us more information about the state of the ancient nations and their culture than all other Greek historians put together. His purpose, as Herodotus himself declares, was to narrate the great conflict between the Greeks and barbarians, in order that the causes might be known and glorious deeds might not perish. Readers are imprest by the perfect ease and mastery with which a great variety of subjects are dealt with, his story "advancing with epic grandeur to its close." Mahaffy pronounces Herodotus an Ionic story-writer, who never became an Attic one—the chief master of Ionic, as Thucydides was of Attic prose.

[2] From Book I of the "History." Translated by George Rawlinson. Crœsus reigned from 560 B.C. to 546. The visit of Solon was made some time before 559.

[3] The capital of Lydia, in Asia Minor, and a flourishing city in the time of Crœsus. It was several times destroyed, the last time by Tamerlane. Its site is now a village.

[4] Amasis came to the Egyptian throne in 569 B.C., and reigned 44 years.

II [9]

BABYLON AND ITS CAPTURE BY CYRUS[5]

(538 B.C.)

Assyria contains many large cities; but of these Babylon, to which, after the destruction of Nineveh, the seat of government was removed, is by far the most renowned and the most strongly fortified. Babylon is situated in an extensive plain. Each side of the city, which forms a square, measures one hundred and twenty stadia (about fourteen miles), making the entire circuit of the city four hundred and eighty stadia—such is the magnitude of this city Babylon! and in magnificence also it surpassed every city of which we have any knowledge. It is surrounded by a trench, deep, wide, and full of water. Within this is a wall, the width of which is fifty royal cubits, and its height two hundred cubits.[6] The royal cubit exceeds the common measure by three fingers' breadth.

It is proper I should say in what manner the earth removed from the trench was disposed [10] of, and how the wall was constructed. The earth, as fast as it was removed from the trench, was converted into bricks and baked in furnaces: when thus prepared, melted bitumen was used instead of mortar; and between every thirtieth course of bricks there was inserted a layer of reeds. The sides of the trench were first lined with brickwork, and then the wall raised in the manner described. On the upper edges of the wall, and opposite to one another, were constructed turrets; between these turrets a space was left wide enough for a chariot and four horses to pass and turn. In the walls were one hundred gates, all of brass, with posts and upper lintels of the same. Eight days' journey from Babylon is a city named Is, near which runs a small river of the same name, discharging itself into the Euphrates; this river brings down with its waters clots of bitumen in large

quantities. From this source was derived the bitumen used in cementing the walls of Babylon.

Such are the fortifications of Babylon. The city is divided into two portions by the river Euphrates, which runs through the midst of it. This river rises in Armenia, and throughout its course is wide, deep, and swift; it empties itself into the Red sea.[7] Each of the city walls is extended to the river, where it makes an angle, and, with a coating of burnt bricks, lines the sides of the river. The city is filled with houses of three or four stories, forming streets in straight lines, and running parallel with one another, the cross streets opening upon the river through as many smaller brazen gates, placed in the breastwork of [11] the river walls. Within the principal wall just mentioned is a second, not much inferior to the first in strength, tho less in width.

In the center of each portion of the city is an enclosed space—the one occupied by the royal palace, a building of vast extent and great strength; in the other stands the temple of Jupiter Belus, with its brazen gates, remaining in my time: it is a square structure; each side measures two stadia. Within the enclosure is erected a solid tower, measuring a stadium both in width and depth; upon this tower is raised another, and then another, and another, making eight in all. The ascent is by a path which is formed on the outside of the towers; midway in the ascent is a resting-place, furnished with easy chairs, in which those who ascend repose themselves. On the summit of the topmost tower stands a large temple; and in this temple is a great couch, handsomely fitted up; and near it stands a golden table: no statue whatever is erected in the temple, nor does any man ever pass the night there; but a woman only, chosen from the people by the god, as the Chaldeans, who are the priests of the temple affirm. The same persons say—tho I give no credit to the story—that the god himself comes to the temple and reposes on the bed, in like manner as at Thebes in Egypt, where also, in the temple of Jupiter, a woman passes the night. A similar custom is observed at Pataris, in Lycia, where there is at times an oracle, on which occasions the priestess is shut up by night in the temple. [12]

Within the precincts of the temple at Babylon there is a smaller sacred edifice on the ground, containing an immense golden statue of Jupiter in a sitting posture: around the statue are large tables, which, with the steps and throne, are all of gold, and, as the Chaldeans affirm, contain eight hundred talents of gold. Without this edifice is a golden altar; there is also another altar of great size, on which are offered full-grown animals: upon the golden altar it is not lawful to offer sacrifices except sucklings. Once in every year, when the festival of this god is celebrated, the Chaldeans burn upon the greater altar a thousand talents of frankincense. There was also, not long since, in this sacred enclosure a statue of solid gold, twelve cubits in height; at least so the Chaldeans affirm: I did not myself see it. This figure Darius Hystaspes would fain have taken, but dared not execute his wishes; however, his son Xerxes not only took it, but put to death the priests who endeavored to prevent its removal. Such was the magnificence of this temple, which contained also many private offerings.

Of this Babylon there were several monarchs—as I shall mention in my history of the Assyrians—who adorned the city and its temples. Among these, two young women must be mentioned. The former, named Semiramis,[8] reigned five generations before the latter. This queen raised an embankment worthy of admiration through the plain to confine the river, which heretofore often spread over the level like a lake. The latter of these two [13] queens, named Nitocris,[9] excelled the former in intelligence: she left monuments, some of which I must describe. Seeing the Medes already possest of extensive empire, and restlessly extending their power, by taking city after city, among which was Nineveh, she resolved in good time to secure herself against them in the best manner possible. In the first place, therefore, as the river Euphrates ran in a straight course through the city, she formed excavations at a distance above it, by which means its course became so tortuous that it three times passed a certain town of Assyria, called Ardericca; travelers from our sea,[10] in descending the Euphrates toward Babylon, three times arrive at that town in the course of three days. She also raised both banks of the river to an amazing height and thickness. At some distance above Babylon, and near the river, she dug a reservoir in the

marsh, of such depth as to drain it. The width of this excavation was such as to make its circuit four hundred and twenty stadia. The earth removed from it was taken to raise the banks of the river; this done, she brought stones, with which the sides of the lake were lined. Both these works—the diverting of the river and the reservoir—were formed with the intention of rendering the current less rapid by its many windings, which broke its force, and at the same time made the navigation more circuitous; so that those who [14] descended toward Babylon by water might have to make a long circuit around the lake. These works were effective on that side which was exposed to the inroads of the Medes, and where the distance between her dominions and theirs was the least; for she wished to cut off all communication with them, and to keep them in ignorance of her movements.

Thus did this princess raise from the depths a fortification, within which she was included. The city being divided into two portions by the river in former times, whoever wished to pass from one to the other was obliged to take a boat, which manifestly was a great inconvenience. This defect she supplied. When she had dug the lake in the marsh, she availed herself of the occasion to construct another monument also, by which her fame will be perpetuated. She caused stones of great magnitude to be hewn, and when they were ready, the lake being empty, she turned the waters of the Euphrates into it; which, as it filled, left the old channel dry. Then she lined both sides of the river and the descent from the gates with burnt bricks, in like manner as the city walls; and with the stones already mentioned she constructed, as near the middle of the city as possible, a bridge, binding the stones together with iron and lead. During the day, planks of wood were extended from pier to pier, so as to form a pathway; these were withdrawn at night, to prevent the people from passing over to plunder one another. This bridge was, as we have said, formed by withdrawing the water of the Euphrates into the artificial lake; when completed, the river was restored to its ancient channel; the propriety of this mode of [15] proceeding then become apparent, by means of which the citizens obtained the accommodation of a bridge.

The same queen also executed the following machination: she constructed for herself a tomb, aloft upon a gate in one of the most frequented ways of the city; upon the sepulcher she engraved this inscription: "If any one of my successors, the kings of Babylon, shall lack money, let him open the sepulcher, and take what treasures he pleases. But let him beware of opening it from any other cause than necessity; for in such a case it shall not turn to his advantage." This sepulcher remained undisturbed till Darius ascended the throne. To this king it seemed a grievance both that this gate should remain useless, and that the wealth deposited in it, and which invited research, should not be appropriated. The gate was not used, because no one could pass through it without having a dead body over his head. He therefore opened the tomb, in which he found—of treasures indeed nothing, but the corpse, and an inscription to this effect: "If thou hadst not been insatiably eager for riches, and greedy of filthy lucre, thou wouldst not have opened the depository of the dead." So much for this queen and the reports that have been handed down concerning her.

It was against the son of this woman that Cyrus made war; he was named (like his father) Labynetus, and reigned over the Assyrians. When the Great King[11] goes out to battle, he is attended by ample provisions and cattle drawn from the home stock; and even water from the Choaspian spring at Susa,[12] of which alone the king drinks, is carried about for [16] his use; for he can taste no other stream. This Choaspian water, after having been boiled, is put into vases of silver, which are transported in four-wheeled wagons drawn by mules, following him wherever he goes.

Cyrus advancing toward Babylon arrived at the river Gyndes, which, rising in the Matienian hills and running through the country of the Dardanians (or Darnians), empties itself into the Tigris; and this river, passing by the city Opis, discharges its waters into the Red Sea.[13] When Cyrus attempted to pass this river Gyndes, which could only be done by boats, one of the white horses called sacred, full of mettle, plunged into the stream and endeavored to reach the opposite bank; but, being submerged in the current, it was carried away. Cyrus, enraged at the river for this injury, threatened to reduce it so low that

in future women should ford it with ease, not wetting their knees. Having uttered this threat, he delayed the progress of his army toward Babylon, and, dividing his forces into two bodies, measured out one hundred and eighty channels to be cut from both banks of the river, thus diverting the Gyndes on all sides. He enjoined upon his army the work of digging these trenches, and by their numbers they completed it; but the whole summer was spent there in the labor.

Cyrus having in this manner punished the river Gyndes, by distributing its waters into three hundred and sixty trenches, as soon as the next spring appeared, advanced toward [17] Babylon. The Babylonians, coming out in battle-array, waited his approach; when he drew nigh to the city they engaged him, but, being defeated, retired within the walls. Some time before, well knowing the restless intentions of Cyrus, and seeing him attack one nation after another, they had brought into the city an abundance of corn for many years. They therefore disregarded the siege. But Cyrus, beset with difficulties, saw a long time pass away without his making any progress toward the accomplishment of his object.

At length, either at the suggestion of some one else or from a thought of his own, he resorted to the following means: He disposed the whole of his army, by placing one part above the city, where the river enters it, and another part below, where it makes its exit, commanding them as soon as they should perceive the river to be sufficiently shallow to enter by that way. This order being given, he himself went off with the inferior troops of the army. Arriving at the lake, he did what had been done before by the queen of Babylon in the marsh; for, by making a trench from the river to the empty reservoir, he diverted the water from the ancient channel, till it so far subsided as to become fordable.

As soon as this happened, the Persians who had been appointed for this purpose entered Babylon by the bed of the river, the water of which was little more than knee-deep. If the Babylonians had been before apprized of the intentions of Cyrus, or if they had learned at the moment what he was doing, they would not have suffered the Persians to enter the city, nor would the Babylonians have perished so shamefully; for if they had closed all the gates by the river's side, and ascended the walls which ran along it, they might have taken the Persians as in a net. But the Persians came upon their opponents quite unexpectedly; and from the great extent of the city—as it has been affirmed by some of the inhabitants—those who dwelt in the outskirts of the city were made prisoners before the people in the center of Babylon knew that the place was taken. But, as it happened, they were celebrating a festival, and were dancing and feasting when they learned what had happened. Thus was Babylon the first time taken.

FOOTNOTES:

[5] From Book I of the "History." Translated by Isaac Taylor. Cyrus, after capturing Babylon, did not destroy it; it was Darius Hystaspes who razed its walls and towers. Darius Hystaspes was the father of that Darius who succeeded to the Persian throne after the failure of male heirs to Cyrus. Xerxes carried further the work of destruction at Babylon. Its permanent decay was accelerated still more by the founding, in its neighborhood, of Seleucia in 300 B.C. In the time of Pliny it had become a dismal and silent place.

[6] Equivalents in English feet for these measurements have been estimated as eighty-five feet for the width and three hundred and thirty-five feet for the height.

[7] Now called the Persian Gulf.

[8] Semiramis is regarded by modern antiquarians as a fabulous personage. By some of them she has been identified with the goddess Astarte.

[9] Antiquarians have great doubts as to the identity of this queen. By some she is thought to have been the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, who began to reign in 604

B.C., and the mother or grandmother of Belshazzar, the last of the kings of Babylon.

[10] That is, from the sea which encircled Greece.

[11] Herodotus means by this the King of Persia.

[12] Susa was the capital of Susiana, a country lying at the head of the Persian Gulf.

[13] Here again for Red Sea we must read Persian Gulf.

III [18]

THE PYRAMID OF CHEOPS[14]

Till the death of Rhampsinitus, the priests said, Egypt was excellently governed, and flourished greatly; but after him Cheops succeeded to the throne, and plunged into all manner of wickedness. He closed the temples and forbade the Egyptians to offer sacrifice, compelling them instead to labor, one and all, in his service. Some were required to drag blocks of stone down to the Nile from the quarries in the Arabian range of hills; others received the blocks after they had been conveyed in boats across the river, and drew them to the range of hills called the Libyan. A hundred thousand men labored [19] constantly, and were relieved every three months by a fresh lot. It took ten years' oppression of the people to make the causeway for the conveyance of the stones, a work not much inferior, in my judgment, to the pyramid itself. This causeway is five furlongs in length, ten fathoms wide, and in height, at the highest part, eight fathoms. It is built of polished stone, and is covered with carvings of animals. To make it took ten years, as I said—or rather to make the causeway, the works on the mound where the pyramid stands, and the underground chambers, which Cheops intended as vaults for his own use; these last were built on a sort of island, surrounded by water introduced from the Nile by a canal. The pyramid itself was twenty years in building. It is a square, eight hundred feet each way, and the height the game, built entirely of polished stone, fitted together with the utmost care. The stones of which it is composed are none of them less than thirty feet in length.

The pyramid was built in steps, battlement-wise, as it is called, or, according to others, altar-wise. After laying the stones for the base, they raised the remaining stones to their places by means of machines formed of short wooden planks. The first machine raised them from the ground to the top of the first step. On this there was another machine, which received the stone upon its arrival, and conveyed it to the second step, whence a third machine advanced it still higher. Either they had as many machines as there were steps in the pyramid or possibly they had but a single machine, which, being easily moved, was transferred from tier to tier as the stone rose—both accounts are given, and therefore I mention both. The upper portion of the pyramid was finished first, then the middle, and finally the part which was lowest and nearest the ground. There is an inscription in Egyptian characters on the pyramid which records the quantity of radishes, onions, and garlic consumed by the laborers who constructed it; and I perfectly well remember that the interpreter who read the writing to me said that the money expended in this way was 1,600 talents of silver. If this then is a true record, what a vast sum must have been spent on the iron tools used in the work, and on the feeding and clothing of the laborers, considering the length of time the work lasted, which has already been stated, and the additional time—no small space, I imagine—which must have been occupied by the quarrying of the stones, their conveyance, and the formation of the underground apartments!

FOOTNOTES:

[14] From Book II of the "History." Translated by George Rawlinson. The Pyramid of Cheops was built about 3,500 B.C. Cheops, according to Herodotus, reigned fifty years.

IV [20]

THE STORY OF PERIANDER'S SON[15]

After Periander had put to death his wife Melissa, it chanced that on his first affliction a second followed of a different kind. His wife had borne him two sons, and one of them had now reached the age of seventeen, the other of eighteen years, when their mother's [21] father, Procles, tyrant of Epidaurus,[16] asked them to his court. They went, and Procles treated them with much kindness, as was natural, considering they were his own daughter's children. At length, when the time for parting came, Procles as he was sending them on their way said, "Know you now, my children, who it was that caused your mother's death?" The elder son took no account of this speech, but the younger, whose name was Lycophron, was sorely troubled at it—so much so that when he got back to Corinth, looking upon his father as his mother's murderer, he would neither speak to him nor answer when spoken to nor utter a word in reply to all his father's questionings. So Periander, at last growing furious at such behavior, banished his son from his house.

The younger son gone, he turned to the elder and asked him what it was that their grandfather had said to them. Then the son related in how kind and friendly a fashion the grandfather had received them; but, not having taken any notice of the speech which Procles had uttered at parting, he quite forgot to mention it. Periander insisted that it was not possible this should be all—their grandfather must have given them some hint or other—and he went on pressing his son till at last he remembered the parting speech and told it. Periander, after he had turned the whole matter over in his thoughts and felt unwilling to give way at all, sent a messenger to the persons who had opened their houses to his outcast son and forbade them to harbor him. Then the boy, when he had been [22] driven from one friend, sought refuge with another, but was forced from shelter to shelter by the threats of his father, who menaced all those that took him in, and commanded them to shut their doors against him. Still, as fast as he was forced to leave one house he went to another, and was received by the inmates; for his acquaintances, altho in no small alarm, yet gave him shelter, as he was Periander's son.

At last Periander made proclamation that whoever harbored his son, or even spoke to him, should forfeit a certain sum of money to Apollo. On hearing this no one any longer liked to take him in, or even to hold converse with him, and he himself did not think it right to seek to do what was forbidden; so, abiding by his resolve, he made his lodging in the public porticoes. When four days had passed in this way, Periander, seeing how wretched his son was, that he neither washed nor took any food, felt moved with compassion toward him; wherefore, foregoing his anger, he approached the lad, and said, "Which is better, oh, my son, to fare as now thou farest or to receive my crown and all the good things that I possess, on the one condition of submitting thyself to thy father? See, now, tho my own child, and lord of this wealthy Corinth, thou hast brought thyself to a beggar's life, because thou must resist and treat with anger him whom it least behooves thee to oppose. If there has been a calamity, and thou bearest me ill will on that account, bethink thee that I too feel it, and am the greater sufferer, inasmuch as it was by me that [23] the deed was done. For thyself, now that thou knowest how much better a thing it is to be envied than pitied, and how dangerous it is to indulge anger against parents and

superiors, come back with me to thy home." With such words as these did Periander chide his son; but the latter made no reply except to remind his father that he was indebted to the god in the penalty for coming and holding converse with him. Then Periander knew there was no cure for the youth's malady, nor means of overcoming it; so he prepared a ship and sent him away out of his sight to Corcyra,[17] which island at that time belonged to him. As for Procles, Periander, regarding him as the true author of all his present troubles, went to war with him as soon as his son was gone, and not only made himself master of his kingdom, Epidaurus, but also took Procles himself, and carried him into captivity.

As time went on, and Periander came to be old, he found himself no longer equal to the oversight and management of affairs. Seeing therefore in his elder son no manner of ability, but knowing him to be dull and blockish, he sent to Corcyra and recalled Lycophron to take the kingdom. Lycophron, however, did not even deign to ask the bearer of this message a question. But Periander's heart was set upon the youth, so he sent again to him, this time by his own daughter, the sister of Lycophron, who would, he thought, have more power to persuade him than any other person. Then the daughter, when she had reached Corcyra, spoke thus with her brother: "Dost thou wish the [24] kingdom, brother, to pass into strange hands, and our father's wealth to be made a prey rather than thyself return to enjoy it? Come back home with me, and cease to punish thyself. It is scant gain, this obstinacy. Why seek to cure evil by evil? Mercy, remember, is by many set above justice. Many, also while pushing their mother's claims have forfeited their father's fortune. Power is a slippery thing—it has many suitors; and he is old and stricken in years—let not thy own inheritance go to another."

Thus did the sister, who had been tutored by Periander what to say, urge all the arguments most likely to have weight with her brother. He, however, made answer that so long as he knew his father to be still alive, he would never go back to Corinth. When the sister brought Periander this reply, he sent to his son a third time by a herald, and said he would come himself to Corcyra, and let his son take his place at Corinth, as heir to his kingdom. To these terms Lycophron agreed; and Periander was making ready to pass into Corcyra and his son to return to Corinth, when the Corcyreans, being informed of what was taking place, to keep Periander away, put the young man to death. For this reason it was that Periander took vengeance on the Corcyreans.

FOOTNOTES:

[15] From Book III of the "History." Translated by George Rawlinson. Periander was tyrant of Corinth, succeeding to power about 625 B.C. He is believed to have reigned forty years.

[16] A city on the coast of Argolis, one of the states of southern Greece.

[17] Now known as Corfu, an island lying off the western coast of Greece, adjacent to Epirus.

THUCYDIDES [25]

Born in Athens about 471 B.C.; died about 401; celebrated as a historian; claimed blood relationship with Miltiades and Cimon; possest an ample fortune; in 424 commanded an expedition against Brasidas, but failing in it went into exile, returning to Athens twenty years later; did not live to finish his "History of the Peloponnesian War," the narrative ending seven years before the war closed; the Greek text first printed by Aldus at Venice in 1502.[18]

I

THE ATHENIANS AND SPARTANS CONTRASTED[19]

Such were the causes of ill feeling which at this time existed between the Athenians and Peloponnesians;[20] the Corinthians complaining that the Athenians were blockading their colony of Potidæa, which was occupied by a Corinthian and Peloponnesian garrison; the Athenians rejoining that the Peloponnesians had excited to revolt a state which was an ally and tributary of theirs, and that they had now openly joined the Potidæans, and were [26] fighting on their side. The Peloponnesian war, however, had not yet broken out; the peace still continued; for thus far the Corinthians had acted alone.

But now, seeing Potidæa[21] besieged, they bestirred themselves in earnest. Corinthian troops were shut up within the walls, and they were afraid of losing the town; so without delay they invited the allies to meet at Sparta. There they inveighed against the Athenians, whom they affirmed to have broken the treaty and to have wronged the Peloponnesians.... The Megarians alleged, among other grounds of complaint, that they were excluded from all harbors within the Athenian dominion and from the Athenian market, contrary to the treaty. The Corinthians waited until the other allies had stirred up [27] the Lacedæmonians; at length they came forward, and, last of all, spoke as follows:

"The spirit of trust, Lacedæmonians, which animates your own political and social life makes you distrust others who, like ourselves, have something unpleasant to say, and this temper of mind, tho favorable to moderation, too often leaves you in ignorance of what is going on outside your own country. Time after time we have warned you of the mischief which the Athenians would do to us, but instead of taking our words to heart, you chose to suspect that we spoke only from interested motives. And this is the reason why you have brought the allies to Sparta, too late, not before but after the injury has been inflicted, and when they are smarting under the sense of it. Which of them all has a better right to speak than ourselves, who have the heaviest accusations to make, outraged as we are by the Athenians, and neglected by you? If the crimes which they are committing against Hellas were being done in a corner, then you might be ignorant, and we should have to inform you of them; but now, what need of many words? Some of us, as you see, have been already enslaved; they are at this moment intriguing against others, notably against allies of ours; and long ago they had made all their preparations in expectation of war. Else why did they seduce from her allegiance Corcyra, which they still hold in defiance of us, and why are they blockading Potidæa, the latter a most advantageous post for the command of the Thracian peninsula, the former a great naval power which might have assisted the Peloponnesians? [28]

"And the blame of all this rests on you; for you originally allowed them to fortify their city after the Persian war, and afterward to build their Long Walls;[22] and to this hour you have gone on defrauding of liberty their unfortunate subjects, and are now beginning to take it away from your own allies. For the true enslaver of a people is he who can put an end to their slavery, but has no care about it; and all the more, if he be reputed the champion of liberty in Hellas. And so we have met at last, but with what difficulty! and even now we have no definite object. By this time we ought to have been considering, not whether we are wronged, but how we are to be revenged. The aggressor is not now threatening, but advancing; he has made up his mind, while we are resolved about nothing. And we know too well how by slow degrees and with stealthy steps the Athenians encroach upon their neighbors. While they think that you are too dull to observe them, they are more careful; but, when they know that you wilfully overlook their aggressions, they will strike you and not spare. Of all Hellenes, Lacedæmonians, you are the only people who never do anything; on the approach of an enemy, you are content to defend yourselves against him, not by acts, but by intentions, and seek to overthrow him, not in the infancy but in the fulness of his strength. How came you to be [29]

considered safe? That reputation of yours was never justified by facts. We all know that the Persian made his way from the ends of the earth against Peloponnesus before you encountered him in a worthy manner; and now you are blind to the doings of the Athenians, who are not at a distance, as he was, but close at hand. Instead of attacking your enemy, you wait to be attacked, and take the chances of a struggle which has been deferred until his power is doubled. And you know that the barbarian miscarried chiefly through his own errors, and that we have oftener been delivered from these very Athenians by blunders of their own than by any aid from you. Some have already been ruined by the hopes which you inspired in them; for so entirely did they trust you that they took no precautions themselves. These things we say in no accusing or hostile spirit —let that be understood—but by way of expostulation. For men expostulate with erring friends; they bring accusations against enemies who have done them a wrong.

"And surely we have a right to find fault with our neighbors if any one ever had. There are important interests at stake to which, as far as we can see, you are insensible. And you have never considered what manner of men are these Athenians with whom you will have to fight, and how utterly unlike yourselves. They are revolutionary, equally quick in the conception and in the execution of every new plan; while you are conservative—careful only to keep what you have, originating nothing, and not acting even when action is most necessary. They are bold beyond their strength; they run risks which prudence would [30] condemn; and in the midst of misfortune they are full of hope. Whereas it is your nature, tho strong, to act feebly; when your plans are most prudent, to distrust them; and when calamities come upon you, to think that you will never be delivered from them. They are impetuous, and you are dilatory; they are always abroad, and you are always at home. For they hope to gain something by leaving their homes; but you are afraid that any new enterprise may imperil what you have already. When conquerors, they pursue their victory to the utmost; when defeated, they fall back the least. Their bodies they devote to their country as tho they belonged to other men; their true self is in their mind, which is most truly their own when employed in her service. When they do not carry out an intention which they have formed, they seem to have sustained a personal bereavement; when an enterprise succeeds, they have gained a mere instalment of what is to come; but if they fail, they at once conceive new hopes and so fill up the void. With them alone to hope is to have, for they lose not a moment in the execution of an idea. This is the lifelong task, full of danger and toil, which they are always imposing upon themselves. None enjoy their good things less, because they are always seeking for more. To do their duty is their only holiday, and they deem the quiet of inaction to be as disagreeable as the most tiresome business. If a man should say to them, in a word, that they were born neither to have peace themselves nor to allow peace to other men, he would simply speak the truth.

"In the face of such an enemy, Lacedæmonians, you persist in doing nothing. You do not [31] see that peace is best secured by those who use their strength justly, but whose attitude shows that they have no intention of submitting to wrong. Justice with you seems to consist in giving no annoyance to others and in defending yourselves only against positive injury. But this policy would hardly be successful, even if your neighbors were like yourselves; and in the present case, as we pointed out just now, your ways compared with theirs are old-fashioned. And, as in the arts, so also in politics, the new must always prevail over the old. In settled times the traditions of government should be observed; but when circumstances are changing and men are compelled to meet them, much originality is required.

"The Athenians have had a wider experience, and therefore the administration of their state has improved faster than yours. But here let your procrastination end; send an army at once into Attica and assist your allies, especially the Potidæans, to whom your word is pledged. Do not allow friends and kindred to fall into the hands of their worst enemies, or drive us in despair to seek the alliance of others; in taking such a course we should be doing wrong either before the gods who are witnesses of our oaths or before men whose eyes are upon us. For the true breakers of treaties are not only those who, when forsaken, turn to others, but those who forsake allies whom they have sworn to defend. We will

remain your friends if you choose to bestir yourselves; for we should be guilty of an impiety if we deserted you without cause; and we shall not easily find allies equally congenial to us. Take heed then; you have inherited from your fathers the leadership of [32] Peloponnesus; see that her greatness suffers no diminution at your hands."

Thus spake the Corinthians. Now there happened to be staying at Lacedæmon an Athenian embassy which had come on other business, and when the envoys heard what the Corinthians had said, they felt bound to go before the Lacedæmonian assembly, not with the views of answering the accusations brought against them by the cities, but they wanted to put before the Lacedæmonians the whole question, and make them understand that they should take time to deliberate and not be rash. They desired also to set forth the greatness of their city, reminding the elder men of what they knew, and informing the younger of what lay beyond their experience. They thought that their words would sway the Lacedæmonians in the direction of peace. So they came and said that, if they might be allowed, they too would like to address the people. The Lacedæmonians invited them to come forward, and they spoke as follows:

"We were not sent here to argue with your allies, but on a special mission; observing, however, that no small outcry has arisen against us, we have come forward, not to answer the accusations which they bring (for you are not judges before whom either we or they have to plead), but to prevent you from lending too ready an ear to their bad advice and so deciding wrongly about a very serious question. We propose also, in reply to the wider charges which are raised against us, to show that what we have acquired we hold rightfully.

"Of the ancient deeds handed down by tradition and which no eye of any one who hears us ever saw, why should we speak? But of the Persian war, and other events which you [33] yourselves remember, speak we must, altho we have brought them forward so often that the repetition of them is disagreeable to us. When we faced those perils we did so for the common benefit; in the solid good you shared, and of the glory, whatever good there may be in that, we would not be wholly deprived. Our words are not designed to deprecate hostility, but to set forth in evidence the character of the city with which, unless you are very careful, you will soon be involved in war. We tell you that we, first and alone, dared to engage with the barbarian at Marathon,[23] and that, when he came again, being too weak to defend ourselves by land, we and our whole people embarked on shipboard and shared with the other Hellenes in the victory of Salamis.[24] Thereby he was prevented from sailing to the Peloponnesus and ravaging city after city; for against so mighty a fleet how could you have helped one another? He himself is the best witness of our words; for when he was once defeated at sea, he felt that his power was gone and quickly retreated with the greater part of his army.

"The event proved undeniably that the fate of Hellas depended on her navy. And the three chief elements of success were contributed by us; namely, the greatest number of ships, [34] the ablest general, the most devoted patriotism. The ships in all numbered four hundred, and of these, our own contingent amounted to nearly two-thirds. To the influence of Themistocles, our general, it was chiefly due that we fought in the strait, which was confessedly our salvation; and for this service you yourselves honored him above any stranger who ever visited you. Thirdly, we displayed the most extraordinary courage and devotion; there was no one to help us by land; for up to our frontier those who lay in the enemy's path were already slaves; so we determined to leave our city and sacrifice our homes. Even in that extremity we did not choose to desert the cause of the allies who still resisted, and by dispersing ourselves to become useless to them; but we embarked and fought, taking no offense at your failure to assist us sooner. We maintain then that we rendered you a service at least as great as you rendered us. The cities from which you came to help us were still inhabited and you might hope to return to them; your concern was for yourselves and not for us; at any rate, you remained at a distance while we had anything to lose. But we went forth from a city which was no more, and fought for one of which there was small hope; and yet we saved ourselves, and bore our part in saving you. If, in order to preserve our land, like other states, we had gone over to the Persians at

first, or afterward had not ventured to embark because our ruin was already complete, it would have been useless for you with your weak navy to fight at sea, but everything would have gone quietly just as the Persian desired. [35]

"Considering, Lacedæmonians, the energy and sagacity which we then displayed, do we deserve to be so bitterly hated by the other Hellenes merely because we have an empire? That empire was not acquired by force; but you would not stay and make an end of the barbarian, and the allies came of their own accord and asked us to be their leaders. The subsequent development of our power was originally forced upon us by circumstances; fear was our first motive; afterward ambition, and then interest stept in. And when we had incurred the hatred of most of our allies, when some of them had already revolted and been subjugated, and you were no longer the friends to us which you once had been, but suspicious and ill-disposed, how could we without great risk relax our hold? For the cities as fast as they fell away from us would have gone over to you. And no man is to be reproached who seizes every possible advantage when the danger is so great.

"At all events, Lacedæmonians, we may retort that you, in the exercise of your supremacy, manage the cities of Peloponnesus to suit your own views, and that if you, and not we, had persevered in the command of the allies long enough to be hated, you would have been quite as intolerable to them as we are, and would have been compelled, for the sake of your own safety, to rule with a strong hand. An empire was offered to us: can you wonder that, acting as human nature always will, we accepted it, and refused to give it up again, constrained by three all powerful motives, ambition, fear, interest? We are not the first who have aspired to rule; the world has ever held that the weaker must be [36] kept down by the stronger. And we think that we are worthy of power; and there was a time when you thought so too; but now when you mean expediency you talk about justice. Did justice ever deter any one from taking by force whatever he could? Men who indulge the natural ambition of empire deserve credit if they are in any degree more careful of justice than they need be. How moderate we are would speedily appear if others took our place; indeed, our very moderation, which should be our glory, has been unjustly converted into a reproach.

"For because in our suits with our allies, regulated by treaty, we do not even stand upon our rights, but have instituted the practise of deciding them at Athens and by Athenian law, we are supposed to be litigious. None of our opponents observes why others, who exercise dominion elsewhere and are less moderate than we are in their dealings with their subjects, escape this reproach. Why is it? Because men who practise violence have no longer any need of law. But we are in the habit of meeting our allies on terms of equality, and, therefore, if through some legal decision of ours, or exercise of our imperial power, contrary to their own ideas of right, they suffer ever so little, they are not grateful for our moderation in leaving them so much, but are far more offended at their trifling loss than if we had from the first plundered them in the face of day, laying aside all thought of law. For then they would themselves have admitted that the weaker must give way to the stronger. Mankind resents injustice more than violence, because the one seems to be an unfair advantage taken by an equal, the other is the irresistible force of a [37] superior. They were patient under the yoke of the Persian, who inflicted on them far more grievous wrongs; but now our dominion is odious in their eyes. And no wonder: the ruler of the day is always detested by his subjects. And should your empire supplant ours, may not you lose the good-will which you owe to the fear of us? Lose it you certainly will, if you mean again to exhibit the temper of which you gave a specimen when, for a short time, you led the confederacy against the Persian. For the institutions under which you live are incompatible with those of foreign states; and further, when any of you goes abroad, he respects neither these nor any other Hellenic laws.

"Do not then be hasty in deciding a question which is serious; and do not, by listening to the misrepresentations and complaints of others, bring trouble upon yourselves. Realize, while there is time, the inscrutable nature of war; and how when protracted it generally ends in becoming a mere matter of chance, over which neither of us can have any control, the event being equally unknown and equally hazardous to both. The misfortune is that in

their hurry to go to war, men begin with blows, and when a reverse comes upon them, then have recourse to words. But neither you nor we have as yet committed this mistake; and therefore while both of us can still choose the prudent part, we tell you not to break the peace or violate your oaths. Let our differences be determined by arbitration, according to the treaty. If you refuse, we call to witness the gods by whom you have sworn that you are the authors of the war; and we will do our best to strike in return."

When the Lacedæmonians had heard the charges brought by the allies against the Athenians, and their rejoinder, they ordered everybody but themselves to withdraw, and deliberated alone. The majority were agreed that there was now a clear case against the Athenians, and that they must fight at once.[25]

FOOTNOTES:

[18] Jowett says Thucydides "stands absolutely alone among historians, not only of Hellas, but of the world, in his impartiality and love of truth." Macaulay's enthusiasm for him is well known. Mahaffy says his work was intended to be a military history, compiled from original documents and from personal observations made by himself and other eye-witnesses. "There can not be the smallest doubt," adds Mahaffy, "that, in the hands of Thucydides, the art of writing history made an extraordinary stride and attained a perfection which no subsequent Hellenic, and few modern writers have attained." He is praised for the "lofty dignity" which he imparts to every subject. His temper is so solemn and severe as to be "strangely un-Attic." Among his great and enduring merits is the fact that he has "taught us to know more of Greek interpolitical life than all other Greek writers put together." No historian has been greater than he, not only in dignity of language, but in calmness of judgment, in intellectual force, and in breadth and acuteness of observation.

[19] From Book I of the "History of the Peloponnesian War." Translated by Benjamin Jowett.

[20] The Peloponnesians were the people of the peninsula which forms the southern part of Greece, and which is now known as Morea. In ancient times this territory was called the Peloponnesus. Its people comprized the inhabitants of several political domains called Achaia, Sicyonia, Corinthia, Argolis, Arcadia, Laconia, Messenia, and Elis. Laconia was otherwise, and quite anciently, known as Lacedæmon, its capital being the city of Sparta.

[21] Potidæa, the modern Pinaka, had revolted from Athens in 432 B.C., but did not capitulate until the end of the second year of the Peloponnesian war. It was a rich and flourishing town, originally Dorian, but colonized later from Corinth. During one of the Eastern invasions of Greece, it fell into Persian hands.

[22] These walls connected Athens with its port, the Piræus, and were each about five miles long. They ran parallel and were separated from each other by about 500 feet of space. This intervening land was used for a carriage road, on either side of which were houses. Thus was formed a continuous walled street from Athens to the sea, so that communication in case of war was made secure.

[23] The battle of Marathon was fought in September, 490. It ended the attempts of Darius to subdue Greece.

[24] The battle of Salamis took place in September, 480, and was fought in waters lying between the Piræus and the island of Salamis. Themistocles commanded the Greeks. The Persian ships were practically annihilated. Byron's lines on this battle, in his poem "The Isles of Greece," will be recalled.

II

[38]

THE PLAGUE AT ATHENS[26]

(430—425 B.C.)

They [the enemy] had not been there [in Attica] many days when the plague broke out at Athens for the first time. A similar disorder is said to have previously smitten many places, particularly Lemnos;[27] but there is no record of such a pestilence occurring elsewhere, or of so great a destruction of human life. For a while physicians, in ignorance [39] of the nature of the disease, sought to apply remedies; but it was in vain, and they themselves were among the first victims, because they oftenest came into contact with it. No human art was of any avail, and as to supplications in temples, inquiries of oracles, and the like, they were utterly useless, and at last men were overpowered by the calamity and gave up all remedies.

The disease is said to have begun south of Egypt in Ethiopia; thence it descended into Egypt and Libya, and after spreading over the greater part of the Persian empire, suddenly fell upon Athens. It first attacked the inhabitants of the Piræus, and it was supposed that the Peloponnesians had poisoned the cisterns, no conduits having as yet been made there. It afterward reached the upper city, and then the mortality became far greater. As to its probable origin or the causes which might or could have produced such a disturbance of nature, every man, whether a physician or not, will give his own opinion. But I shall describe its actual course, and the symptoms by which any one who knows them beforehand may recognize the disorder should it ever reappear. For I was myself [40] attacked, and witnessed the sufferings of others.

The season was admitted to have been remarkably free from ordinary sickness; and if anybody was already ill of any other disease, it was absorbed in this. Many who were in perfect health, all in a moment, and without any apparent reason, were seized with violent heats in the head and with redness and inflammation of the eyes. Internally the throat and the tongue were quickly suffused with blood, and the breath became unnatural and fetid. There followed sneezing and hoarseness; in a short time the disorder, accompanied by a violent cough, reached the chest; then fastening lower down, it would move the stomach and bring on all the vomits of bile to which physicians have ever given names; and they were very distressing. An ineffectual retching producing violent convulsions attacked most of the sufferers; some as soon as the previous symptoms had abated, others not until long afterward. The body externally was not so very hot to the touch, nor yet pale; it was of a livid color inclining to red, and breaking out in pustules and ulcers. But the internal fever was intense; the sufferers could not bear to have on them even the finest linen garment; they insisted on being naked, and there was nothing which they longed for more eagerly than to throw themselves into cold water. And many of those who had no one to look after them actually plunged into the cisterns, for they were tormented by unceasing thirst, which was not in the least assuaged whether they drank little or much. They could not sleep; a restlessness which was intolerable never left [41] them.

While the disease was at its height the body, instead of wasting away, held out amid these sufferings in a marvelous manner, and either they died on the seventh or ninth day, not of weakness, for their strength was not exhausted, but of internal fever, which was the end of most; or, if they survived, then the disease descended into the bowels and there produced violent ulcerations; severe diarrhea at the same time set in, and at a later stage caused exhaustion, which finally with few exceptions carried them off. For the disorder, which had originally settled in the head, passed gradually through the whole body, and, if a person got over the worst, would often seize the extremities and leave its mark, attacking the privy parts and the fingers and the toes; and some escaped with the loss of these, some with the loss of their eyes. Some, again, had no sooner recovered than they

were seized with a forgetfulness of all things and knew neither themselves nor their friends.

The malady took a form not to be described, and the fury with which it fastened upon each sufferer was too much for human nature to endure. There was one circumstance in particular which distinguished it from ordinary diseases. The birds and animals, which feed on human flesh, altho so many bodies were lying unburied, either never went near them or died if they touched them. This was proved by a remarkable disappearance of the birds of prey, which were not to be seen either about the bodies or anywhere else; while in the case of the dogs the fact was even more obvious, because they live with man. [42]

Such was the general nature of the disease; I omit many strange peculiarities which characterized individual cases. None of the ordinary sicknesses attacked any one while it lasted, or, if they did, they ended in the plague. Some of the sufferers died from want of care, others equally who were receiving the greatest attention. No single remedy could be deemed a specific; for that which did good to one did harm to another. No constitution was of itself strong enough to resist or weak enough to escape the attacks; the disease carried off all alike and defied every mode of treatment. Most appalling was the despondency which seized upon any one who felt himself sickening; for he instantly abandoned his mind to despair and, instead of holding out, absolutely threw away his chance of life. Appalling too was the rapidity with which men caught the infection, dying like sheep if they attended on one another, and this was the principal cause of mortality. When they were afraid to visit one another, the sufferers died in their solitude, so that many houses were empty because there had been no one left to take care of the sick; or if they ventured they perished, especially those who aspired to heroism. For they went to see their friends without thought of themselves and were ashamed to leave them, even at a time when the very relatives of the dying were at last growing weary and ceased to make lamentations, overwhelmed by the vastness of the calamity. But whatever instances there may have been of such devotion, more often the sick and the dying were tended by [43] the pitying care of those who had recovered, because they knew the course of the disease and were themselves free from apprehension. For no one was ever attacked a second time, or not with a fatal result. All men congratulated them; and they themselves, in the excess of their joy at the moment, had an innocent fancy that they could not die of any other sickness.

The crowding of the people out of the country into the city aggravated the misery, and the newly arrived suffered most. For, having no houses of their own, but inhabiting, in the height of summer, stifling huts, the mortality among them was dreadful, and they perished in wild disorder. The dead lay as they had died, one upon another, while others hardly alive wallowed in the streets and crawled about every fountain craving for water. The temples in which they lodged were full of the corpses of those who had died in them; for the violence of the calamity was such that men, not knowing where to turn, grew reckless of all law, human and divine. The customs which had hitherto been observed at funerals were universally violated, and they buried their dead each one as best he could. Many, having no proper appliances, because the deaths in their household had been so frequent, made no scruple of using the burial-place of others. When one man had raised a funeral pile, others would come, and throwing on their dead first, set fire to it; or when some other corpse was already burning, before they could be stopt would throw their own dead upon it and depart.

There were other and worse forms of lawlessness which the plague introduced at Athens. [44] Men who had hitherto concealed their indulgence in pleasure now grew bolder. For, seeing the sudden change—how the rich died in a moment, and those who had nothing immediately inherited their property—they reflected that life and riches were alike transitory, and they resolved to enjoy themselves while they could, and to think only of pleasure. Who would be willing to sacrifice himself to the law of honor when he knew not whether he would ever live to be held in honor? The pleasure of the moment and any sort of thing which conduced to it took the place both of honor and of expediency. No fear of God or law of man deterred a criminal. Those who saw all perishing alike thought

that the worship or neglect of the gods made no difference. For offenses against human law no punishment was to be feared; no one would live long enough to be called to account. Already a far heavier sentence had been passed and was hanging over a man's head; before that feeling, why should he not take a little pleasure?

Such was the grievous calamity which now afflicted the Athenians; within the walls their people were dying, and without, their country was being ravaged. In their troubles they naturally called to mind a verse which the elder men among them declared to have been current long ago:

"A Dorian war will come and a plague with it."

FOOTNOTES:

[25] The Peloponnesian war broke out in 431 B.C., and lasted until 404. Its result was the abasement of Athens and the elevation of Sparta to supreme power in Greece. When it began, Athens with her allies included all the coast cities of Asia Minor as far south as Lycia, the cities bordering on the Thracian and Chalcidian shores, and nearly all the islands of the Ægean Sea. Sparta at the same time was leader in a confederacy of independent states, among which were nearly all the Peloponnesian states, besides some of those in northern Greece, those of Magna Græcia and Sicily. Athens was strong in her navy, which comprized 300 galleys, while the Spartan strength lay in her land forces. The treasury of Athens was full, that of Sparta weak. After the war, the walls of Athens were demolished and she was deprived of her foreign possessions. The government set over her was an oligarchy of thirty persons, known in history as the thirty tyrants. These men soon made their harsh rule so intolerable that within sixteen months after Athens surrendered to Sparta they were deposed and democratic rule was restored to the Athenians.

[26] From Book II of the "History of the Peloponnesian War." Translated by Benjamin Jowett.

[27] One of the larger islands of the Ægean Sea, its area being about one hundred and eighty square miles.

III

[45]

THE SAILING OF THE ATHENIAN FLEET FOR SICILY[28]

(413 B.C.)

About the middle of summer the expedition started for Sicily. Orders had been previously given to most of the allies, to the corn-ships, the smaller craft, and generally to the vessels in attendance on the armament that they should muster at Corcyra, whence the whole fleet was to strike across the Ionian Gulf to the promontory of Iapygia.[29] Early in the morning of the day appointed for their departure, the Athenians and such of their allies as had already joined them went down to the Piræus and began to man the ships. The entire population of Athens accompanied them, citizens and strangers alike. The citizens came to take farewell, one of an acquaintance another of a kinsman, another of a son; the crowd as they passed along were full of hope and full of tears; hope of conquering Sicily, tears because they doubted whether they would ever see their friends again, when they thought of the long voyage on which they were sending them. At the moment of parting, the danger was nearer; and terrors which had never occurred to them [46] when they were voting the expedition now entered into their souls. Nevertheless their

spirits revived at the sight of the armament in all its strength and of the abundant provision which they had made. The strangers and the rest of the multitude came out of curiosity, desiring to witness an enterprise of which the greatness exceeded belief.

No armament so magnificent or costly had ever been sent out by any single Hellenic power, tho in mere number of ships and hoplites that which sailed to Epidaurus under Pericles and afterward under Hagnon to Potidæa was not inferior. For that expedition consisted of a hundred Athenian and fifty Chian and Lesbian triremes, conveying four thousand hoplites, all Athenian citizens, three hundred cavalry, and a multitude of allied troops. Still the voyage was short and the equipments were poor, whereas this expedition was intended to be long absent, and was thoroughly provided both for sea and land service, wherever its presence might be required.

On the fleet the greatest pains and expense had been lavished by the trierarchs and the state. The public treasury gave a drachma a day to each sailor, and furnished empty hulls for sixty swift sailing vessels, and for forty transports carrying hoplites. All these were manned with the best crews which could be obtained. The trierarchs, besides the pay given by the state, added somewhat more out of their own means to the wages of the upper ranks of rowers and of the petty officers. The figureheads and other fittings provided by the trierarchs were of the most costly description. Every one strove to the utmost that his own ship might excel both in beauty and swiftness. The infantry had been [47] well selected and the lists carefully made up. There was the keenest rivalry among the soldiers in the matter of arms and personal equipment.

And while at home the Athenians were thus competing with one another in the performance of their several duties, to the rest of Hellas the expedition seemed to be a grand display of their power and greatness, rather than a preparation for war. If any one had reckoned up the whole expenditure (1) of the state, (2) of individual soldiers and others, including in the first not only what the city had already laid out, but what was entrusted to the generals, and in the second what either at the time or afterward private persons spent upon their outfit, or the trierarchs upon their ships, the provision for the long voyage which every one may be supposed to have carried with him over and above his public pay, and what soldiers or traders may have taken for purposes of exchange, he would have found that altogether an immense sum amounting to many talents was withdrawn from the city. Men were quite amazed at the boldness of the scheme and the magnificence of the spectacle, which were everywhere spoken of, no less than at the great disproportion of the force when compared with that of the enemy against whom it was intended. Never had a greater expedition been sent to a foreign land; never was there an enterprise in which the hope of future success seemed to be better justified by actual power.

When the ships were manned and everything required for the voyage had been placed on board, silence was proclaimed by the sound of the trumpet, and all with one voice before [48] setting sail offered up the customary prayers; these were recited, not in each ship, but by a single herald, the whole fleet accompanying him. On every deck both officers and men, mingling wine in bowls, made libations from vessels of gold and silver. The multitude of citizens and other well-wishers who were looking on from the land joined in the prayer. The crews raised the pæan, and when the libations were completed, put to sea. After sailing out for some distance in single file, the ships raced with one another as far as Ægina;[30] thence they hastened onward to Corcyra, where the allies who formed the rest of the army were assembling.

Meanwhile reports of the expedition were coming in to Syracuse from many quarters, but for a long time nobody gave credit to them. At length an assembly was held. Even then different opinions were exprest, some affirming and others denying that the expedition was coming. At last Hermocrates,[31] the son of Hermon, believing that he had certain information, came forward, and warned the Syracusans....

Great was the contention which his words aroused among the Syracusan people, some asserting that the Athenians would never come, and that he was not speaking truth, others [49]

asking, "And if they should come, what harm could they do to us nearly so great as we could do to them?" while others were quite contemptuous, and made a jest of the whole matter. A few only believed Hermocrates and realized the danger. At last Athenagoras, the popular leader, who had at that time the greatest influence with the multitude, came forward and spoke....

The Athenians and their allies were by this time collected at Corcyra. There the generals began by holding a final review of the ships, and disposed them in the order in which they were to anchor at their stations. The fleet was divided into three squadrons, and one of them assigned by lot to each of the three generals, in order to avoid any difficulties which might occur, if they sailed together, in finding water, anchorage, and provisions where they touched; they thought also that the presence of a general in each division would promote good order and discipline throughout the fleet. They then sent before them to Italy and Sicily three ships, which had orders to find out what cities in those regions would receive them, and to meet them again on their way, that they might know before they put in.

At length the great armament proceeded to cross from Corcyra to Sicily. It consisted of a hundred and thirty-four triremes in all, besides two Rhodian vessels of fifty oars. Of these a hundred were Athenian, sixty being swift vessels, and the remaining forty transports; the rest of the fleet was furnished by the Chians and other allies. The hoplites numbered in all five thousand one hundred, of whom fifteen hundred were Athenians taken from the [50]
roll, and seven hundred who served as marines were of the fourth and lowest class of Athenian citizens. The remainder of the hoplites were furnished by the allies, mostly by the subject states; but five hundred came from Argos, besides two hundred and fifty Mantinean and other mercenaries. The archers were in all four hundred and eighty, of whom eighty were Cretans. There were seven hundred Rhodian slingers, a hundred and twenty light-armed Megarians who were exiles, and one horse transport which conveyed thirty horsemen and horses.

Such were the forces with which the first expedition crossed the sea. For the transport of provisions thirty merchant-ships, which also conveyed bakers, masons, carpenters, and tools such as are required in sieges, were included in the armament. It was likewise attended by a hundred small vessels; these as well as the merchant-vessels, were prest into the service. Other merchant-vessels and lesser craft in great numbers followed of their own accord for purposes of trade. The whole fleet now struck across the Ionian Sea from Corcyra. They arrived at the promontory of Iapygia and at Tarentum,[32] each ship taking its own course, and passed along the coast of Italy. The Italian cities did not admit them within their walls, or open a market to them, but allowed them water and anchorage; Tarentum and Locri[33] refused even these. At length they reached Rhegium, [51]
[34] the extreme point of Italy, where the fleet reunited. As they were not received within the walls, they encamped outside the city, at the temple of Artemis; there they were provided by the inhabitants with a market, and drawing up their ships on shore they took a rest. They held a conference with the Rhegians, and prest them, being Chalcidians themselves, to aid their Chalcidian kinsmen the Leontines. But the Rhegians replied that they would be neutral, and would only act in accordance with the decision of all the Italian Greeks. The Athenian commanders now began to consider how they could best commence operations in Sicily. Meanwhile they were expecting the ships which had gone on and were to meet them from Egesta;[35] for they wished to know whether the Egestæans really had the money of which the messengers had brought information to Athens.

FOOTNOTES:

[28] From Book VI of "The History of the Peloponnesian War." Translated by Benjamin Jowett. At the time of the sailing of this fleet the war had been in progress sixteen years. Syracuse, a Greek colony, founded from Corinth, had now become an ally of Sparta against Athens.

[29] Iapygia lies in what is now Apulia, southern Italy. It is the extreme southern point of the "heel" of the "boot."

[30] An island in the Saronic Gulf, lying immediately south of Attica; in an artistic and historical sense, one of the most celebrated of Greek islands.

[31] One of the three generals of Syracuse entrusted with the defense of the city. His character was "one of the brightest and purest" in the history of that place, says a writer in Smith's "Dictionary." His daughter married the tyrant Dionysius.

[32] The modern Taranto, in southern Italy, in the gulf of that name.

[33] The city of Locri lay near Gerace, a town in the extremity of the "toe" of the "boot." It was allied with Syracuse in the fourth century.

[34] The modern Reggio, which lies opposite Messina, and which, like Messina, was destroyed in the earthquake of 1908.

[35] Also written Segesta, a city in northwestern Sicily, six miles from the coast and about twenty-five miles west of Palermo. The modern city of Aleamo stands near its site. Segesta traced its foundation to fugitives from Troy. Among its notable ruins is a Greek temple in the Doric order, which is one of the finest that have survived to our time.

IV

COMPLETION OF THE ATHENIAN DEFEAT AT SYRACUSE[36]

(413 B.C.)

[52]

The Syracusans and the allies naturally thought that the struggle would be brought to a glorious end if, after having defeated the Athenian fleet, they took captive the whole of their great armament, and did not allow them to escape either by sea or land. So they at once began to close the mouth of the Great Harbor, which was about a mile wide, by means of triremes, merchant-vessels, and small boats, placed broadside, which they moored there. They made every preparation also for a naval engagement, should the Athenians be willing to hazard another; and all their thoughts were on a grand scale.

The Athenians, seeing the closing of the harbor and inferring the intentions of the enemy, proceeded to hold a council. The generals and officers met and considered the difficulties [53] of their position. The most pressing was the want of food. For they had already sent to Catana,[37] when they intended to depart, and stopt the supplies; and they could get no more unless they recovered the command of the sea. They resolved therefore to quit their lines on the higher ground and to cut off by a cross-wall a space close to their ships, no greater than was absolutely required for their baggage and for their sick; after leaving a guard there, they meant to put on board every other man, and to launch all their ships, whether fit for service or not; they would then fight a decisive battle, and, if they conquered, go to Catana; but if not, they would burn their ships, and retreat by land in good order, taking the nearest way to some friendly country, barbarian or Hellenic.

This design they proceeded to execute, and, withdrawing quietly from the upper walls, manned their whole fleet, compelling every man of any age at all suitable for service to embark. The entire number of the ships which they manned was about a hundred and ten. They put on board numerous archers and javelin-men, Acarnanians,[38] and other foreigners, and made such preparations for action as the nature of the plan imposed upon them by their necessities allowed. When all was nearly ready, Nicias,[39] perceiving that the soldiers were deprest by their severe defeat at sea, which was no new experience to [54]

them, while at the same time the want of provisions made them impatient to risk a battle with the least possible delay, called his men together and before they engaged exhorted them....

Nicias gave orders to man the ships. Gylippus[40] and the Syracusans could see clearly enough from the preparations which the Athenians were making that they were going to fight. But they had also previous notice, and had been told of the iron grapnels; and they took precautions against this as against all the other devices of the Athenians. They covered the prows of their vessels with hides, extending a good way along the upper part of their sides, so that the grapnels might slip and find no hold. When all was ready, Gylippus and the other generals exhorted their men....

When Gylippus and the other Syracusan generals had, like Nicias, encouraged their troops, perceiving the Athenians to be manning their ships, they presently did the same. Nicias, overwhelmed by the situation, and seeing how great and how near the peril was (for the ships were on the very point of rowing out), feeling too, as men do on the eve of a great struggle, that all which he had done was nothing, and that he had not said half enough, again addrest the trierarchs, and calling each of them by his father's name, and his own name, and the name of his tribe, he entreated those who had made any reputation for themselves not to be false to it, and those whose ancestors were eminent not to tarnish their hereditary fame. He reminded them that they were the inhabitants of the freest [55] country in the world, and how in Athens there was no interference with the daily life of any man. He spoke to them of their wives and children and their fathers' gods, as men will at such a time; for then they do not care whether their common-place phrases seem to be out of date or not, but loudly reiterate the old appeals, believing that they may be of some service at the awful moment. When he thought that he had exhorted them, not enough, but as much as the scanty time allowed, he retired, and led the land-forces to the shore, extending the line as far as he could, so that they might be of the greatest use in encouraging the combatants on board ship. Demosthenes,[41] Menander, and Euthydemus, who had gone on board the Athenian fleet to take command, now quitted their own station, and proceeded straight to the closed mouth of the harbor, intending to force their way to the open sea where a passage was still left.

The Syracusans and their allies had already put out with nearly the same number of ships as before. A detachment of them guarded the entrance of the harbor; the remainder were disposed all round it in such a manner that they might fall on the Athenians from every side at once, and that their land-forces might at the same time be able to cooperate whenever the ships retreated to the shore. Sicanus and Agatharchus commanded the Syracusan fleet, each of them a wing; Pythen and the Corinthians occupied the center. [56]

When the Athenians approached the closed mouth of the harbor, the violence of their onset overpowered the ships which were stationed there; they then attempted to loosen the fastenings. Whereupon from all sides the Syracusans and their allies came bearing down upon them, and the conflict was no longer confined to the entrance, but extended throughout the harbor. No previous engagement had been so fierce and obstinate. Great was the eagerness with which the rowers on both sides rushed upon their enemies whenever the word of command was given; and keen was the contest between the pilots as they maneuvered one against another. The marines too were full of anxiety that, when ship struck ship, the service on deck should not fall short of the rest; every one in the place assigned to him was eager to be foremost among his fellows. Many vessels meeting —and never did so many fight in so small a space, for the two fleets together amounted to nearly two hundred—they were seldom able to strike in the regular manner, because they had no opportunity of first retiring or breaking the line; they generally fouled one another as ship dashed against ship in the hurry of flight or pursuit. All the time that another vessel was bearing down, the men on deck poured showers of javelins and arrows and stones upon the enemy; and when the two closed, the marines fought hand to hand, and endeavored to board. In many places, owing to the want of room, they who had struck another found that they were struck themselves; often two or even more vessels were

unavoidably entangled about one, and the pilots had to make plans of attack and defense, [57] not against one adversary only, but against several coming from different sides.

The crash of so many ships dashing against one another took away the wits of the sailors, and made it impossible to hear the boatswains, whose voices in both fleets rose high, as they gave directions to the rowers, or cheered them on in the excitement of the struggle. On the Athenians' side they were shouting to their men that they must force a passage and seize the opportunity now or never of returning in safety to their native land. To the Syracusans and their allies was represented the glory of preventing the escape of their enemies, and of a victory by which every man would exalt the honor of his own city. The commanders, too, when they saw any ship backing water without necessity, would call the captain by his name, and ask, of the Athenians, whether they were retreating because they expected to be more at home upon the land of their bitterest foes than upon that sea which had been their own so long; on the Syracusan side, whether, when they knew perfectly well that the Athenians were only eager to find some means of flight, they would themselves fly from the fugitives.

While the naval engagement hung in the balance, the two armies on shore had great trial and conflict of soul. The Sicilian soldier was animated by the hope of increasing the glory which he had already won, while the invader was tormented by the fear that his fortunes might sink lower still. The last chance of the Athenians lay in their ships, and their anxiety was dreadful. The fortune of the battle varied; and it was not possible that the [58] spectators on the shore should all receive the same impression of it. Being quite close and having different points of view, they would some of them see their own ships victorious; their courage would then revive, and they would earnestly call upon the gods not to take from them their hope of deliverance. But others, who saw their ships worsted, cried and shrieked aloud, and were by the sight alone more utterly unnerved than the defeated combatants themselves. Others again who had fixt their gaze on some part of the struggle which was undecided, were in a state of excitement still more terrible; they kept swaying their bodies to and fro in an agony of hope and fear as the stubborn conflict went on and on; for at every instant they were all but saved or all but lost. And while the strife hung in the balance, you might hear in the Athenian army at once lamentation, shouting, cries of victory or defeat, and all the various sounds which are wrung from a great host in extremity of danger. Not less agonizing were the feelings of those on board.

At length the Syracusans and their allies, after a protracted struggle, put the Athenians to flight, and triumphantly bearing down upon them, and encouraging one another with loud cries and exhortations, drove them to the land. Then that part of the navy which had not been taken in the deep water fell back in confusion to the shore, and the crews rushed out of the ships into the camp. And the land-forces, no longer now divided in feeling, but uttering one universal groan of intolerable anguish ran, some of them to save the ships, others to defend what remained of the wall; but the greater number began to look to [59] themselves and to their own safety. Never had there been a greater panic in an Athenian army than at that moment. They now suffered what they had done to others at Pylos. For at Pylos[42] the Lacedæmonians, when they saw their ships destroyed, knew that their friends who had crossed over into the island of Sphacteria[43] were lost with them. And so now the Athenians, after the rout of their fleet, knew that they had no hope of saving themselves by land unless events took some extraordinary turn.

Thus, after a fierce battle and great destruction of ships and men on both sides, the Syracusans and their allies gained the victory. They gathered up the wrecks and bodies of the dead, and sailing back to the city, erected a trophy. The Athenians, overwhelmed by their misery, never so much as thought of recovering their wrecks or of asking leave to collect their dead. Their intention was to retreat that very night....

On the third day after the sea-fight, when Nicias and Demosthenes thought that their preparations were complete, the army began to move. They were in a dreadful condition; not only was there the great fact that they had lost their whole fleet, and instead of their expected triumph had brought the utmost peril upon Athens as well as upon themselves,

but also the sights which presented themselves as they quitted the camp were painful to every eye and mind. The dead were unburied, and when any one saw the body of a friend lying on the ground he was smitten with sorrow and dread, while the sick or wounded who still survived but had to be left were even a greater trial to the living, and more to be pitied than those who were gone. Their prayers and lamentations drove their companions to distraction; they would beg that they might be taken with them, and call by name any friend or relative whom they saw passing; they would hang upon their departing comrades and follow as far as they could, and when their limbs and strength failed them and they dropt behind, many were the imprecations and cries which they uttered. So that the whole army was in tears, and such was their despair that they could hardly make up their minds to stir altho they were leaving an enemy's country, having suffered calamities too great for tears already, and dreading miseries yet greater in the unknown future. [60]

There was also a general feeling of shame and self-reproach—indeed they seemed, not like an army, but like a fugitive population of a city captured after a siege, and of a great city too. For the whole multitude who were marching together numbered not less than forty thousand. Each of them took with him anything he could carry which was likely to be of use. Even the heavy-armed and cavalry, contrary to their practise when under arms, conveyed about their persons their own food, some because they had no attendants, others because they could not trust them; for they had long been deserting, and most of them had gone off all at once. Nor was the food which they carried sufficient, for the supplies of the camp had failed. Their disgrace and the universality of the misery, altho there might be some consolation in the very community of suffering, was nevertheless at that moment hard to bear, especially when they remembered from what pomp and splendor they had fallen into their present low estate. Never had a Hellenic army experienced such a reverse. They had come intending to enslave others, and they were going away in fear that they would be themselves enslaved. Instead of the prayers and hymns with which they had put to sea, they were now departing amid appeals to heaven of another sort. They were no longer sailors but landsmen, depending, not upon their fleet but upon their infantry. Yet in face of the great danger which still threatened them all these things appeared endurable.... [61]

When daylight broke and the Syracusans and their allies saw that the Athenians had departed, most of them thought that Gylippus had let them go on purpose, and were very angry with him. They easily found the line of their retreat, and quickly following came up with them about the time of the midday meal. The troops of Demosthenes were last; they were marching slowly and in disorder, not having recovered from the panic of the previous night, when they were overtaken by the Syracusans, who immediately fell upon them and fought. Separated as they were from the others, they were easily hemmed in by the Syracusan cavalry and driven into a narrow space. The division of Nicias was as much as six miles in advance, for he marched faster, thinking that their safety depended at such a time, not in remaining and fighting, if they could avoid it, but in retreating as quickly as they could, and resisting only when they were positively compelled. [62]

Demosthenes, on the other hand, who had been more incessantly harassed throughout the retreat, because marching last, was first attacked by the enemy; now, when he saw the Syracusans pursuing him, instead of pressing onward, had ranged his army in order of battle. Thus lingering he was surrounded, and he and the Athenians under his command were in the greatest danger and confusion. For they were crusht into a walled enclosure, having a road on both sides and planted thickly with olive-trees, and missiles were hurled at them from all points. The Syracusans naturally preferred this mode of attack to a regular engagement. For to risk themselves against desperate men would have been only playing into the hands of the Athenians. Moreover, every one was sparing of his life; their good fortune was already assured, and they did not wish to fall in the hour of victory. Even by this irregular mode of fighting they thought that they could overpower and capture the Athenians.

And so when they had gone on all day assailing them with missiles from every quarter, and saw that they were quite worn out with their wounds and all their other sufferings,

Gylippus and the Syracusans made a proclamation, first of all to the islanders, that any of them who pleased might come over to them and have their freedom. But only a few cities accepted the offer. At length an agreement was made for the entire force under [63] Demosthenes. Their arms were to be surrendered but no one was to suffer death, either from violence or from imprisonment, or from want of the bare means of life. So they all surrendered, being in number six thousand, and gave up what money they had. This they threw into the hollows of shields and filled four. The captives were at once taken to the city. On the same day Nicias and his division reached the river Erineus, which he crossed, and halted his army on a rising ground.

On the following day, he was overtaken by the Syracusans, who told him that Demosthenes had surrendered, and bade him do the same. He, not believing them, procured a truce while he sent a horseman to go and see. Upon the return of the horseman bringing assurance of the fact, he sent a herald to Gylippus and the Syracusans, saying that he would agree, on behalf of the Athenian state, to pay the expenses which the Syracusans had incurred in the war, on condition that they should let his army go; until the money was paid he would give Athenian citizens as hostages, a man for a talent. Gylippus and the Syracusans would not accept these proposals, but attacked and surrounded this division of the army as well as the other, and hurled missiles at them from every side until the evening. They too were grievously in want of food and necessaries. Nevertheless they meant to wait for the dead of the night and then to proceed. They were just resuming their arms, when the Syracusans discovered them and raised the pæan. The Athenians, perceiving that they were detected, laid down their arms [64] again, with the exception of about three hundred men who broke through the enemy's guard, and made their escape in the darkness as best they could.

When the day dawned Nicias led forward his army, and the Syracusans and the allies again assailed them on every side, hurling javelins and other missiles at them. The Athenians hurried on to the river Assinarus. They hoped to gain a little relief if they forded the river, for the mass of horsemen and other troops overwhelmed and crusht them; and they were worn out by fatigue and thirst. But no sooner did they reach the water than they lost all order and rushed in; every man was trying to cross first, and, the enemy pressing upon them at the same time, the passage of the river became hopeless. Being compelled to keep close together they fell one upon another, and trampled each other under foot; some at once perished, pierced by their own spears; others got entangled in the baggage and were carried down the stream. The Syracusans stood upon the further bank of the river, which was steep, and hurled missiles from above on the Athenians, who were huddled together in the deep bed of the stream and for the most part were drinking greedily. The Peloponnesians came down the bank and slaughtered them, falling chiefly upon those who were in the river. Whereupon the water at once became foul but was drunk all the same, altho muddy and dyed with blood, and the crowd fought for it.

At last, when the dead bodies were lying in heaps upon one another in the water and the army was utterly undone, some perishing in the river, and any one who escaped being cut [65] off by the cavalry, Nicias surrendered to Gylippus, in whom he had more confidence than in the Syracusans. He entreated him and the Lacedæmonians to do what they pleased with himself, but not to go on killing the men. So Gylippus gave the word to make prisoners. Thereupon the survivors, not including, however, a large number whom the soldiers concealed, were brought in alive. As for the three hundred who had broken through the guard in the night, the Syracusans sent in pursuit and seized them. The total of the public prisoners when collected was not great; for many were appropriated by the soldiers, and the whole of Sicily was full of them, they not having capitulated like the troops under Demosthenes. A large number also perished; the slaughter at the river being very great, quite as great as any which took place in the Sicilian war; and not a few had fallen in the frequent attacks which were made upon the Athenians during the march. Still many escaped, some at the time, others ran away after an interval of slavery, and all these found refuge at Catana.

The Syracusans and their allies collected their forces and returned with the spoil, and as many prisoners as they could take with them, into the city. The captive Athenians and allies they deposited in the quarries, which they thought would be the safest place of confinement. Nicias and Demosthenes they put to the sword, altho against the will of Gylippus. For Gylippus thought that to carry home with him to Lacedæmon the generals of the enemy, over and above all his other successes, would be a brilliant triumph. One of [66] them, Demosthenes, happened to be the greatest foe, and the other the greatest friend of the Lacedæmonians, both in the same matter of Pylos and Sphacteria....

Those who were imprisoned in the quarries were at the beginning of their captivity harshly treated by the Syracusans. There were great numbers of them, and they were crowded in a deep and narrow place. At first the sun by day was scorching and suffocating, for they had no roof over their heads, while the autumn nights were cold, and the extremes of temperature engendered violent disorders. Being cramped for room, they had to do everything on the same spot. The corpses of those who had died from their wounds, exposure to the weather, and the like lay heaped one upon another. The smells were intolerable; and the prisoners were at the same time afflicted by hunger and thirst. During eight months they were allowed only about half a pint of water and a pint of food a day.[44] Every kind of misery which could befall man in such a place befell them. This was the condition of all the captives for about ten weeks. At length the Syracusans sold them, with the exception of the Athenians and of any Sicilian or Italian Greeks who had sided with them in the war. The whole number of the public prisoners is not accurately known, but they were not less than seven thousand.

Of all the Hellenic actions which took place in this war, or indeed of all Hellenic actions which are on record, this was the greatest—the most glorious to the victors, the most ruinous to the vanquished; for they were utterly and at all points defeated, and their [67] sufferings were prodigious. Fleet and army perished from the face of the earth; nothing was saved, and of the many who went forth few returned home.

Thus ended the Sicilian expedition.

FOOTNOTES:

[36] From Book VII of the "History of the Peloponnesian War," translated by Benjamin Jowett. "The noblest piece of tragedy in all written history," says John Morley of this book. Gray, the poet, in one of his letters, inquired, "Is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life?" Macaulay, in a letter once wrote: "I do assure you that there is no prose composition in the world that I place so high as the Seventh book of Thucydides. Tacitus was a great man, but he was not up to the Sicilian expedition." Praise is given to this chapter by Mahaffy for "the sustained splendor of the narrative." Grote had profound admiration for the famous picture contained in the selection here given. He refers to its "condensed and burning phrases" as imparting an impression which modern historians have sought in vain to convey.

[37] The modern Catania, on the east coast of Sicily.

[38] The people of Acarnania, a province of Greece, lying on the Ionian Sea south of the Ambracian Gulf.

[39] Commander of the Athenians.

[40] The Spartan general who had been sent to Syracuse by advice of Alcibiades after he went over to the enemy.

[41] Next under Nicias in command of the expedition. He died twenty-nine years before the birth of the orator of the same name.

[42] Here occurred one of the most memorable events in the Peloponnesian war, the defense of Pylos under Demosthenes.

[43] This island lies immediately south of Pylos. It is long and narrow and guards the Bay of Navarino, the largest harbor in Greece, which was the scene of a famous battle between the English, French, Turkish, and Russian fleets in 1827.

[44] This allowance of food was only about one-half the amount usually given to a slave.

XENOPHON [68]

Born in Athens about 430 B.C.; died after 357; celebrated as historian and essayist, being a disciple of Socrates; joined the expedition of Cyrus the Younger in 401, and after the battle of Cunaxa became the chief leader of ten thousand Greeks in their march to the Black Sea, the story being chronicled in his famous "Anabasis"; fought on the Spartan side in the battle of Coronea; banished from Athens, he settled at Scillus in Eleia; spent his last years in Corinth; among his writings besides the "Anabasis" are the "Hellenica," "Cycropædia," "Memorabilia of Socrates," and essays on hunting and horsemanship.

I

THE CHARACTER OF CYRUS THE YOUNGER[45]

Thus then died Cyrus, a man who, of all the Persians since Cyrus the Elder, was the most princely and most worthy of empire, as is agreed by all who appear to have had personal knowledge of him. In the first place, while he was yet with his brother and the other youths, he was a boy, and when he was receiving his education thought to surpass them all in everything. For without exception the sons of the Persian nobles are educated at the [69] gates of the king;[46] where they may learn many a lesson of virtuous conduct, but can see or hear nothing disgraceful. In this place the boys see some honored by the king, and others disgraced, and hear of them; so that in their very childhood they learn to govern and to obey.

Here Cyrus, first of all, showed himself most remarkable for modesty among those of his own age, and for paying more ready obedience to his elders than even those who were inferior to him in station; and next he was noted for his fondness for horses, and for managing them in a superior manner. They found him, too, very desirous of learning and most assiduous in practising the warlike exercises of archery and hurling the javelin. When it suited his age, he grew extremely fond of the chase, and of braving dangers in encounters with wild beasts. On one occasion he did not shrink from a she bear that attacked him; however, in grappling with her, he was dragged from his horse, and received some wounds, the scars of which were visible on his body, but at last killed her. The person who first came to his assistance he made a happy man in the eyes of many.

When he was sent down by his father, as satrap of Lydia and Great Phrygia and Cappadocia, and was also appointed commander of all the troops whose duty it is to muster in the plain of Castolus, he soon showed that if he made a league or compact with [70] any one, or gave a promise, he deemed it of the utmost importance not to break his word. Accordingly, the states that were committed to his charge, as well as individuals, had the greatest confidence in him; and if any one had been his enemy, he felt secure that if Cyrus entered into a treaty with him, he should suffer no infraction of the stipulations. When,

therefore, he waged war against Tissaphernes,[47] all the cities, of their own accord, chose to adhere to Cyrus in preference to Tissaphernes, except the Milesians; but they feared Cyrus, because he would not abandon the cause of the exiles; for he both showed by his deeds, and declared in words, that he would never desert them, since he had once become a friend to them, not even tho they should grow still fewer in number, and be in a worse condition than they were.

Whenever any one did Cyrus a kindness or an injury, he showed himself anxious to go beyond him in those respects; and some used to mention a wish of his, that he "desired to live long enough to outdo both those who had done him good, and those who had done him ill, in the requital that he should make." Accordingly, to him alone of the men of our days were so great a number of people desirous of committing the disposal of their property, their cities, and their own person.

Yet no one could with truth say this of him, that he suffered the criminal or unjust to deride his authority; for he of all men inflicted punishment most unsparingly; and there [71] were often to be seen, along the most frequented roads, men deprived of their feet, or hands, or eyes; so that in Cyrus' dominions it was possible for any one, Greek or barbarian, who did no wrong, to travel without fear whithersoever he pleased, and having with him whatever might suit his convenience.

To those who showed ability for war, it is acknowledged that he paid distinguished honor. His first war was with the Pisidians and Mysians; and, marching in person into these countries, he made those whom he saw voluntarily hazarding their lives in his service governors over the territory that he subdued, and distinguished them with rewards in other ways, so that the brave appeared to be the most fortunate of men, while the cowardly were deemed fit only to be their slaves. There were, therefore, great numbers of persons who voluntarily exposed themselves to danger wherever they thought that Cyrus would become aware of their exertions.

With regard to justice, if any appeared to him inclined to display that virtue, he made a point of making such men richer than those who sought to profit by injustice. Accordingly, while in many other respects his affairs were administered judiciously, he likewise possest an army worthy of the name. For it was not for money that generals and captains came from foreign lands to enter into his service, but because they were persuaded that to serve Cyrus well would be more profitable than any amount of monthly pay. Besides, if any one executed his orders in a superior manner, he never suffered his diligence to go unrewarded; consequently, in every undertaking, the best-qualified [72] officers were said to be ready to assist him.

If he noticed any one that was a skilful manager, with strict regard to justice, stocking the land of which he had the direction, and securing income from it, he would never take anything from such a person, but was ever ready to give him something in addition; so that men labored with cheerfulness, acquired property with confidence, and made no concealment from Cyrus of what each possest; for he did not appear to envy those who amassed riches openly, but to endeavor to bring into use the wealth of those who concealed it.

Whatever friends he made, and felt to be well disposed to him, and considered to be capable of assisting him in anything that he might wish to accomplish, he is acknowledged by all to have been most successful in attaching them to him. For, on the very same account on which he thought that he himself had need of friends—namely, that he might have cooperators in his undertakings—did he endeavor to prove an efficient assistant to his friends in whatever he perceived any of them desirous of effecting.

He received, for many reasons, more presents than perhaps any other single individual; and these he outdid every one else in distributing among his friends, having a view to the character of each, and to what he perceived each most needed. Whatever presents any one sent him of articles of personal ornament, whether for warlike accouterment or merely for dress, concerning these, they said, he used to remark that he could not

decorate his own person with them all, but that he thought friends well equipped were the greatest ornament a man could have. That he should outdo his friends, indeed, in conferring great benefits is not at all wonderful, since he was so much more able; but that he should surpass his friends in kind attentions and an anxious desire to oblige, appears to me far more worthy of admiration. Frequently, when he had wine served him of a peculiarly fine flavor, he would send half-emptied flagons of it to some of his friends, with a message to this effect, "Cyrus has not for some time met with pleasanter wine than this; and he has therefore sent some of it to you, and begs you will drink it to-day, with those whom you love best." He would often, too, send geese partly eaten and the halves of loaves, and other such things, desiring the bearer to say, in presenting them, "Cyrus has been delighted with these, and therefore wishes you also to taste of them." [73]

Wherever provender was scarce, but he himself, from having many attendants, and from the care which he took, was able to procure some, he would send it about, and desire his friends to give that provender to the horses that carried them, so that hungry steeds might not carry his friends. Whenever he rode out and many were likely to see him, he would call to him his friends, and hold earnest conversation with them, that he might show whom he held in honor; so that, from what I have heard, I should think that no one was ever beloved by a greater number of persons, either Greeks or barbarians. Of this fact the following is a proof: that no one deserted to the king from Cyrus, tho only a subject (except that Orontes[48] attempted to do so; but he soon found the person whom he believed faithful to him more a friend to Cyrus than to himself), while many came over to Cyrus from the king, after they had become enemies to each other, and these, too, men who were greatly beloved by the king; for they felt persuaded that if they proved themselves brave soldiers under Cyrus, they would obtain from him more adequate rewards for their services than from the king. [74]

What occurred also at the time of his death is a great proof as well that he himself was a man of merit as that he could accurately distinguish such as were trustworthy, well disposed, and constant to their attachment. For when he was killed, all his friends and the partakers of his table who were with him fell fighting in his defense except Ariæus, who had been posted in command of the cavalry on the left; and, when he learned that Cyrus had fallen in the battle, he took to flight, with all the troops which he had under his command.

FOOTNOTES:

[45] From the "Anabasis." Translated by J. S. Watson. Cyrus the Younger, son of Darius Nothus, with the help of 10,000 Greeks, sought to conquer his brother Artaxerxes, but was defeated and killed in the battle of Cunaxa in 401 B.C. The elder Cyrus, called the "Great," founder of the Persian Empire, died in 529 B.C. It is the retreat of the 10,000 Greeks that Xenophon chronicles in the "Anabasis."

[46] By this is meant at the palace of the king, tho not literally within the palace. Among the ancient Persians, as to-day among the Turks at Constantinople, the king's palace was called "the Porte."

[47] A Persian satrap who took part in the battle of Cunaxa. He became chief ruler of Western Asia, but was overthrown by the Greeks in 395 and put to death.

[48] A Persian of royal blood, one of the officers of Cyrus the Younger, several times in revolt against him, and finally condemned.

II [75]

THE GREEK ARMY IN THE SNOWS OF ARMENIA[49]

(400 B.C.)

The next day it was thought necessary to march away as fast as possible, before the enemy's force should be reassembled, and get possession of the pass. Collecting their baggage at once, therefore, they set forward through a deep snow, taking with them several guides; and, having the same day passed the height on which Tiribazus had intended to attack them, they encamped. Hence they proceeded three days' journey, through a desert tract of country, a distance of fifteen parasangs, to the river Euphrates, and passed it without being wet higher than the middle. The sources of the river were said not to be far off.

Hence they advanced three days' march, through much snow and a level plain, a distance of fifteen parasangs; the third day's march was extremely troublesome, as the north wind [76] blew full in their faces, completely parching up everything and benumbing the men. One of the augurs, in consequence, advised that they should sacrifice to the wind; and a sacrifice was accordingly offered, when the vehemence of the wind appeared to every one manifestly to abate. The depth of the snow was a fathom; so that many of the baggage-cattle and slaves perished, with about thirty of the soldiers. They continued to burn fires through the whole night, for there was plenty of wood at the place of encampment. But those who came up late could get no wood; those therefore who had arrived before, and had kindled fires, would not admit the late comers to the fire unless they gave them a share of the corn or other provisions that they had brought. Thus they shared with one another what they respectively had. In the places where the fires were made, as the snow melted, there were formed large pits that reached to the ground; and here there was accordingly opportunity to measure the depth of the snow.

Hence they marched through snow the whole of the following day, and many of the men contracted the bulimia. Xenophon, who commanded in the rear, finding in his way such of the men as had fallen down with it, knew not what disease it was. But as one of those acquainted with it told him that they were evidently affected with bulimia, and that they would get up if they had something to eat, he went round among the baggage, and, wherever he saw anything eatable, he gave it out, and sent such as were able to run to distribute it among those diseased, who, as soon as they had eaten, rose up and continued [77] their march. As they proceeded, Cheirisophus[50] came, just as it grew dark, to a village, and found a spring in front of the rampart, some women and girls belonging to the place fetching water. The women asked them who they were; and the interpreter answered, in the Persian language, that they were people going from the king to the satrap. They replied that he was not there, but about a parasang off.

However, as it was late, they went with the water-carriers within the rampart to the head man of the village; and here Cheirisophus, and as many of the troops as could come up, encamped; but of the rest, such as were unable to get to the end of the journey spent the night on the way without food or fire; and some of the soldiers lost their lives on that occasion. Some of the enemy too, who had collected themselves into a body, pursued our rear, and seized any of the baggage-cattle that were unable to proceed, fighting with one another for the possession of them. Such of the soldiers, also, as had lost their sight from the effects of the snow, or had had their toes mortified by the cold, were left behind. It was found to be a relief to the eyes against the snow if the soldiers kept something black before them on the march, and to the feet, if they kept constantly in motion, and allowed themselves no rest, and if they took off their shoes in the night; but as to such as slept with their shoes on, the straps worked into their feet, and the soles were frozen about them; for when their old shoes had failed them, shoes of raw hides had been made by the [78] men themselves from the newly skinned oxen.

From such unavoidable sufferings, some of the soldiers were left behind, who, seeing a piece of ground of a black appearance, from the snow having disappeared there, conjectured that it must have melted; and it had, in fact, melted in the spot from the effect

of a fountain, which was sending up a vapor in a woody hollow close at hand. Turning aside thither, they sat down and refused to proceed farther. Xenophon, who was with the rear-guard, as soon as he heard this, tried to prevail on them by every art and means not to be left behind, telling them, at the same time, that the enemy were collected and pursuing them in great numbers. At last he grew angry; and they told him to kill them, as they were quite unable to go forward. He then thought it the best course to strike terror, if possible, into the enemy that were behind, lest they should fall upon the exhausted soldiers. It was now dark, and the enemy were advancing with a great noise, quarreling about the booty that they had taken, when such of the rear-guard as were not disabled started up, and rushed toward them, while the tired men, shouting as loud as they could, clashed their spears against their shields. The enemy, struck with alarm, threw themselves into the hollow amid the snow, and no one of them afterward made himself heard from any quarter.

Xenophon, and those with him, telling the sick men that a party would come to their relief next day, proceeded on their march, but before they had gone four stadia they found other soldiers resting by the way in the snow, and covered up with it, no guard being [79] stationed over them. They roused them up, but they said that the head of the army was not moving forward. Xenophon, going past them, and sending on some of the ablest of the peltasts, ordered them to ascertain what it was that hindered their progress. They brought word that the whole army was in that manner taking rest. Xenophon and his men, therefore, stationing such a guard as they could, took up quarters there without fire or supper. When it was near day, he sent the youngest of his men to the sick, telling them to rouse them and oblige them to proceed.

At this juncture Cheirisophus sent some of his people from the villages to see how the rear were faring. The young men were rejoiced to see them, and gave them the sick to conduct to the camp, while they themselves went forward, and, before they had gone twenty stadia, found themselves at the village in which Cheirisophus was quartered. When they came together, it was thought safe enough to lodge the troops up and down in the villages. Cheirisophus accordingly remained where he was, and the other officers, appropriating by lot the several villages that they had in sight, went to their respective quarters with their men.

Here Polycrates, an Athenian captain, requested leave of absence, and, taking with him the most active of his men, and hastening to the village which Xenophon had been allotted, surprized all the villagers and their head man in their houses, together with seventeen colts that were bred as a tribute for the king, and the head man's daughter, who [80] had been but nine days married; her husband was gone out to hunt hares, and was not found in any of the villages. Their houses were under ground, the entrance like the mouth of a well, but spacious below; there were passages dug into them for the cattle, but the people descended by ladders. In the houses were goats, sheep, cows, and fowls, with their young; all the cattle were kept on fodder within the walls.[51] There were also wheat, barley, leguminous vegetables, and barley-wine, in large bowls; the grains of barley floated in it even with the brims of the vessels, and reeds also lay in it, some larger and some smaller, without joints; and these, when any one was thirsty, he was to take in his mouth and suck. The liquor is very strong, unless one mixed water with it, and a very pleasant drink to those accustomed to it.

FOOTNOTES:

[49] From the "Anabasis." Translated by J. S. Watson. The "Anabasis" has made Xenophon perhaps the most prominent figure of ancient classical literature, largely because every schoolboy who studies Greek knows at least this book. It stands in that sense to Greek literature as Cæsar's "Commentaries" stands to Latin. The book has further value, not only as authentic history, but for the curious details it gives of the manners and customs of savage tribes living

along the shores of the Euxine, and of those which prevailed at the Persian court and elsewhere in the Persian state.

[50] A Spartan general who, at the instance of Xenophon, had been appointed to lead the van of the retreating Greek army.

[51] W. T. Ainsworth, who has made a geographical commentary on Xenophon's "Anabasis," says: "This description of a village on the Armenian uplands applies itself to many that I visited." Houses on exposed elevations he found to be still semisubterranean. Whatever might be the kind of cottage used, domestic animals "participated with the family in the warmth and protection thereof."

III

THE BATTLE OF LEUCTRA[52]

[81]

(371 B.C.)

For the battle everything was adverse on the side of the Lacedæmonians, while to the enemy everything was rendered favorable by fortune. It was after dinner that the last council of war was held by Cleombrotus; and, as the officers had drunk a little at noon, it was said that the wine in some degree inspired them. And as, when both sides were fully armed, and it was now evident that a battle would take place, the people who had provisions for sale, with some of the baggage-carriers and others who were unwilling to fight, were proceeding first of all to quit the camp of the Bœotians, the mercenaries under Hiero the Phocian peltasts, and the Heraclean and Phliasian cavalry, making a circuit, fell upon them as they were going off, turned them back, and pursued them to the Bœotian camp; so that they made the army of the Bœotians larger and more numerous than before.

Besides, as there was a plain between the armies, the Lacedæmonians drew up their cavalry before their main body and the Thebans drew up theirs over against them; but the cavalry of the Thebans had been exercised in wars with the Orchomenians and [82] Thespians, while that of the Lacedæmonians was at that time in a very inefficient condition; for the richest men maintained the horses, and, when notice of an expedition was given, the men appointed came to ride them, and each taking his horse, and whatever arms were given him, proceeded at once to the field; and thus the weakest and least spirited of all the men were mounted on horseback. Such was the cavalry on either side. Of the foot, it was said that the Lacedæmonians advanced with each enomoty drawn up three deep, this arrangement making them not more than twelve deep in all. The Theban infantry, in close array, were not less than fifty deep, considering that if they could defeat the body of the enemy posted around the king, the rest of the army would be an easy conquest.

As soon as Cleombrotus began to lead forward against the enemy, and even before the troops about him were aware that he was putting them in motion, the cavalry had already engaged, and those of the Lacedæmonians were at once defeated, who, as they fled, fell in among their own heavy-armed infantry, on which the troops of the Thebans were also pressing. But that the troops round Cleombrotus had at first the advantage in the contest, any one may be convinced by certain proof; for they would not have been able to take him and carry him off alive unless those who fought in front of him had been at that time victorious. When, however, Deimon the polemarch, Sphodrias, one of the attendants at the royal tent, and Cleonymus, his son, were killed, and the horse-guard, those who are called supporters of the polemarch, and the rest, being overpowered by the mass of the [83] enemy, were forced to fall back, the Lacedæmonians on the left, seeing the right wing

thus repulsed, also gave way; yet, tho many were killed, and they were quite defeated, they were able, when they had repassed the trench which was in front of the camp, to form themselves under arms in the place from which they had set out. Their camp was nevertheless not on level ground, but rather somewhat on an acclivity.

Some of the Lacedæmonians, at the time, who thought their disaster an insupportable disgrace, exclaimed that they ought to prevent the enemy from erecting a trophy, and endeavor to recover the dead, not by making a truce, but by fighting another battle. However, the polemarchs, seeing that of the Lacedæmonians in all nearly a thousand had lost their lives; and that of the Spartans, who were in the field to the number of about seven hundred, about four hundred had fallen; and observing, also, that all the auxiliaries were too dispirited to renew the combat, and some of them not even concerned at what had happened, called a council of the chief officers, and deliberated what course they ought to pursue; and as all were of opinion that "they ought to fetch off the dead by truce," they accordingly despatched a herald to treat respecting a truce. The Thebans soon afterward erected a trophy, and gave up the dead under truce.

After these occurrences, the messenger who was sent with the news of the calamity to Lacedæmon arrived there on the last day of the gymnopædiæ and after the chorus of men had made their entry. The ephors, when they heard of the calamity, were greatly concerned, as, I think, they naturally must have been; yet they did not order that chorus to withdraw, but allowed them to finish the entertainment. They then sent the names of the dead to their several relatives, and gave notice to the women to make no lamentations, but to bear their affliction in silence. The day after, a person might have seen those whose relatives had died appearing in public with looks of cheerfulness and joy; however, of those whose relatives were said to be alive, he would have seen but few, and those going about with gloomy and dejected countenances.

FOOTNOTES:

[52] From Book VI of the "Hellenica." At Leuctra, which lies near Thebes in Bœtia, Epaminondas commanding the Bœotians, overwhelmed the Spartans under Cleombrotus. From this event dates the decline of Sparta.

IV

OF THE ARMY OF THE SPARTANS[53]

[84]

The regulations which I have mentioned are beneficial alike in peace and in war; but if any one wishes to learn what the lawgiver contrived better than other legislators with reference to military proceedings, he may attend to the following particulars:

In the first place, then, the ephors give the cavalry and infantry public notice of the years during which they must join the army, as well as the artizans; for the Lacedæmonians provide themselves in the field with an abundance of all those things which people use in a city; and of whatever instruments an army may require in common, orders are given to bring some on wagons and others on beasts of burden, as by this arrangement anything left behind is least likely to escape notice. [85]

For engagements in the field he made the following arrangements: He ordered that each soldier should have a purple robe and a brazen shield; for he thought that such a dress had least resemblance to that of women, and was excellently adapted for the field of battle, as it is soonest made splendid, and is longest in growing soiled. He permitted also

those above the age of puberty to let their hair grow, as he thought that they thus appeared taller, more manly, and more terrible in the eyes of the enemy.

When they were thus equipped, he divided them into six moræ of cavalry and heavy-armed infantry. Each of these moræ of the citizens has one polemarch, four centurions, eight captains of fifty, and sixteen enomotarchs. The men of these moræ are sometimes, according to the command issued, formed in enomotiæ, sometimes by threes, sometimes by sixes. As to what most people imagine, that the arrangement of the Lacedæmonians under arms is extremely complex, they conceive the exact contrary to what is the fact; for in the Lacedæmonian order the officers are placed in the front ranks, and each rank is in a condition to perform everything which it is necessary for it to perform. So easy is it to [86] understand this arrangement that no one who can distinguish one man from another would fail of learning it; for it is assigned to some to lead, and enjoined on others to follow. Shiftings of place, by which the companies are extended or deepened, are ordered by the word of the enomotarch, as by a herald; and in these there is nothing in the least difficult to learn.

But how it is possible for men in this arrangement, even if they are thrown into confusion, to fight with an enemy presenting themselves on any quarter alike, it is not so easy to understand, except for those who have been brought up under the institution of Lycurgus. The Lacedæmonians do with the greatest ease what appears extremely difficult to other men that are even accustomed to arms. For when they march in column, one enomotia follows in the rear of another; and if, when they are in this order, a body of the enemy shows itself in front, orders are given to each enomotarch to bring up his enomotia to the front on the left; and this movement is made throughout the whole army, until it presents itself in full array against the enemy. But if again, while they are in this order, the enemy should show themselves in the rear, each rank performs the evolution, that the strongest may always be presented to the enemy.

But when the commander is on the left, they do not in that case consider themselves in a worse condition, but sometimes even in a better; for if an enemy should attempt to encompass them, he would come round, not on the defenseless, but on the armed side. If on any occasion, again, it should appear advantageous, for any particular object, that the commander should occupy the right wing, they wheel the troop toward the wing, and maneuver the main body until the commander is on the right, and the rear becomes the left. But if, again, the body of the enemy appear on the right, marching in column, they do nothing else but turn each century round, like a ship, so as to front the enemy; and thus the century which was in the rear comes to the right. But if the enemy approach on the left, they do not allow them to come near, but repulse them, or turn their centuries round to face the enemy; and thus again the century that was in the rear takes its place on the left.

FOOTNOTES:

[53] From the treatise on "The Government of Lacedæmon." Translated by J. S. Watson. This work is believed to be the earliest extant specimen of Attic prose. Mahaffy describes it as "one of the most interesting and instructive documents of the age, very remarkable for its Machiavellian tone, in its calm ignoring of the right and wrong of the case as irrelevant."

V

HOW TO CHOOSE AND MANAGE SADDLE-HORSES[54] [87]

When a person would buy a horse that has been already ridden, we shall subjoin some admonitions which he ought to bear in mind, if he would not be cheated in his purchase. In the first place, then, let it not escape his notice what the *age* is; for a horse that has no [88] longer the marks in his teeth neither delights the buyer with hope nor is so easy to be exchanged.

It is also necessary to see how he takes the rider on his back;[55] for many horses reluctantly receive on them anything which it is plain to them that they can not receive without being compelled to work. It must likewise be observed whether, when he is mounted, he wishes to separate himself from other horses, or whether, if he be ridden near horses standing by, he carries off his rider toward them. There are some horses too that, from bad training, run off from the place of exercise to their stalls at home.

As for horses whose jaws are not alike, that sort of riding which is called the *pede* exposes them, and, still more, a change in the direction in which they are ridden; for many horses will not attempt to run away with their riders unless a hard jaw, and their course directed homeward, concur to stimulate them. We ought to ascertain, also, whether the horse, being put to his speed, is readily pulled up, and whether he submits to be turned about.

It is good for a purchaser not to be too ignorant, moreover, whether a horse is equally willing to obey when he is roused with a blow; for a servant and an army, if disobedient, are useless, but a disobedient horse is not only useless, but often plays the traitor.

However, when we take upon ourselves to purchase a warhorse, we must make trial of him in all things in which war will make trial of him; and these are leaping across [89] ditches, springing over walls, jumping on to mounds, and jumping down from them; and we must try him in riding up and down steep places, and along them; for all such efforts show his spirit, whether it is bold and whether his body is sound. Yet we must not at once reject a horse that does not accomplish all these feats perfectly; for many fail, not from being unable, but from want of training; and if they are taught, and used, and exercised in such performances, they will execute them all well, provided they are sound in other respects, and not wanting in spirit.

We must, however, be cautious of having anything to do with horses that are naturally shy; for horses that are excessively timorous will not only not allow the rider on their back to harm the enemy, but will often take him by surprize, and expose him to great danger. We must also learn whether the horse has anything of vice either toward other horses or toward men, and whether he is averse to being handled; for all such defects are troublesome to his owner.

As to any reluctance to being bridled and mounted, and other tricks, a person will much sooner discover them if, when the horse has been thoroughly exercised, he attempt to do to him what he did before he began to ride him; since horses that, after having been exercised, are ready to submit to exercise again give sufficient proofs of a mettlesome spirit.

To sum up all in a few words, whatever horse has good feet, is mild-tempered, sufficiently swift, is willing and able to endure fatigue, and is in the highest degree [90] obedient will probably give least trouble to his rider, and contribute most to his safety in military occupations. But horses that from sluggishness require a great deal of driving or, from excess of mettle, much coaxing and care, afford plenty of employment to the rider, as well as much apprehension in time of danger....

We shall now show how a man may groom a horse with least danger to himself and most benefit to the animal. If, when he cleans him, he look the same way as the horse, there is danger that he may be struck in the face with his knee or his hoof. But if he look in the opposite direction to the horse when he cleans him, keeping himself out of the reach of his leg, and rubs gradually down by the shoulder, he will thus receive no injury, and may

clean the frog of the horse's foot by turning up the hoof. In like manner let him clean the hind legs.

But whoever is employed about a horse ought to know that to do these things, and everything else that he has to do, he must come as little as possible near the face and the tail; for if a horse be inclined to be vicious, he has in both these parts the advantage of the man. But a person who approaches him at the side may manage the horse with least danger to himself, and with most power over the beast.

When we have to lead a horse, we do not approve of the practise of leading from behind, for these reasons: that the person leading the horse is thus least able to keep on his guard against him, and the horse has most liberty to do what he pleases. To the mode, again, of conducting him with a long rein, to teach him to go forward and take the lead, we object [91] for the following reasons: that the horse can do mischief on whichever side he pleases, and that, by turning himself round, he can set himself opposite his leader. When there are a number of horses together, too, how, if they are thus led, can they be prevented from annoying one another? But a horse that is accustomed to be led at the side will be least in a condition to molest either other horses or men, and will be readiest at hand for his rider whenever he may require to mount in haste.

That the groom may put on the bridle properly, let him first approach the horse on the left side, and then throwing the reins over the horse's head, let him suffer them to rest on the point of the shoulder; and next let him take the headpiece in his right hand, and apply the bit with his left. If the horse take the bit into his mouth, the man has nothing to do but to put on the headpiece; but if the horse will not open his mouth, the man must hold the bit to his teeth, and insert the middle finger of his left hand between the horse's bars; for most horses, when this is done, open their mouths; should the horse, however, not even then receive the bit, let him press the lip against the dog-tooth or tusk, and there are very few horses that, on feeling this, will not admit it....

But never to approach a horse in a fit of anger is the one great precept and maxim of conduct in regard to the treatment of a horse; for anger is destitute of forethought, and consequently often does that of which the agent must necessarily repent.

When a horse is shy of any object, and reluctant to approach it, the rider must try to make [92] him feel that there is nothing terrible in it, especially to a horse of spirit; but if he can not succeed, the rider must himself touch that which appears so alarming, and lead the horse up gently to it. As to those who force horses forward with blows in such a case they merely inspire the animals with greater terror; for they imagine when they suffer any pain at such a time, that what they look upon with alarm is in some way the cause of it.

When the groom brings the horse to the rider, we have no objection that he should know how to make the horse stoop, so that it may be easy to mount him; yet we think every rider ought to take care to be able to mount even if the horse does not bend to him; for sometimes a different horse will present himself, and the same horse will not always be equally obedient....

When he has taken his seat, whether on the horse's bare back or on the cloth, we do not like that he should sit as if he were on a carriage-seat, but as if he were standing upright with his legs somewhat apart, for thus he will cling more firmly to the horse with his thighs, and keeping himself erect, he will be able to throw a javelin, or to strike a blow on horseback, if it be necessary, with greater force.

But it is necessary to allow the leg, as well as the foot, to hang loose from the knee; for if a rider keep his leg stiff, and strike it against anything, it may be broken; but if the leg hang easy, and anything strikes against it, it will yield, and yet not move the thigh from its position.

A rider should also accustom himself to keep the parts of his body above the hips as [93] flexible as possible; for he will by this means be better able to exert himself, and if any person should drag or push him, he will be less likely to be thrown off.

Let it be observed, that when he is seated on the horse's back, he must first teach the horse to stand quiet, until he has drawn up his mantle, if necessary, and adjusted the reins, and taken hold of his lance in such a way as it may most conveniently be carried. Then let him keep his left arm close to his side; for in such an attitude a rider appears most graceful and his hand has the greatest power.

As to reins, we approve of such as are equally balanced, and not weak, or slippery, or too thick, so that the hand which holds them may be able also to hold the spear when it is necessary.

When the rider gives the signal to the horse to start, let him begin to advance at a walking pace, as this pace is least likely to disturb the horse. Let him hold the reins, if the horse be inclined to hold down his head, rather high, but if he be more disposed to carry it erect, let him keep them lower, for thus he will best set off the horse's figure. After a little, if he trot at his natural pace, he will find his limbs become pliant without inconvenience, and will come with the greatest readiness to obey the whip. Since too it is the most approved practise to set off toward the left side, the horse will most readily start on that side, if, when he lifts, as he is trotting, the right foot, the rider then give him the signal to gallop. For, being then about to raise the left foot, he will thus start with that foot; and just at the moment that the rider turns him to the left, he will make the first spring in his gallop; for a horse, when he is turned to the right, naturally leads off with the right foot, and when turned to the left, with the left foot. [94]

FOOTNOTES:

[54] From the treatise, "On Horsemanship." Translated by J. S. Watson. Mahaffy says this treatise on the horse "shows an insight into the character of horses which would do credit to a modern book." Most readers of the treatise who are familiar with horses have remarked how true it all is of the horse as we know him to-day. One commentator has remarked that the book reads as if it might have been written by some educated man professionally attached to racing stables.

[55] The ancients did not use the stirrup; nor did they have a saddle in the modern sense of the word.

PLATO [95]

Born in Ægina of aristocratic parents about 427 B.C.; died in Athens in 347; originally called Aristocles and surnamed Plato because of his broad shoulders; a disciple of Socrates and a teacher of Aristotle; was the founder of the Academic school; in his youth a successful gymnast, soldier, and poet; traveled in Egypt, Sicily, and Magna Græcia; arrested in Syracuse by Dionysius, the tyrant, and sold as a slave in Ægina, where he was released and returned to Athens; revisited Syracuse in 367 and 361; lived afterward in Athens until his death, which occurred at a marriage feast.[56]

I

THE IMAGE OF THE CAVE[57]

After this, I said, imagine the enlightenment or ignorance of our nature in a figure. Behold: human beings living in a sort of underground den, which has a mouth open toward the light and reaching all across the den; they have been here from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they can not move, and can see only before them; for the chains are arranged in such a manner as to prevent them from turning round their heads. At a distance above and behind them the light of a fire is blazing, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette-players have [96] before them, over which they show the puppets.

I see, he[58] said.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying vessels, which appear over the wall; also figures of men and animals, made of wood and stone and various materials; and some of the passengers, as you would expect, are talking, and some of them are silent?

That is a strange image, he said, and they are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave.

True, he said; how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would see only the shadows.

Yes, he said.

And if they were able to talk to one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them.

Very true.

And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy that the voice which they heard was that of a passing shadow?

No question, he replied.

There can be no question, I said, that the truth would be to them just nothing but the shadows of the images. [97]

That is certain.

And now look again, and see how they are released and cured of their folly. At first, when any one of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to go up and turn his neck round and walk and look at the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then imagine some one saying to him that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now he is approaching real being and has a truer sight and vision of more real things —what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them—will he not be in a difficulty? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

Far truer.

And if he is compelled to look at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take refuge in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

True, he said.

And suppose, once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast and forced into the presence of the sun himself, do you not think that he will be pained and irritated, and when he approaches the light he will have his eyes dazzled, and will not be able to see any of the realities which are now affirmed to be the truth? [98]

Not all in a moment, he said.

He will require to get accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; next he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun, or the light of the sun, by day.

Certainly.

And at last he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him as he is in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate his nature.

Certainly.

And after this, he will reason that the sun is he who gives the seasons and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold....

No question, he said.

This allegory, I said, you may now append to the previous argument; the prison is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, the ascent and vision of the things above you may truly regard as the upward progress of the soul into the intellectual world; that is my poor belief, to which, at your desire, I have given expression. Whether I am right or not God only knows; but, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is inferred also to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of [99] light and the lord of light in his world, and the source of truth and reason in the other; this is the first great cause which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must behold.

I agree, he said, as far as I am able to understand you.

I should like to have your agreement in another matter I said. For I would not have you marvel that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; but their souls are ever hastening into the upper world in which they desire to dwell; and this is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

Certainly, that is quite natural.

And is there anything surprizing in one who passes from divine contemplation to human things, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the darkness visible, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or shadows of images of justice, and is endeavoring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen the absolute justice?

There is nothing surprizing in that, he replied.

Any one who has common sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes, either from coming out of the light or from going into the light, which is true of the mind's eye, quite as much as of the bodily eye; and he who remembers this when he sees the soul of any one whose vision is perplexed and weak will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul has come out of [100] the brighter life, and is unable to see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And then he will count the one

happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or, if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets the other from the den.

That, he said, is a very just remark.

But if this is true, then certain professors of education must be mistaken in saying that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like giving eyes to the blind.

Yes, that is what they say, he replied.

Whereas, I said, our argument shows that the power is already in the soul; and that as the eye can not turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too, when the eye of the soul is turned round, the whole soul must be turned from the world of generation into that of being, and become able to endure the sight of being and of the brightest and best of being—that is to say, of the good.

Very true.

And this is conversion; and the art will be how to accomplish this as easily and completely as possible; not implanting eyes, for they exist already, but giving them a right direction, which they have not.

Yes, he said, that may be assumed.

And hence while the other qualities seem to be akin to the body, being infused by habit and exercise and not originally innate, the virtue of wisdom is part of a divine essence, and has a power which is everlasting, and by this conversion is rendered useful and [101]
profitable, and is also capable of becoming hurtful and useless. Did you never observe the narrow intelligence flashing from the keen eye of a clever rogue—how eager he is, how clearly his paltry soul sees the way to his end; he is the reverse of blind, but his keen sight is taken into the service of evil, and he is dangerous in proportion to his intelligence?

Very true, he said.

But what if there had been a circumcision of such natures in the days of their youth; and they had been severed from the leaden weights, as I may call them, with which they are born into the world, which lead on to sensual pleasures, such as those of eating and drinking, and drag them down and turn the vision of their souls about the things that are below—if, I say, these natures had been released from these tendencies and turned round to the truth, the very same faculty in these very same persons would have seen the other as keenly as they now see that on which the eye is fixt.

That is very likely.

Yes, I said; and there is another thing which is likely, or rather a necessary inference from what has proceeded, that neither the uneducated and uninformed of the truth, nor yet those who never make an end of their education, will be able ministers of state; not the former, because they have no single aim of duty which is the rule of their actions, private as well as public; nor the latter, because they will not act at all except upon compulsion, fancying that they are already in the islands of the blest.

Very true, he replied. [102]

Then, I said, the business of us who are the founders of the state will be to compel the best minds to attain that knowledge which has been already declared by us to be the greatest of all—to that eminence they must ascend and arrive at the good, and when they have ascended and seen enough we must not allow them to do as they do now.

What do you mean?

I mean that they remain in the upper world; but this must not be allowed; they must be made to descend again among the prisoners in the den, and partake of their labors and honors, whether they are worth having or not.

But is not this unjust? he said; ought we to give them an inferior life, when they might have a superior one?

You have again forgotten, my friend, I said, the intention of the legislator; he did not aim at making any one class in the state happy above the rest; the happiness was to be in the whole state, and he held the citizens together by persuasion and necessity, making them benefactors of one another; to this end he created them, not that they should please themselves, but they were to be his instruments in binding up the state.

True, he said, I had forgotten that.

FOOTNOTES:

[56] Plato is one of the very few Greek authors none of whose work has been lost. He shares this good fortune with Xenophon. Of the dialog Plato was practically, if not actually, the originator, and the form has survived to our day.

[57] From "The Republic." Translated by Benjamin Jowett. In this famous work Plato describes an ideal commonwealth.

[58] The speaker here is Glaucon, Plato's brother.

II

GOOD AND EVIL[59]

[103]

I suppose that you are satisfied at having a life of pleasure which is without pain. And if you are satisfied, and if you are unable to show any good or evil which does not end in pleasure and pain, hear the consequences: If this is true, then I say that the argument is absurd which affirms that a man often does evil knowingly when he might abstain, because he is seduced and amazed by pleasure; or again, when you say that a man knowingly refuses to do what is good because he is overcome at the moment by pleasure. Now that this is ridiculous will be evident if we only give up the use of various names, such as pleasant and painful and good and evil. As there are two things, let us call them by two names—first, good and evil, and then pleasant and painful. Assuming this, let us go on to say that a man does evil knowing that he does evil. But some one will ask, Why? Because he is overcome, is the first answer. And by what is he overcome? the inquirer will proceed to ask. And we shall not be able to reply, by pleasure, for the name of pleasure has been exchanged for that of good.

[104]

In our answer, then, we shall say only that he is overcome. By what? he will reiterate. By the good, we shall have to reply; indeed, we shall. Nay, but our questioner will rejoin with a laugh, if he be one of the swaggering sort, that is too ridiculous, that a man should do what he knows to be evil when he ought not, because he is overcome by good. Is that, he will ask, because the good was worthy or not worthy of conquering the evil? And in answer to that we shall clearly reply, because it was not worthy; for if it had been worthy, then he who, as we say, was overcome by pleasure, would not have been wrong. But how, he will reply, can the good be unworthy of the evil, or the evil of the good? Is not the real explanation that they are out of proportion to each other, either as greater and smaller, or more and fewer? This we can not deny. And when you speak of being overcome, what do you mean, he will say, but that you choose the greater evil in exchange for the lesser

good? This being the case, let us now substitute the names of pleasure and pain, and say, not as before, that a man does what is evil knowingly, but that he does what is painful knowingly, and because he is overcome by pleasure, which is unworthy to overcome. And what measure is there of the relations of pleasure to pain other than excess and defect, which means that they become greater and smaller, and more and fewer, and differ in degree? For if any one says, Yes, Socrates, but immediate pleasure differs widely from future pleasure and pain, to which I should reply: And do they differ in any other way except by reason of pleasure and pain? There can be no other measure of them. And do you, like a skilful weigher, put into the balance the pleasures and the pains, near and [105] distant, and weigh them, and then say which outweighs the other? If you weigh pleasures against pleasures, you of course take the more and greater; or if you weigh pains against pains, you take the fewer and the less; or if pleasures against pains, then you choose that course of action in which the painful is exceeded by the pleasant, whether the distant by the near or the near by the distant; and you avoid that course of action in which the pleasant is exceeded by the painful. Would you not admit, my friends, that this is true? I am confident that they can not deny this.

He agreed with me.

Well then, I shall say, if you admit that, be so good as to answer me a question: Do not the same magnitudes appear larger to your sight when near, and smaller when at a distance. They will acknowledge that. And the same holds of thickness and number; also sounds which are in themselves equal are greater when near and lesser when at a distance. They will grant that also. Now supposing that happiness consisted in making and taking large things, what would be the saving principle of human life? Would the art of measuring be the saving principle or would the power of appearance? Is not the latter that deceiving art which makes us wander up and down and take the things at one time of which we repent at another, both in our actions and in our choice of things great and small? But the art of measurement is that which would do away with the effect of appearances, and, showing the truth, would fain teach the soul at last to find rest in the [106] truth, and would thus save our life. Would not mankind generally acknowledge that the art which accomplishes this is the art of measurement?

Yes, he said, the art of measurement.

Suppose, again, the salvation of human life to depend on the choice of odd and even, and on the knowledge of when men ought to choose the greater or less, either in reference to themselves or to each other whether near or at a distance; what would be the saving principles of our lives? Would not knowledge?—a knowledge of measuring, when the question is one of excess and defect, and a knowledge of number, when the question is of odd and even? The world will acknowledge that, will they not?

Protagoras admitted that they would.

Well then, I say to them, my friends, seeing that the salvation of human life has been found to consist in the right choice of pleasures and pains—in the choice of the more and the fewer, and the greater and the less, and the nearer and remoter—must not this measuring be a consideration of excess and defect and equality in relation to one another?

That is undeniably true.

And this, as possessing measure, must undeniably also be an art and science?

They will agree to that....

Then you agree, I said, that the pleasant is the good, and the painful evil. And here I would beg my friend Prodicus not to introduce his distinction of names, whether he is disposed to say pleasurable, delightful, joyful. However and in whatever way he rejoices to name them, I will ask you, most excellent Prodicus, to answer this in my sense. [107]

Prodicus laughed and assented, as did the others.

Then, my friends, I said, what do you say to this? Are not all actions the tendency of which is to make life painless and pleasant honorable and useful? The honorable work is also useful and good.

This was admitted.

Then, I said, if the pleasant is the good, nobody does anything under the idea or conviction that some other thing would be better and is also attainable when he might do the better. And this inferiority of a man to himself is merely ignorance, as the superiority of a man to himself is wisdom.

They all assented.

And does not ignorance consist in having a false opinion and being deceived about important matters?

To that they unanimously assented also.

Then, I said, no man voluntarily pursues evil or that which he thinks to be evil. To prefer evil to good is not in human nature; and when a man is compelled to choose one of two evils, no one will choose the greater when he might have the less.

We all agreed to every word of this.

Well, I said, there is a certain thing called fear or terror; and here, Prodicus, I should particularly like to know whether you would agree with me in defining this fear or terror as expectation of evil.

Protagoras and Hippias agreed, but Prodicus said that this was fear and not terror.

Never mind about that, Prodicus, I said; but let me ask whether, if our former assertions are true, a man will pursue that which he fears when he need not? Would not this be in contradiction to the admission which has been already made, that he thinks the things which he fears to be evil? And no one will pursue or voluntarily accept that which he thinks to be evil.

FOOTNOTES:

[59] From the "Protagoras," translated by Benjamin Jowett. Protagoras, from whom this dialog gets its name, was one of the Greek sophists, born about 481 B.C., and exiled from Athens on a charge of atheism, his work entitled "On the Gods" being publicly burned. In the dialog, which took place in the house of Calias, a wealthy Athenian gentleman, besides Protagoras there were present other sophists, including Hippias, Prodicus, Hippocrates, Alcibiades, and Critias.

III

SOCRATES IN PRAISE OF LOVE[60]

[108]

And now I will take my leave of you, and rehearse the tale of love which I heard once upon a time from Diotima,[61] of Mantinea, who was a wise woman in this and many other branches of knowledge. She was the same who deferred the plague of Athens ten years by a sacrifice, and was my instructress in the art of love. In the attempt that I am [109] about to make, I shall pursue Agathon's method, and begin with his admissions, which are nearly if not quite the same as I made to the wise woman when she questioned me;

this will be the easiest way, and I shall take both parts myself as well as I can. For, like Agathon, she spoke first of the being and nature of Love, and then of his works. And I said to her, in nearly the same words which he used to me, that Love was a mighty god, and likewise fair; and she proved to me as I proved to him that, in my way of speaking about him, Love was neither fair nor good. "What do you mean, Diotima," I said; "is love then evil and foul?" "Hush," she cried; "is that to be deemed foul which is not fair?" "Certainly," I said. "And is that which is not wise ignorant? Do you not see that there is a mean between wisdom and ignorance?" "And what is this?" I said. "Right opinion," she replied, "which, as you know, being incapable of giving a reason, is not knowledge (for how could knowledge be devoid of reason? nor, again, ignorance, for neither can ignorance attain the truth), but is clearly something which is a mean between ignorance and wisdom." "Quite true," I replied. "Do not then insist," she said, "that what is not fair is of necessity foul or what is not good is evil, or infer that because Love is not fair and good he is therefore foul and evil; for he is in mean between them." "Well," I said, "Love is surely admitted by all to be a great god." "By those who know or by those who don't know?" "By all." "And how, Socrates," she said with a smile, "can Love be acknowledged to be a great god by those who say that he is not a god at all?" "And who [110] are they?" I said. "You and I are two of them," she replied. "How can that be?" I said. "That is very intelligible," she replied, "as you yourself would acknowledge that the gods are happy and fair—of course you would—would you dare to say that any god was not?" "Certainly not," I replied. "And you mean by the happy those who are the possessors of things good or fair?" "Yes." "And you admitted that Love, because he was in want, desires those good and fair things of which he is in want?" "Yes, I admitted that." "But how can he be a god who has no share in the good or the fair?" "That is not to be supposed." "Then you see that you also deny the deity of Love."

"What then is Love?" I asked. "Is he mortal?" "No." "What then?" "As in the former instance, he is neither mortal nor immortal, but in a mean between them." "What is he then, Diotima?" "He is a great spirit, and like all that is spiritual he is intermediate between the divine and the mortal." "And what is the nature of this spiritual power?" I said. "This is the power," she said, "which interprets and conveys to the gods the prayers and sacrifices of men, and to men the commands and rewards of the gods; and this power spans the chasm which divides them, and in this all is bound together, and through this the arts of the prophet and the priest, their sacrifices and mysteries and charms, and all prophecy and incantation, find their way. For God mingles not with man; and through this power all the intercourse and speech of God with man, whether awake or asleep, is carried on. The wisdom which understands this is spiritual; all other wisdom, such as that [111] of arts or handicrafts, is mean and vulgar. Now these spirits or intermediate powers are many and divine, and one of them is Love." "And who," I said, "was his father, and who his mother?" "The tale," she said, "will take time; nevertheless I will tell you. On the birthday of Aphrodite there was a feast of the gods, at which the god Poros or Plenty, who is the son of Metis or Discretion, was one of the guests. When the feast was over, Penia or Poverty, as the manner was, came about the doors to beg. Now Plenty, who was the worse for Nectar (there was no wine in those days), came into the garden of Zeus and fell into a heavy sleep; and Poverty, considering her own straitened circumstances, plotted to have him for a husband, and accordingly she lay down at his side and conceived Love, who partly because he is naturally a lover of the beautiful, and because Aphrodite is herself beautiful, and also because he was born on Aphrodite's birthday is her follower and attendant. And as his parentage is, so also are his fortunes.

"In the first place, he is always poor, and anything but tender and fair, as the many imagine him; and he is hard-featured and squalid, and has no shoes nor a house to dwell in; on the bare earth exposed he lies under the open heaven, in the streets, or at the doors of houses, taking his rest; and like his mother, he is always in distress. Like his father too, whom he also partly resembles, he is always plotting against the fair and the good; he is bold, enterprising, strong, a hunter of men, always at some intrigue or other, keen in the [112] pursuit of wisdom, and never wanting resources; a philosopher at all times, terrible as an enchanter, sorcerer, sophist; for as he is neither mortal nor immortal, he is alive and

flourishing at one moment when he is in plenty, and dead at another moment, and again alive by reason of his father's nature. But that which is always flowing in is always flowing out, and so he is never in want and never in wealth, and he is also in a mean between ignorance and knowledge. The truth of the matter is just this: No god is a philosopher or seeker after wisdom, for he is wise already; nor does any one else who is wise seek after wisdom. Neither do the ignorant seek after wisdom. For herein is the evil of ignorance, that he who is neither good nor wise is nevertheless satisfied; he feels no want, and has therefore no desire." "But who then, Diotima," I said, "are the lovers of wisdom, if they are neither the wise nor the foolish?" "A child may answer that question," she replied; "they are those who, like Love, are in a mean between the two. For wisdom is a most beautiful thing, and Love is of the beautiful; and therefore Love is also a philosopher or lover of wisdom, and being a lover of wisdom is in a mean between the wise and the ignorant. And this again is a quality which Love inherits from his parents; for his father is wealthy and wise, and his mother poor and foolish. Such, my dear Socrates, is the nature of the spirit Love. The error in your conception of him was very natural, and as I imagine from what you say, has arisen out of a confusion of love and the beloved—this made you think that love was all beautiful. For the beloved is the truly [113] beautiful, delicate, and perfect and blest; but the principle of love is of another nature, and is such as I have described."

I said, "O thou strange woman, thou sayest well, and now, assuming Love to be such as you say, what is the use of him?" "That, Socrates," she replied, "I will proceed to unfold; of his nature and birth I have already spoken, and you acknowledge that Love is of the beautiful. But some one will say, 'Of the beautiful in what, Socrates and Diotima?'—or rather let us put the question more clearly, and ask, When a man loves the beautiful, what does he love?" I answered her, "That the beautiful may be his." "Still," she said, "the answer suggests a further question, which is this, What is given by the possession of beauty?" "That," I replied, "is a question to which I have no answer ready." "Then," she said, "let me put the word 'good' in the place of the beautiful, and repeat the question, What does he who loves the good desire?" "The possession of the good," I said. "And what does he gain who possesses the good?" "Happiness," I replied; "there is no difficulty in answering that." "Yes," she said, "the happy are made happy by the acquisition of good things. Nor is there any need to ask why a man desires happiness; the answer is already final." "That is true," I said. "And is this wish and this desire common to all? and do all men always desire their own good, or only some men?—what think you?" "All men," I replied; "the desire is common to all." "But all men, Socrates," she rejoined, "are not said to love, but only some of them; and you say that all men are always loving the same [114] things." "I myself wonder," I said, "why that is." "There is nothing to wonder at," she replied; "the reason is that one part of love is separated off and receives the name of the whole, but the other parts have other names." "Give an example," I said. She answered me as follows: "There is poetry, which, as you know, is complex and manifold. And all creation or passage of non-being into being is poetry or making, and the processes of all art are creative, and the masters of arts are all poets." "Very true." "Still," she said, "you know that they are not called poets, but have other names; the generic term 'poetry' is confined to that specific art which is separated off from the rest of poetry, and is concerned with music and meter; and this is what is called poetry, and they who possess this kind of poetry are called poets."

"Very true," I said. "And the same holds of love. For you may say generally that all desire of good and happiness is due to the great and subtle power of Love; but those who, having their affections set upon him, are yet diverted into the paths of money-making or gymnastic philosophy are not called lovers—the name of the genus is reserved for those whose devotion takes one form only—they alone are said to love, or to be lovers." "In that," I said, "I am of opinion that you are right." "Yes," she said, "and you hear people say that lovers are seeking for the half of themselves; but I say that they are seeking neither for the half nor for the whole, unless the half or the whole be also a good. And they will cut off their own hands and feet and cast them away if they are evil; for they love them not because they are their own, but because they are good, and dislike them not [115]

because they are another's, but because they are evil. There is nothing which men love but the good. Do you think that there is?" "Indeed," I answered, "I should say not." "Then," she said, "the conclusion of the whole matter is that men love the good." "Yes," I said. "To which may be added that they love the possession of the good?" "Yes, that may be added." "And not only the possession, but the everlasting possession of the good?" "That may be added too." "Then love," she said, "may be described generally as the love of the everlasting possession of the good?" "That is most true," I said.

"Then if this be the nature of love, can you tell me further," she said, "what is the manner of the pursuit? What are they doing who show all this eagerness and heat which is called love? Answer me that." "Nay, Diotima," I said, "if I had known I should not have wondered at your wisdom or have come to you to learn." "Well," she said, "I will teach you: love is only birth in beauty, whether of body or soul." "The oracle requires an explanation," I said; "I don't understand you." "I will make my meaning clearer," she replied. "I mean to say that which all men are bringing to the birth of their bodies and their souls. There is a certain age at which human nature is desirous of procreation; and this procreation must be in beauty and not in deformity; and this is the mystery of man and woman, which is a divine thing, for conception and generation are a principle of immortality in the mortal creature. And in the inharmonical they can never be. But the [116] deformed is always inharmonical with the divine, and the beautiful harmonious. Beauty, then, is the destiny or goddess of parturition who presides a birth, and therefore, when approaching beauty the conceiving power is propitious, and diffuse, and benign, and begets and bears fruit; on the appearance of foulness she frowns and contracts in pain, and is averted and morose, and shrinks up, and not without a pang refrains from conception. And this is the reason why, when the hour of conception arrives, and the teeming nature is full, there is such a flutter and ecstasy about beauty whose approach is the alleviation of pain. For love, Socrates, is not, as you imagine, the love of the beautiful only." "What then?" "The love of generation and birth in beauty." "Yes," I said. "Yes, indeed," she replied. "But why of birth?" I said. "Because to the mortal, birth is a sort of eternity and immortality," she replied; "and as has been already admitted, all men will necessarily desire immortality together with good if love is of the everlasting possession of the good."

All this she taught me at various times when she spoke of love. And on another occasion she said to me: "What is the reason, Socrates, of this love, and the attendant desire? See you not how all animals, birds as well as beasts, in their desire of procreation, are in agony when they take the infection of love; this begins with the desire of union, to which is added the care of offspring, in behalf of whom the weakest are ready to battle against the strongest even to the uttermost, and to die for them, and will let themselves be tormented with hunger or suffer anything in order to maintain their offspring.... Marvel [117] not then at the love which all men have of their offspring; for that universal love and interest are for the sake of immortality."

When I heard this, I was astonished and said, "Is this really true, O thou wise Diotima?" And she answered with all the authority of a sophist: "Of that, Socrates, you may be assured; think only of the ambition of men, and you will marvel at their senselessness unless you consider how they are stirred by the love of an immortality of fame. They are ready to run risks greater far than they would have run for their children, and to spend money and undergo any amount of toil, and even to die for the sake of leaving behind them a name which shall be eternal. Do you imagine that Alcestis[62] would have died on behalf of Admetus, or Achilles after Patroclus, or your own Codrus in order to preserve the kingdom for his sons, if they had not imagined that the memory of their virtues, which is still retained among us, would be immortal? Nay," she said, "for I am persuaded that all men do all things for the sake of the glorious fame of immortal virtue, and the better they are the more they desire this; for they are ravished with the desire of the immortal.

"Men whose bodies only are creative betake themselves to women and beget children—this is the character of their love; their offspring, as they hope, will preserve their

memory and give them the blessedness and immortality which they desire in the future. But creative souls—for there are men who are more creative in their souls than in their [118] bodies—conceive that which is proper for the soul to conceive or retain. And what are these conceptions?—wisdom and virtue in general. And such creators are all poets and other artists who may be said to have invention. But the greatest and fairest sort of wisdom by far is that which is concerned with the ordering of states and families, and which is called temperance and justice. And he who in youth has the seed of these implanted in him and is himself inspired, when he comes to maturity desires to beget and generate offspring. And he wanders about seeking beauty that he may beget offspring—for in deformity he will beget nothing—and embraces the beautiful rather than the deformed; and when he finds a fair and noble and well-nurtured soul, and there is union of the two in one person, he gladly embraces it, and to such a soul he is full of fair speech about virtue and the nature and pursuits of a good man; and he tries to educate it; and at the touch and presence of the beautiful he brings forth the beautiful which he conceived long before, and the beautiful is ever present with him and in his memory even when absent, and in company they tend that which he brings forth, and they are bound together by a far nearer tie and have a closer friendship than those who beget mortal children, for the children who are their common offspring are fairer and more immortal. Who, when he thinks of Homer and Hesiod[63] and other great poets, would not rather emulate them [119] in the creation of children such as theirs, which have preserved their memory and given them everlasting glory? Or who would not have such children as Lycurgus[64] left behind to be the saviors, not only of Lacedæmon, but of Hellas, as one may say? There is Solon, too, who is the revered father of Athenian laws; and many others there are in various places, both among Hellenes and barbarians. They all have done many noble works, and have been the parents of virtue of every kind, and in honor of their children many temples have been raised, which were never raised in honor of the mortal children of any one.

"These are the lesser mysteries of love, into which even you, Socrates, may enter; to the greater and more hidden ones which are the crown of these, and to which, if you pursue them in a right spirit, they will lead, I know not whether you will be able to attain. But I will do my utmost to inform you, and do you follow if you can. For he who would proceed rightly in this matter should begin in youth to turn to beautiful forms; and first, if his instructor guide him rightly, he should learn to love one such form only—out of that he should create fair thoughts; and soon he will find himself perceive that the beauty of one form is truly related to the beauty of another; and then if beauty in general is his pursuit, how foolish would he be not to recognize that the beauty in every form is one and the same! And when he perceives this he will abate his violent love of the one, which [120] he will despise and deem a small thing, and will become a lover of all beautiful forms; this will lead him on to consider that the beauty of the mind is more honorable than the beauty of the outward form. So that if a virtuous soul have but a little comeliness, he will be content to love and tend it, and will search out and bring to the birth thoughts which may improve the young, until his beloved is compelled to contemplate and see the beauty of institutions and laws, and understand that all is of one kindred, and that personal beauty is only a trifle; and after laws and institutions he will lead him on to the sciences, that he may see their beauty, being not like a servant in love with the beauty of one youth or man or institution, himself a slave mean and calculating, but looking at the abundance of beauty and drawing toward the sea of beauty, and creating and beholding many fair and noble thoughts and notions in boundless love of wisdom, until at length he grows and waxes strong, and at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science, which is the science of beauty everywhere...."

Such, Phædrus[65]—and I speak not only to you, but to all men—were the words of Diotima; and I am persuaded of their truth. And being persuaded of them, I try to persuade others that in the attainment of this end human nature will not easily find a better helper than Love. And, therefore, also, I say that every man ought to honor him as I myself honor him, and walk in his ways, and exhort others to do the same, even as I praise the power and spirit of Love according to the measure of my ability now and ever.

The words which I have spoken, you, Phædrus, may call an encomium of Love or anything else which you please.

FOOTNOTES:

[60] From "The Symposium." Translated by Benjamin Jowett. Mahaffy ranks this work "as greater and more brilliant" than the "Phædo." Being intensely Greek, it has, however, seemed alien, if not offensive, to many modern readers. Scholars have valued it highly as a vivid picture of the manners of the most refined society of Athens. It has sometimes been called "The Banquet." Under that name, the poet Shelley made a translation. The banquet described took place in the house of the tragic poet Agathon. Agathon was born about 477 B.C., of a rich and eminent Athenian family. He was remarkable for personal accomplishments rather than for high literary genius. He is believed to have died at the age of forty-seven.

[61] Diotima, a priestess, reputed to have been a Pythagorean, but some writers have doubted her existence.

[62] The wife of Admetus, a Thessalian king, who sacrificed her life in order to save that of her husband.

[63] Hesiod, whose home was in Bœotia, is thought to have lived about three centuries after Homer; that is, about 800 B.C. He was a shepherd in his youth, and began to write verses while tending his flocks.

[64] Lived probably in the ninth century B.C., and the traditional author of the laws by which Sparta was governed for several centuries.

[65] An Athenian, son of Pythocles, and friend of Plato, but of whom nothing more is known.

IV

THE PRAISE OF SOCRATES BY ALCIBIADES[66]

When Socrates had done speaking, the company applauded, and Aristophanes[67] was beginning to say something in answer to the allusion which Socrates had made to his own speech, when suddenly there was a great knocking at the door of the house, as of revelers, and the sound of a flute-girl was heard. Agathon told the attendants to go and see who were the intruders. "If they are friends of ours," he said, "invite them in, but if not say that the drinking is over." A little while afterward they heard the voice of [121] Alcibiades resounding in the court; he was in a great state of intoxication, and kept [122] roaring and shouting: "Where is Agathon? Lead me to Agathon," and at length, supported by the flute-girl and some of his companions, he found his way to them. "Hail, friends," he said, appearing at the door crowned with a massive garland of ivy and wall-flowers, and having his head flowing with ribbons. "Will you have a very drunken man as a companion of your revels? Or shall I crown Agathon, as was my intention in coming, and go my way? For I was unable to come yesterday, and therefore I come to-day, carrying on my head three ribbons, that taking them from my own head I may crown the head of this fairest and wisest of men, as I may be allowed to call him. Will you laugh at me because I am drunk? Yet I know very well that I am speaking the truth, altho you may laugh. But first tell me whether I shall come in on the understanding that I am drunk. Will you drink with me or not?"

The company were vociferous in begging that he should take his place among them, and Agathon specially invited him. Thereupon he was led in by the people who were with him; and as he was being led he took the crown and ribbons from his head, intending to crown Agathon, and had them before his eyes; this prevented him from seeing Socrates, who made way for him, and Alcibiades took the vacant place between Agathon and Socrates, and in taking the place he embraced Agathon and crowned him. "Take off his sandals," said Agathon, "and let him make a third on the same couch."

"By all means; but who makes the third partner in our revels?" said Alcibiades, turning round and starting up as he caught sight of Socrates. "By Heracles," he said, "what is [123] this? Here is Socrates always lying in wait for me, and always, as his way is, coming out at all sorts of unexpected places; and now, what have you to say for yourself, and why are you lying here, where I perceive that you have contrived to find a place, not by a professor or lover of jokes, like Aristophanes, but by the fairest of the company?"

Socrates turned to Agathon and said: "I must ask you to protect me, Agathon; for this passion of his has grown quite a serious matter. Since I became his admirer I have never been allowed to speak to any other fair one, or so much as to look at them. If I do he goes wild with envy and jealousy, and not only abuses me, but can hardly keep his hands off me, and at this moment he may do me some harm. Please see to this, and either reconcile me to him or, if he attempt violence, protect me, as I am in bodily fear of his mad and passionate attempts."

"There can never be reconciliation between you and me," said Alcibiades; "but for the present I will defer your chastisement. And I must beg you, Agathon, to give me back some of the ribbons that I may crown the marvelous head of this universal despot. I would not have him complain of me for crowning you, and neglecting him, who in conversation is the conqueror of all mankind; and this not once only, as you were the day before yesterday, but always." Then taking some of the ribbons, he crowned Socrates, and again reclined. When he had lain down again, he said: "You seem, my friends, to be sober, which is a thing not to be endured; you must drink for that was the agreement [124] which I made with you—and I elect myself master of the feast until you are quite drunk. Let me have a large goblet, Agathon, or rather," he said, addressing the attendant, "bring me that wine-cooler." The wine-cooler which caught his eye was a vessel holding more than two quarts; this he filled and emptied, and bade the attendant fill it again for Socrates. "Observe, my friends," said Alcibiades, "that my ingenious device will have no effect on Socrates, for he can drink any quantity of wine and not be at all nearer being drunk." Socrates drank the cup which the attendant filled for him....

"I shall praise Socrates in a figure which will appear to him to be a caricature, and yet I do not mean to laugh at him, but only to speak the truth. I say, then, that he is exactly like the masks of Silenus, which may be seen sitting in the statuaries' shops, having pipes and flutes in their mouths; and they are made to open in the middle, and there are images of gods inside them. I say also that he is like Marsyas the satyr. You will not deny this, Socrates, that your face is like that of a satyr. Aye, and there is a resemblance in other points too. For example, you are a bully—that I am in a position to prove by the evidence of witnesses if you will not confess. And are you not a flute-player? That you are, and a far more wonderful performer than Marsyas. For he indeed with instruments charmed the souls of men by the power of his breath, as the performers of his music do still; for the melodies of Olympus are derived from the teaching of Marsyas, and these, whether they are played by a great master or by a miserable flute-girl, have a power which no others [125] have; they alone possess the soul and reveal the wants of those who have need of gods and mysteries, because they are inspired.

"But you produce the same effect with the voice only, and do not require the flute; that is the difference between you and him. When we hear any other speaker, even a very good one, his words produce absolutely no effect upon us in comparison, whereas the very fragments of you and your words, even at second-hand, and however imperfectly repeated, amaze and possess the souls of every man, woman, and child who comes within

hearing of them. And if I were not afraid that you think me drunk, I would have sworn to as well as spoken of the influence which they have always and still have over me. For my heart leaps within me more than that of any Corybantian[68] reveler, and my eyes rain tears when I hear him. And I observe that many others are affected in the same way. I have heard Pericles and other great orators, but tho I thought that they spoke well, I never had any similar feeling; my soul was not stirred by them, nor was I angry at the thought of my own slavish state. But this Marsyas has often brought me to such a pass that I have felt as if I could hardly endure the life which I am leading (this, Socrates, you admit); and I am conscious that if I did not shut my ears against him, and fly from the voice of the siren, he would detain me until I grew old sitting at his feet. For he makes me confess [126] that I ought not to live as I do, neglecting the wants of my own soul, and busying myself with the concerns of the Athenians; therefore I hold my ears and tear myself away from him. And he is the only person who ever made me ashamed, which you might think not to be in my nature, and there is no one else who does the same. For I know that I can not answer him or say that I ought not to do as he bids, but when I leave his presence the love of popularity gets the better of me. And therefore I run away and fly from him, and when I see him I am ashamed of what I have confest to him. And many a time I wish that he were dead, and yet I know that I should be much more sorry than glad if he were to die; so that I am at my wit's end.

"And this is what I and many others have suffered from the flute-playing of this satyr. Yet hear me once more while I show you how exact the image is, and how marvelous his power. For I am sure that none of you know him; but I know him and will describe him, as I have begun. See you how fond he is of the fair? He is always with them and is always being smitten by them, and then again he knows nothing and is ignorant of all things—that is the appearance which he puts on. Is he not like a Silenus in this? Yes, surely; that is, his outer mask, which is the carved head of the Silenus; but when he is opened, what temperance there is, as I may say to you, O my companions in drink, residing within. Know you that beauty and wealth and honor, at which the many wonder, are of no account with him, and are utterly despised by him; he regards not at all the persons who are gifted with them; mankind are nothing to him; all his life is spent in [127] mocking and flouting at them. But when I opened him, and looked within at his serious purpose, I saw in him divine and golden images of such fascinating beauty that I was ready to do in a moment whatever Socrates commanded (they may have escaped the observation of others, but I saw them). Now I thought that he was seriously enamored of my beauty, and this appeared to be a grand opportunity of hearing him tell what he knew, for I had a wonderful opinion of the attractions of my youth.

"In the prosecution of this design, when I next went to him, I sent away the attendant who usually accompanied me (I will confess the whole truth, and beg you to listen; and if I speak falsely, do you, Socrates, expose the falsehood). Well, he and I were alone together, and I thought that when there was nobody with us, I should hear him speak the language of love as lovers do, and I was delighted. Not a word; he conversed as usual, and spent the day with me and then went away. Afterward I challenged him to the palestra; and he wrestled and closed with me several times alone; I fancied that I might succeed in this way. Not a bit; there was no use in that. Lastly, as I had failed hitherto, I thought that I must use stronger measures and attack him boldly, as I had begun, and not give him up until I saw how the matter stood. So I invited him to supper, just as if he were a fair youth, and I a designing lover. He was not easily persuaded to come; he did, however, after a while, accept the invitation, and when he came the first time, he wanted to go away at once as soon as supper was over, and I had not the face to detain him.... [128]

"And yet I could not help wondering at his natural temperance and self-restraint and courage. I never could have thought that I should have met with a man like him in wisdom and endurance. Neither could I be angry with him or renounce his company any more than I could hope to win him. For I well knew that if Ajax could not be wounded by steel, much less he by money; and I had failed in my only chance of captivating him. So I wandered about and was at my wit's end; no one was ever more hopelessly enslaved by another. All this, as I should explain, happened before he and I went on the expedition to

Potidæa; there we messed together, and I had the opportunity of observing his extraordinary power of sustaining fatigue and going without food when our supplies were intercepted at any place, as will happen with an army. In the faculty of endurance he was superior not only to me but to everybody else; there was no one to be compared to him. Yet at a festival he was the only person who had any real powers of enjoyment, and tho not willing to drink, he could if compelled beat us all at that, and the most wonderful thing of all was that no human being had ever seen Socrates drunk; and that, if I am not mistaken, will soon be tested. His endurance of cold was also surprizing. There was a severe frost, for the winter in that region is really tremendous, and everybody else either remained indoors, or if they went out had on no end of clothing, and were well shod, and had their feet swathed in felt and fleeces; in the midst of this, Socrates, with his bare feet [129] on the ice, and in his ordinary dress, marched better than any of the other soldiers who had their shoes on, and they looked daggers at him because he seemed to despise them.

"I have told you one tale, and now I must tell you another, which is worth hearing, of the doings and sufferings of this enduring man while he was on the expedition. One morning he was thinking about something which he could not resolve; and he would not give up, but continued thinking from early dawn until noon—there he stood fixt in thought; and at noon attention was drawn to him, and the rumor ran through the wondering crowd that Socrates had been standing and thinking about something ever since the break of day. At last, in the evening after supper, some Ionians out of curiosity (I should explain that this was not in the winter but in summer) brought out their mats and slept in the open air that they might watch him and see whether he would stand all night. There he stood all night as well as all day and the following morning; and with the return of light he offered up a prayer to the sun, and went his way. I will also tell, if you please—and indeed I am bound to tell—of his courage in battle; for who but he saved my life? Now this was the engagement in which I received the prize for valor; for I was wounded and he would not leave me, but he rescued me and my arms; and he ought to have received the prize of valor which the generals wanted to confer on me partly on account of my rank, and I told them so (this Socrates will not impeach or deny), but he was more eager than the generals that I and not he should have the prize. There was another occasion on which he was very [130] noticeable; this was in the flight of the army after the battle of Delium, and I had a better opportunity of seeing him than at Potidæa, as I was myself on horseback, and therefore comparatively out of danger. He and Laches were retreating as the troops were in flight, and I met them and told them not to be discouraged, and promised to remain with them; and there you might see him, Aristophanes, as you describe, just as he is in the streets of Athens, stalking like a pelican, and rolling his eyes, calmly contemplating enemies as well as friends, and making very intelligible to anybody, even from a distance, that whoever attacks him will be likely to meet with a stout resistance; and in this way he and his companion escaped—for these are the sort of persons who are never touched in war; they pursue only those who are running away headlong. I particularly observed how superior he was to Laches in presence of mind.

"Many are the wonders of Socrates which I might narrate in his praise; most of his ways might perhaps be paralleled in others, but the most astonishing thing of all is his absolute unlikeness to any other human being that is or ever has been. You may imagine Brasidas and others to have been like Achilles; or you may imagine Nestor and Antenor to have been like Pericles; and the same may be said of other famous men, but of this strange being you will never be able to find any likeness, however remote, either among men who now are or who ever have been, except that which I have already suggested of Silenus and the satyrs; and this is an allegory not only of himself, but also of his words. [131] For, altho I forgot to mention this before, his words are ridiculous when you first hear them; he clothes himself in language that is as the skin of the wanton satyr—for his talk is of pack-asses and smiths and cobblers and curriers, and he is always repeating the same things in the same words, so that an ignorant man who did not know him might feel disposed to laugh at him; but he, who pierces the mask and sees what is within will find that they are the only words which have a meaning in them, and also the most divine,

abounding in fair examples of virtue, and of the largest discourse, or rather extending to the whole duty of a good and honorable man.

"This, friends, is my praise of Socrates. I have added my blame of him for his ill treatment of me; and he has ill treated not only me, but Charmides,[69] the son of Glaucon, and Euthydemus,[70] the son of Diocles, and many others in the same way—beginning as their lover, he has ended by making them pay their addresses to him. Wherefore I say to you, Agathon, 'Be not deceived by him; learn from me and take warning, and don't be a fool and learn by experience,' as the proverb says."

When Alcibiades had done speaking, there was a laugh at his plainness of speech, as he seemed to be still in love with Socrates. "You are sober, Alcibiades," said Socrates, "or you would never have gone about to hide the purpose of your satyr's praises, for all this [132] long story is only an ingenious circumlocution, the point of which comes in by the way at the end; you want to get up a quarrel between me and Agathon, and your notion is that I ought to love you and nobody else, and that you and you only ought to love Agathon. But the plot of this satyric or Selinic drama has been detected, and you must not allow him, Agathon, to set us at variance."

"I believe you are right," said Agathon, "and I am disposed to think that his intention in placing himself between you and me was only to divide us; but he shall gain nothing by that move, as I will go and lie in the couch next to you."

"Yes, yes," replied Socrates, "by all means come here and lie on the couch below me."

"Alas," said Alcibiades, "how am I fooled by this man! He is determined to get the better of me at every turn. I do beseech you, allow Agathon to lie between us."

"Impossible," said Socrates, "as you praised me, and I ought to praise my neighbor on the right, he will be out of order in praising me again when he ought rather to be praised by me, and I must entreat you to consent to this, and not be jealous, for I have a great desire to praise the youth."

"Ha! ha!" cried Agathon; "I will rise instantly, that I may be praised by Socrates."

"The usual way," said Alcibiades; "where Socrates is, no one else has any chance with the fair, and now how readily has he invented a specious reason for attracting Agathon to himself!"

FOOTNOTES:

[66] From "The Symposium." Translated by Benjamin Jowett. This picture of Socrates is declared by Mahaffy to be the most wonderful of all pictures of him, inasmuch as it shows him "in all his ugliness, his fascination, his deep sympathy, his iron courage, his unassailable chastity." Mahaffy's enthusiasm has been shared by many writers and readers in all generations.

[67] The famous comic poet and dramatist, author of the "Frogs," "Clouds," "Birds," and many other works, of which only eleven are now extant; born about 451 B.C., died not later than 380.

[68] The Corybantes were priests of the Phrygian goddess Rhea, worship of whom was exprest in dances, which often took the character of orgies.

[69] Charmides was an uncle of Plato, noted for moderation.

[70] Euthydemus was a name given by Plato to one of his dialogs, in which virtue and the teaching of virtue are the themes.

V

THE REFUSAL OF SOCRATES TO ESCAPE FROM PRISON[71] [133]

Crito: There are persons who at no great cost are willing to save you and bring you out of prison; and as for the informers, you may observe that they are far from being exorbitant in their demands; a little money will satisfy them. My means, which, as I am sure, are ample, are at your service, and if you have a scruple about spending all mine, here are strangers who will give you the use of others; and one of them, Simmias the Theban, has brought a sum of money for this very purpose; and Cebes and many others are willing to spend their money too. I say, therefore, do not on that account hesitate about making your escape, and do not say, as you did in court, that you will have difficulty in knowing what to do with yourself if you escape. For men will love you in other places to which you may go, and not in Athens only; there are friends of mine in Thessaly, if you like to go to them, who will value and protect you, and no Thessalians will give you any trouble.

Nor can I think that you are justified, Socrates, in betraying your own life when you might be saved; this is playing into the hands of your enemies and destroyers; and moreover I should say that you were betraying your children; for you might bring them [134] up and educate them; instead of which you go away and leave them, and they will have to take their chance; and if they do not meet with the usual fate of orphans, there will be small thanks to you. No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nurture and education. But you are choosing the easier part, as I think, not the better and manlier, which would rather have become one who professes virtue in all his actions, like yourself. And indeed I am ashamed not only of you, but of us who are your friends, when I reflect that this entire business of yours will be attributed to our want of courage. The trial need never have come on, or might have been brought to another issue; and the end of all, which is the crowning absurdity, will seem to have been permitted by us, through cowardice and baseness, who might have saved you, as you might have saved yourself, if we had been good for anything (for there was no difficulty in escaping); and we did not see how disgraceful, Socrates, and also miserable all this will be to us as well as you. Make your mind up then, or rather have your mind already made up, for the time of deliberation is over, and there is only one thing to be done, which must be done, if at all, this very night, and which any delay will render all but impossible; I beseech you therefore, Socrates, to be persuaded by me, and to do as I say....

Socrates: From these premises I proceed to argue the question whether I ought or ought not to try and escape without the consent of the Athenians; and if I am clearly right in [135] escaping, then I will make the attempt; but if not, I will abstain. The other considerations which you mention, of money and loss of character and the duty of educating children, are, as I fear, only the doctrines of the multitude, who would be as ready to call people to life if they were able as they are to put them to death—and with as little reason. But now, since the argument has thus far prevailed, the only question which remains to be considered is whether we shall do rightly either in escaping or in suffering others to aid in our escape and paying them in money and thanks, or whether we shall not do rightly; and if the latter, then death or any other calamity which may ensue on my remaining here must not be allowed to enter into the calculation.

Crito: I think that you are right, Socrates; how then shall we proceed?

Socrates: Let us consider the matter together, and do you either refute me if you can, and I will be convinced, or else cease, my dear friend, from repeating to me that I ought to escape against the wishes of the Athenians; for I am extremely desirous to be persuaded by you, but not against my own better judgment. And now please to consider my first position, and do your best to answer me.

Crito: I will do my best....

Socrates: Again, Crito, may we do evil?

Crito: Surely not, Socrates.

Socrates: And what of doing evil in return for evil, which is the morality of the many; is that just or not?

Crito: Not just. [136]

Socrates: For doing evil to another is the same as injuring him?

Crito: Very true.

Socrates: Then we ought not to retaliate or render evil for evil to any one, whatever evil we may have suffered from him. But I would have you consider, Crito, whether you really mean what you are saying. For this opinion has never been held, and never will be held, by any considerable number of persons; and those who are agreed and those who are not agreed upon this point have no common ground, and can only despise one another when they see how widely they differ. Tell me, then, whether you agree with and assent to my first principle, that neither injury nor retaliation nor warding off evil by evil is ever right. And shall that be the premise of our argument? Or do you decline and dissent from this? For this has been of old and is still my opinion; but, if you are of another opinion, let me hear what you have to say. If, however, you remain of the same mind, I will proceed.

Crito: You may proceed, for I have not changed my mind.

Socrates: Then I will proceed to the next step, which may be put in the form of a question: Ought a man to do what he admits to be right or ought he to betray the right?

Crito: He ought to do what he thinks right.

Socrates: But if this is true, what is the application? In leaving the prison against the will of the Athenians, do I wrong any? or rather do I not wrong those whom I ought least to wrong? Do I not desert the principles which were acknowledged by us to be just? What do you say? [137]

Crito: I can not tell, Socrates; for I do not know.

Socrates: Then consider the matter in this way: Imagine that I am about to play truant (you may call the proceeding by any name which you like), and the laws and the government come and interrogate me: "Tell us, Socrates," they say; "what are you about? Are you going by an act of yours to overturn us—the laws and the whole state, as far as in you lies? Do you imagine that a state can subsist and not be overthrown in which the decisions of law have no power, but are set aside and overthrown by individuals?" What will be our answer, Crito, to these and the like words? Any one, and especially a clever rhetorician, will have a good deal to urge about the evil of setting aside the law which requires a sentence to be carried out; and we might reply, "Yes; but the state has injured us and given an unjust sentence." Suppose I say that?

Crito: Very good, Socrates.

Socrates: "And was that our agreement with you?" the law would say; "or were you to abide by the sentence of the state?" And if I were to express astonishment at their saying this, the law would probably add: "Answer, Socrates, instead of opening your eyes; you are in the habit of asking and answering questions. Tell us what complaint you have to make against us which justifies you in attempting to destroy us and the state? In the first place, did we not bring you into existence? Your father married your mother by our aid and begot you. Say whether you have any objection to urge against those of us who regulate marriage?" None, I should reply. "Or against those of us who regulate the system [138] of nurture and education of children in which you were trained? Were not the laws, which have the charge of this, right in commanding your father to train you in music and

gymnastic?" Right, I should say. "Well then, since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us, can you deny, in the first place, that you are our child and slave, as your fathers were before you? And if this is true, you are not on equal terms with us; nor can you think that you have a right to do to us what we are doing to you. Would you have any right to strike or revile or do any other evil to a father or to your master, if you had one, when you have been struck or reviled by him, or received some other evil at his hands? You would not say this? And because we think right to destroy you, do you think that you have any right to destroy us in return, and your country as far as in you lies? And will you, O professor of true virtue, say that you are justified in this? Has a philosopher like you failed to discover that our country is more to be valued and higher and holier far than mother or father or any master, and more to be regarded in the eyes of the gods and of men of understanding; also to be soothed, and gently and reverently entreated when angry, even more than a father, and if not persuaded, obeyed? And when we are punished by her, whether with imprisonment or stripes, the punishment is to be endured in silence; and if she lead us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right; neither may any one yield or retreat or leave his rank, but whether in battle, or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his city and his country [139] order him, or he must change their view of what is just; and if he may do no violence to his father or mother, much less may he do violence to his country." What answer shall we make to this, Crito? Do the laws speak truly, or do they not?

Crito: I think that they do.

Socrates: Then the laws will say: "Consider, Socrates, if this is true, that in your present attempt you are going to do us wrong. For, after having brought you into the world, and nurtured and educated you, and given you and every other citizen a share in every good that we had to give, we further proclaim and give the right to every Athenian that if he does not like us when he has come of age and has seen the ways of the city, and made our acquaintance, he may go where he pleases and take his goods with him; and none of our laws will forbid him or interfere with him. Any of you who does not like us and the city, and who wants to go to a colony or to any other city, may go where he likes and take his goods with him. But he who has experience of the manner in which we order justice and administer the state, and still remains, has entered into an implied contract that he will do as we command him. And he who disobeys us is, as we maintain, thrice wrong; first, because in disobeying us he is disobeying his parents; secondly, because we are the authors of his education; thirdly, because he had made an agreement with us that he will duly obey our commands; and he neither obeys them nor convinces us that our commands are wrong; and we do not rudely impose them, but give him the alternative of [140] obeying or convincing us; that is what we offer, and he does neither. These are the sort of accusations to which, as we were saying, you, Socrates, will be exposed if you accomplish your intentions; you above all other Athenians." Suppose I ask, why is this? They will justly retort upon me that I above all other men have acknowledged the agreement. "There is clear proof," they will say, "Socrates, that we and the city were not displeasing to you. Of all Athenians you have been the most constant resident in the city, which, as you never leave, you may be supposed to love. For you never went out of the city either to see the games, except once when you went to the Isthmus, or to any other place unless when you were on military service; nor did you travel as other men do. Nor have you any curiosity to know other states or their laws; your affections did not go beyond us and our state; we were your special favorites, and you acquiesced in our government of you; and this is the state in which you begot your children, which is a proof of your satisfaction. Moreover, you might, if you had liked, have fixt the penalty at banishment in the course of the trial—the state which refuses to let you go now would have let you go then. But you pretended that you preferred death to exile, and that you were not grieved at death. And now you have forgotten these fine sentiments, and pay no respect to us the laws, of which you are the destroyer, and are doing what only a miserable slave would do, running away and turning your back upon the compacts and agreements which you made as a citizen. And first of all answer this very question: Are [141]

we right in saying that you agreed to be governed according to us in deed, and not in word only? Is that true or not?" How shall we answer that, Crito? Must we not agree?

Crito: There is no help, Socrates.

Socrates: Then will they not say: "You, Socrates, are breaking the covenants and agreements which you made with us at your leisure, not in any haste or under any compulsion or deception, but having had seventy years to think of them, during which time you were at liberty to leave the city, if we were not to your mind, or if our covenants appeared to you to be unfair. You had your choice, and might have gone either to Lacedæmon or Crete, which you often praise for their good government, or to some other Hellenic or foreign state. Whereas you, above all other Athenians, seemed to be so fond of the state, or, in other words, of us her laws (for who would like a state that has no laws?), that you never stirred out of her; the halt, the blind, the maimed were not more stationary in her than you were. And now you run away and forsake your agreements. Not so, Socrates, if you will take our choice; do not make yourself ridiculous by escaping out of the city.

"For just consider, if you transgress and err in this sort of way, what good will you do either to yourself or to your friends? That your friends will be driven into exile and deprived of citizenship, or will lose their property, is tolerably certain; and you yourself if you fly to one of the neighboring cities, as, for example, Thebes or Megara, both of which are well-governed cities, will come to them as an enemy, Socrates, and their [142] government will be against you, and all patriotic citizens will cast an evil eye upon you as a subverter of the laws, and you will confirm in the minds of the judges the justice of their own condemnation of you. For he who is a corrupter of the laws is more than likely to be a corrupter of the young and foolish portion of mankind. Will you then flee from well-ordered cities and virtuous men? and is existence worth having on these terms?...

"Listen, then, Socrates, to us who have brought you up. Think not of life and children first, and of justice afterward, but of justice first, that you may be justified before the princes of the world below. For neither will you nor any that belong to you be happier or holier or juster in this life, or happier in another, if you do as Crito bids. Now you depart in innocence, a sufferer and not a doer of evil; a victim, not of the laws, but of men. But if you go forth, returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking the covenants and agreements which you have made with us, and wronging those whom you ought least to wrong—that is to say, yourself, your friends, your country, and us—we shall be angry with you while you live, and our brethren, the laws in the world below, will receive you as an enemy; for they will know that you have done your best to destroy us. Listen, then, to us and not to Crito."

This is the voice which I seem to hear murmuring in my ears, like the sound of the flute in the ears of the mystic; that voice, I say, is humming in my ears, and prevents me from hearing any other. And I know that anything more which you may say will be vain. Yet speak, if you have anything to say.

Crito: I have nothing to say, Socrates.

Socrates: Then let me follow the intimations of the will of God.

FOOTNOTES:

[71] From the "Crito," translated by Benjamin Jowett. Crito was an influential and well-to-do citizen of Athens and a friend of Socrates; but nothing more definite about him is known.

VI

[143]

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES[72]

"Me, already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead."

When he had done speaking, Crito said: "And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children or any other matter in which we can serve you?"

"Nothing particular," he said; "only, as I have always told you, I would have you to look to yourselves; that is a service which you may always be doing to me and mine as well as to yourselves. And you need not make professions; for if you take no thought for yourselves, and walk not according to the precepts which I have given you, not now for the first time, the warmth of your professions will be of no avail." [144]

"We will do our best," said Crito. "But in what way would you have us bury you?"

"In any way that you like; only you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not walk away from you." Then he turned to us, and added with a smile: "I can not make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who has been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see a dead body—and he asks, How shall he bury me? And tho I have spoken many words in the endeavor to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blest—these words of mine, with which I comforted you and myself, have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me now, as he was surety for me at the trial: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was my surety to the judges that I would remain, but you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, 'Thus we lay out Socrates,' or, 'Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him'; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that as is usual, and as you think best."

When he had spoken these words, he arose and told us to wait until he went into the bath-chamber with Crito; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow: he was like a father of whom we were being [145] bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath, his children were brought to him—(he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; and he then dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the eleven, entered and stood by him, saying: "To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand." Then bursting into tears, he went out.

Socrates looked at him and said, "I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid." Then turning to us, he said, "How charming the man is; since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says,

Crito; let the cup be brought if the poison is prepared; if not, let the attendant prepare some." [146]

"Yet," said Crito, "the sun is still upon the hilltops, and I know that many a one has taken the draft late; and after the announcement had been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and enjoyed the society of his beloved; do not hasten then; there is still time."

Socrates said: "Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in doing thus, for they think that they will gain by the delay; but I am right in not doing thus, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should be sparing and saving a life which is already gone; I could only laugh at myself for this. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me."

Crito made a sign to the servant, who was standing by; and he went out, and after being absent for some time returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: "You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me the directions how I am to proceed." The man answered: "You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then to lie down, and the poison will act." At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of color or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes, Echecrates,[73] as his manner was, took the cup and said: "What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I or not?" The man answered: "We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough." "I understand," he said; "yet I may and must ask the gods to prosper [147] my journey from this to that other world—even so—and so be it according to my prayer." Then holding the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draft, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast; so that I covered my face and wept over myself, for certainly I was not weeping over him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having lost such a friend. Nor was I the first, for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up and moved away, and I followed; and at that moment, Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out into a loud and passionate cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: "What is this strange outcry?" he said. "I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not offend in this way, for I have heard that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience." When we heard that, we were ashamed, and refrained our tears; and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he prest his foot hard and asked him if he could feel; and he said, "No"; and then his leg, and so upward and upward, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: "When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end." He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for [148] he had covered himself up, and said (they were his last words)—"Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt?" "The debt shall be paid," said Crito; "is there anything else?" There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, whom I may truly call the wisest, and justest, and best of all the men whom I have ever known.

FOOTNOTES:

[72] From the "Phædo." Translated by Benjamin Jowett. Probably the "Phædo" is, of all Plato's writings, the most famous. Its importance is ascribed by Mahaffy not only to what is said of immortality, in passages which have "fascinated the thoughtful men of all ages," but to the touching story of the last hours of Socrates.

[73] Echecrates seems to have been the Locrian philosopher to whom Plato is believed to have gone for some of his early instruction.

ARISTOTLE

[149]

Born in Stagira in 384 B.C.; died at Chalcis in Eubœa in 322; the most famous of Greek philosophers; went to Athens in his eighteenth year as a pupil of Plato and remained there for twenty years; in 343 went to the Court of Macedon, where he undertook the education of Alexander the Great, then thirteen years old; in 335 returned to Athens and produced the greater part of his writings; afterward forced to flee from Athens to Chalcis during an uprising against the Macedonians; his numerous writings deal with all branches of science known to his times; the first edition of the Greek text, that of Aldus Manutius, published in 1495-98.[74]

I

WHAT THINGS ARE PLEASANT[75]

Let it be laid down by us, that pleasure is a certain motion of the soul, and a settlement of it, at once rapid and perceptible, into its own proper nature; and that pain is the contrary. If then pleasure be a thing of this nature, it is plain that whatever is productive of the disposition I have described is pleasant; while everything of a nature to destroy it, or [150] produce a disposition the opposite to it, is painful.

Generally speaking, therefore, it is necessary, both that the being in progress toward a state conformable to nature should be pleasant; and that, in the highest degree, when those feelings, whose original is conformable to it, shall have recovered that their nature; and habits, because that which is habitual becomes by that time natural, as it were; for, in a certain way, custom is like nature, because the idea of frequency is proximate to that of always; now nature belongs to the idea of always, custom to that of often. What is not compulsory, also, is pleasant; for compulsion is contrary to nature. Wherefore acts of necessity are painful; and it has been truly remarked, "Every act of necessity is in its nature painful." It must be also that a state of sedulous attention, anxiety, the having the mind on the stretch, are painful, for they all are acts of necessity, and constrained, unless they have become habitual; but it is custom which, under such circumstances, renders them pleasant. The contraries of these must also be pleasant; wherefore, relaxation of mind, leisure, listlessness, amusements, and intervals of rest, rank in the class of things pleasant; for none of these has anything to do with necessity. Everything of which there is an innate appetite, is pleasant; for appetite is a desire of what is pleasant.

Now, of appetites, some are irrational, others attended by reason. I call all those irrational which men desire, not from any conception which they form: of this kind are all which are said to exist naturally, as those of the body; thirst or hunger, for instance, in the case [151] of sustenance; and the appetite of sustenance in every kind. And the appetites connected with objects of taste, and of lust, and, in fact, objects of touch generally; the appetite of fragrant odors, too, as connected with smelling, and hearing, and sight. Appetites attended by reason are all those whatsoever which men exercise from a persuasion: for many things there are which they desire to behold, and possess, on hearsay and persuasion. Now, as the being pleased stands in the perception of a certain affection, and as imagination is a kind of faint perception, there will attend on him who exercises either memory or hope a kind of imagination of that which is the object of his memory or hope; but if so, it is plain that they who exercise memory or hope, certainly feel pleasure, since

they have also a perception. So that everything pleasant consists either in the perception of present objects, or in the remembrance of those which have already been, or in the hope of such as are yet to be; for men exercise perception on present, memory on past, and hope on future objects. Now the objects of memory are pleasant, not only such as at the moment while present were pleasant, but some even which were not pleasant, should their consequence subsequently be honorable and good; and hence this saying, "But it is indeed pleasant for a man, when preserved, to remember his toils"; and this, "For after his sufferings, a man who has suffered much, and much achieved, is gladdened at the recollection." But the reason of this is, that to be exempt from evil is pleasant. And all objects are pleasant in hope, which appear by their presence either to delight or benefit in [152] a great degree; or to benefit, without giving pain. In a word, whatever objects by their presence delight us, do so, generally speaking, as we hope for, or remember them. On which account, too, the feeling of anger is pleasant; just as Homer has remarked of anger in his poem, "That which with sweetness far greater than distilling honey as it drops"; for there is no one who feels anger where the object seems impracticable to his revenge; nor with those far their superiors in power do men feel anger at all, or if they do, it is in a less degree.

There is also a kind of pleasure consequent on most appetites; for either in the recollection that they have enjoyed them, or in the hope that they shall enjoy them, men are affected and delighted by a certain pleasure: thus men possest by fevers feel delight, amid their thirst, as well at the remembrance how they used to drink, as at the hope of drinking yet again. Lovers, too, feel delight in conversing, writing, and composing something, ever about the object beloved; because, in all those energies, they have a perception, as it were, of the object they love. And this is in all cases a criterion of the commencement of love, when persons feel pleasure not only in the presence of the object, but are enamored also of it when absent, on memory; wherefore, even when pain arises at absence, nay in the midst of mourning, and the very dirge of death, there yet arises within us a certain pleasure. For the pain is felt because the object is not present; but the pleasure consists in remembering and seeing, as it were, both the person, and [153] what he used to do, and the kind of character of which he was. Whence has it been said, and with probability enough, "Thus spake he, and excited within them all a desire of lamentation." Also the avenging oneself is pleasant; for the getting of that is pleasant, the failing to get which is painful: now the angry do feel pain in an excessive degree if they be not avenged; but in the hope of revenge they take pleasure.

Again, to overcome is pleasant, not to the ambitious only, but even to all; for there arises an imagination of superiority, for which all, either in a faint or more violent degree, have an appetite. But since to overcome is pleasant, it must follow, of course, that amusements where there is field for rivalry, as those of music and disputations, are pleasant; for it frequently occurs, in the course of these, that we overcome; also chess, ball, dice, and drafts.

Again, it is the same with respect to amusements where a lively interest is taken; for, of these, some become pleasant as accustomed to them; others are pleasant at first; for instance, hunting and every kind of sporting; for where there is rivalry, there is also victory; on which principle the disputations of the bar and of the schools are pleasant to those who have become accustomed to them, and have abilities. Also honor and good character are most pleasant, by reason that an idea arises, that one is such as is the good man; and this in a greater degree should those people pronounce one such who he thinks speak truth: such are those immediately about one, rather than those who are more removed; familiar friends, and acquaintances, and one's fellow citizens, rather than those [154] who are at a distance; the present, rather than a future generation; a man of practical wisdom, rather than a mere ignoramus; many, than a few; for it is more likely that these I have mentioned will adhere to the truth, than that the opposite characters will: since one has no anxiety about the honor or the opinion of such as one greatly despises, children and animals, for instance, not at least for the sake of such opinion itself; but if one is anxious about it, then it is on account of something else.

A friend, too, ranks among things pleasant; for the affection of love is pleasant; since there is no lover of wine who does not delight in wine: also the having affection felt toward one is pleasant; for there is in this case also an idea of one's being an excellent person, which all who have any sensibility to it are desirous of; now the having affection felt for you is the being beloved yourself, on your own account. Also the being held in admiration is pleasant, on the very account of being honored by it. Flattery and the flatterer are pleasant; since the flatterer is a seeming admirer and a seeming friend. To continue the same course of action is also pleasant; for what is habitual was laid down to be pleasant. To vary is also pleasant; for change is an approach to what is natural: for sameness produces an excess of a stated habit; whence it has been said, "In everything change is pleasant." For on this principle, whatever occurs at intervals of time is pleasant, whether persons or things; for it is a variation of present objects; and at the same time that which occurs merely at intervals possesses the merit of rarity. Also learning and admiration, generally speaking, are pleasant; for under admiration exists a desire [to learn], so that what is admired is desired; and in the act of learning there is a settlement into a state conformable to nature. To benefit and to be benefited are also of the number of pleasant things; for to be benefited is to get what people desire; but to benefit is to possess and abound; things, the both of which men desire. And because a tendency to beneficence is pleasant, it is also pleasant to a man to set his neighbor on his legs again, and to put a finish to that which was deficient in some particular.

II [155]

THE LIFE MOST DESIRABLE[76]

He who proposes to make the fitting inquiry as to which form of government is the best, ought first to determine what manner of living is most eligible; for while this remains uncertain, it will also be equally uncertain what government is best. For, unless some unexpected accident interfere, it is probable that those who enjoy the best government will live best according to existing circumstances; he ought, therefore, first to come to some agreement as to the manner of life which, so to speak, is most desirable for all; and afterward, whether this life is the same or different in the individual and the member of a [156] state.

Deeming then that we have already sufficiently shown what sort of life is best, in our popular discourses on that subject, we must now make use of what we there said. Certainly no one ever called in question the propriety of one of the divisions; namely, that as there are three kinds of things good for man, which are, what is external, what belongs to the body, and to the soul, it is evident that all these must conspire to make men truly happy. For no one would say that a man was happy who had nothing of fortitude or temperance, justice or prudence, but was afraid of the flies that flew round him; or who would abstain from nothing, if he chanced to be desirous of meat or drink, or who would murder his dearest friend for a farthing; or, in like manner, one who was in every particular as wanting and misguided in his understanding as an infant or a maniac. These truths are so evident that all must agree to them, tho some may dispute about the quantity and the degree: for they may think, that a very little amount of virtue is sufficient for happiness; but as to riches, property, power, honor, and all such things, they endeavor to increase them without bounds. But to such we say, that it is easy to prove, from what experience teaches us concerning these cases, that it is not through these external goods that men acquire virtue, but through virtue that they acquire them. As to a happy life, whether it is to be found in pleasure or in virtue, or in both, certain it is that it belongs more frequently to those whose morals are most pure, and whose understandings are best [157] cultivated, and who preserve moderation in the acquisition of external goods, than to those who possess a sufficiency of external good things, but are deficient in the rest.

And that such is the case will be clearly seen by any one who views the matter with reflection. For whatsoever is external has its boundary, as a machine; and whatsoever is useful is such that its excess is either necessarily hurtful, or at best useless to the possessor. But every good quality of the soul, the higher it is in degree, becomes much the more useful, if it is permitted on this subject to adopt the word "useful" as well as "noble." It is also evident that the best disposition of each thing will follow in the same proportion of excess, as the things themselves, of which we allow they are accidents, differ from each other in value. So that if the soul is more noble than any outward possession, or than the body, both in itself and with respect to us, it must be admitted, of course, that the best disposition of each must follow the same analogy. Besides, it is for the sake of the soul that these things are desirable, and it is on this account that wise men should desire them, and not the soul for them.

Let us therefore be well agreed that so much of happiness falls to the lot of every one as he possesses of virtue and wisdom, and in proportion as he acts according to their dictates; since for this we have the example of the God Himself, who is completely happy, not from any external good, but in Himself, and because He is such by nature. For good fortune is something of necessity different from happiness, as every external good of the soul is produced by chance or by fortune; but it is not from fortune that any one is just or wise. Hence it follows, as established by the same reasoning, that the state which is best, and acts best, will be happy: for no one can fare well who acts not well; nor can the actions either of man or city be praiseworthy without virtue and wisdom. For valor, justice and wisdom have in a state the same force and form as in individuals; and it is only as he shares in these virtues that each man is said to be just, wise, and prudent.

FOOTNOTES:

[74] Aristotle has been recognized as a great name in the classic literature of Greece, but this, as Mahaffy points out, is rather as a critic than as a man of letters in the narrow sense of the word. Physically he was unattractive. In his day he was thought ugly. His features were small and his legs thin. A sitting portrait of him, now preserved in Rome, shows a refined and careworn, tho somewhat hard face, in which thought and perhaps bodily suffering have drawn deep furrows. His writings are said to have numbered about four hundred.

[75] From Book I of the "Rhetoric." Translated by Theodore Buckley.

[76] From Book VII of the "Politics." Translated by Edward Walford.

III

[158]

IDEAL HUSBANDS AND WIVES[77]

But as to man, the first object of his care should be respecting a wife; for the society which exists between the male and female is above all others natural. For it is laid down by us elsewhere, that nature aims at producing many such creatures as the several kinds of animals; but it is impossible for the female to accomplish this without the male, or the male without the female, so that the society between them exists of necessity. In all other animals indeed, this association is irrational, and exists only so far as they possess a natural instinct, and for the sake of procreation alone. But in the milder and more intelligent animals, this bond more nearly approaches perfection; for there seem to be in them more signs of mutual assistance and good-will, and of cooperation with each other. [159] But this is especially the case with man, because the male and female here cooperate not

only for the sake of existence, but of living happily. And the procreation of children is a means not only of subserving nature, but also of solid benefit; for the labor which they expend during their season of vigor upon their helpless young is given back to them in the decay of age, from their children who are then in vigor.

And at the same time, by this continual cycle, nature provides for the continuance of the race as a species, since she can not do so numerically. Thus divinely predisposed toward such a society is the nature of both the male and the female. For the sexes are at once divided, in that neither of them have powers adequate for all purposes, nay, in some respects even opposite to each other, tho they tend to the same end. For nature has made the one sex stronger and the other weaker, that the one by reason of fear may be more adapted to preserve property, while the other, by reason of its fortitude, may be disposed to repel assaults; and that the one may provide things abroad, while the other preserves them at home. And with respect to labor, the one is by nature capable of attending to domestic duties, but weak as to matters out-of-doors; the other is ill-adapted to works where repose is necessary, but able to perform those which demand exercise. And with respect to children, the bearing of them belongs to one sex, but the advantage of them is common to both; for the one has to rear them, and the other to educate them.... [160]

A good and perfect wife ought to be mistress of everything within the house, and to have the care of everything according to fixt laws; allowing no one to come in unbidden by her husband, and especially keeping on her guard against everything which can be noised abroad relating to a woman's dishonor. So that if any mischance has happened within doors, she alone ought to know about it; but when those who have come in have done anything wrong, the husband should bear the blame. And she should manage the expenses laid out upon such festivals as her husband has agreed with her in keeping, and make an outlay of clothes and other ornaments on a somewhat lesser scale than is encouraged by the laws of the state; considering that neither splendor of vestments, nor preeminence of beauty, nor the amount of gold, contributes so much to the commendation of a woman as good management in domestic affairs, and a noble and comely manner of life; since all such array of the soul is far more lovely, and has greater force (than anything besides), to provide herself and her children true ornament till old age.

A wife therefore ought to inspire herself with confidence, and perpetually to be at the head of domestic affairs. For it is unseemly for a man to know all that goes on in the house; in all respects indeed she ought to be obedient to her husband, and not to busy herself about public affairs, nor to take part in matrimonial concerns. And when it is time to give his daughters in marriage, or to get wives for his sons, by all means in these respects she should obey her husband. And she ought to show herself a fellow counsellor [161] to her husband, so as to assent to what pleases him, remembering that it is less unseemly for a husband to take in hand domestic matters, than for a wife to busy herself in affairs out-of-doors. But the well-ordered wife will justly consider the behavior of her husband as a model of her own life, and a law to herself, invested with a divine sanction by means of the marriage tie and the community of life. For if she can persuade herself to bear her husband's ways patiently, she will most easily manage matters in the house; but if she can not, she will have greater difficulty. So that it will be seemly for her to show herself of one mind with her husband, and tractable, not only when her husband is in good luck and prosperity, but also when he is in misfortune; and when good fortune has failed him or sickness has laid hold of his bodily frame, or when he has been deprived of his senses, she ought gently and sympathetically to yield in any matter which is not base and unworthy; but if her husband has been ailing and made a mistake, she ought not to keep it on her mind, but to lay the blame on disease or ignorance....

But the husband in his turn should find out certain laws to regulate his treatment of his wife, as one who entered the house of her husband to share his children and his life, and to leave him a progeny destined to bear the names of her husband's parents and her own. And what in the world could there be more holy than these ties? or what is there about which a man in his sound sense could strive more earnestly than to beget the children

who shall hereafter nurse his declining years, from the best and most praiseworthy of [162] wives; for they are to be, as it were, the best and most pious preservers of their father and mother, and guardians of the entire family. For it is probable that they will turn out good, if they have been reared uprightly by their parents in the habitual practise of what is just and holy but if the contrary should be the case, they will suffer the loss themselves. For unless parents afford their children a fit pattern of life, they will leave them an obvious excuse to quote against themselves. And this is to be feared, that if they have not lived well, their sons will disregard them, and neglect them in their old age.

On this account nothing is to be omitted which tends to the fit education of a bride, so that the children may be born of the best possible mother. For the husbandman neglects nothing so as to cast his seed upon the richest and best wrought ground, considering that it is from such a soil that he will hereafter reap the fairest fruits; and if any violence threatens, he fights against his enemy, and deliberately chooses to die rather than endure to see it ravaged; and such a disposition as this is praised by most persons. And as such is the care which is spent by us on the support of our bodies, what manner of men ought we to show ourselves on behalf of our children and of the mother that is to rear them? Ought we not most readily to strain every nerve? For in this way alone does the constitution of man's nature, which is mortal, attain to prosperity, and the prayers of parents all tend to this one end. And hence, whoever cares not for this is sure to be regardless of the gods.

It was for the sake of the gods, then, who were present to him when he offered the [163] marriage sacrifice, that he not only took to himself a wife, but also (what is far more) gave himself over to his bride to honor her next to his own parents. But that which is most precious in the eyes of a prudent wife is to see her husband preserving himself entirely for her, thinking of no other woman in comparison with her, and regarding herself, above all other women, as peculiarly his own, and faithful toward him. For in proportion as a wife perceives that she is faithfully and justly cared for, so much the more will she exert her energies to show herself such. Whoever therefore is prudent will not fail to remember with how much honor it becomes him to requite his parents, his wife, and his children, in order that he may gain the name of one who is just and upright in distributing to each their due. For every one is indignant beyond measure at being deprived of that which belongs to himself in a peculiar manner; and there is no one who is content at being deprived of his own property, tho one were to give him plenty of his neighbor's goods. And in very truth nothing is so peculiarly the property of a wife as a chaste and hallowed intercourse.

And hence it would not befit a prudent man to cast his seed wherever chance might take it, lest children should be born to him from a bad and base stock, on an equality with his legitimate sons; and by this the wife is robbed of her conjugal rights, the children are injured, and above all, the husband himself is enveloped in disgrace. He ought therefore to approach his wife with much self-restraint and decency, and to maintain modesty in his [164] words, and in his deeds a regard to what is lawful and honest, and in his intercourse he should be true and discreet. And to little errors, even tho they be voluntary, he ought to vouchsafe pardon; and if she has made any mistake through ignorance, he ought to advise her, and not to inspire her with fear, except such as is accompanied with reverence and respect. For such treatment would be more suited to mistresses at the hands of their gallants. Yet, nevertheless, justly to love her husband with reverence and respect, and to be loved in turn, is that which befits a wife of gentle birth, as to her intercourse with her own husband. For fear is of two kinds; the one kind is reverent and full of respect; such is that which good sons exhibit toward their parents, and well-ordered citizens toward those who rule them in a kindly spirit. But the other kind is attended by hatred and aversion: such is that which slaves feel toward their masters, and citizens toward unjust and lawless tyrants.

Furthermore, the husband ought to choose the best course out of all that we have said above, and so to conciliate his wife to himself, and to make her trustworthy and well disposed, as that whether her husband be present or absent, she will be equally good, while he can turn his attention to public matters: so that even in his absence she may feel

that no one is better, nor more suited to herself, nor more nearly bound to her, than her own husband: and that he may always direct his energies to the public good, and show from the very first that such is the case, even tho she may be very young and quite inexperienced in such matters. For if the husband should ever begin such a course of conduct as this, and show himself to be perfect master of himself, he would be the best guide of the entire course of his life, and he would teach his wife to adopt a similar mode of action.

FOOTNOTES:

[77] From Book I of the "Economics." Translated by Edward Walford.

IV

[165]

HAPPINESS AS AN END OF HUMAN ACTION[78]

Since we have spoken of the virtues, of the different kinds of friendships, and of pleasures, it remains that we should discuss the subject of happiness in outline, since we assumed this to be the end of human actions. Therefore, if we recapitulate what has been said before, the argument will be more concise.

We have said that it is not a habit; for if it were, it might exist in a man who slept throughout his life, living the life of a plant, and suffering the greatest misfortunes. If, then, this does not please us, but if we must rather bring it under a kind of energy, as was said before; and if, of energies, some are necessary and eligible for the sake of something else, others are eligible for their own sakes; it is plain that we must consider happiness as one of those which are eligible for their own sakes, and not one of those which are eligible for the sake of something else; for happiness is in want of nothing, but is self- [166] sufficient. Now those energies are eligible for their own sakes from which nothing more is sought for beyond the energy. But of this kind, actions done according to virtue seem to be: for the performance of honorable and good acts is among things eligible for their own sakes. And of amusements, those are eligible for their own sakes which are pleasant: for men do not choose these for the sake of anything else: for they are rather injured by them than benefited, since they neglect their persons and property. But the majority of those who are called happy fly to such pastimes as these; and, therefore, those who have a happy turn for such pastimes as these are in favor with tyrants; for they make themselves agreeable in those things which tyrants desire; and such are the men they want.

These things are thought to belong to happiness, because those who are in power pass their leisure in them. But such men are perhaps no proof; for neither virtue nor intellect consists in having power, and from these two good energies proceed; nor if those, who have never tasted pure and liberal pleasure, fly to bodily pleasures, must we therefore think that these pleasures are more eligible; for children think those things which are esteemed by them the best. It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose, that as the things which appear honorable to children and men differ, so also those which appear so to the bad and the good will differ likewise, and therefore, as we have very often said, those things are honorable and pleasant which are so to the good man. But to every man that energy is most eligible which is according to his proper habit; and, therefore, to the good man, that [167] is most eligible which is according to virtue.

Consequently happiness does not consist in amusement; for it is absurd that the end should be amusement; and that men should toil and suffer inconvenience all their life long for the sake of amusement; for we choose everything, as we might say, for the sake of something else, except happiness; for that is an end. But to be serious and to labor for

the sake of amusement appears foolish and very childish. But to amuse ourselves in order that we may be serious, as Anacharsis said, seems to be right: for amusement resembles relaxation. Relaxation, therefore, is not the end, for we have recourse to it for the sake of the energy. But the happy life seems to be according to virtue; and this is serious, and does not consist in amusement. We say also that serious things are better than those which are ridiculous and joined with amusement; and that the energy of the better part and of the better man is more serious; and the energy of the better man is at once superior, and more tending to happiness. Besides, any person whatever, even a slave, may enjoy bodily pleasures no less than the best man; but no one allows that a slave partakes of happiness except so far as that he partakes of life: for happiness does not consist in such modes of passing life, but in energies according to virtue, as has been said already.

If happiness be an energy according to virtue, it is reasonable to suppose that it is according to the best virtue; and this must be the virtue of the best part of man. Whether, then, this best part be the intellect, or something else—which is thought naturally to bear [168]
rule and to govern, and to possess ideas upon honorable and divine subjects, or whether it is itself divine, or the most divine of any property which we possess; the energy of this part according to its proper virtue must be perfect happiness: and that this energy is contemplative has been stated. This also would seem to agree with what was said before, and with the truth: for this energy is the noblest; since the intellect is the noblest thing within us, and of subjects of knowledge, those are noblest with which the intellect is conversant.

It is also most continuous; for we are better able to contemplate continuously than to do anything else continuously. We think also that pleasure must be united to happiness: but of all the energies according to virtue, that according to wisdom is confessedly the most pleasant: at any rate, wisdom seems to contain pleasures worthy of admiration, both in point of purity and stability: and it is reasonable to suppose that his mode of life should be pleasanter to those who know it than to those who are only seeking it. Again, that which is called self-sufficiency must be most concerned with contemplative happiness; for both the wise man and the just, and all others, need the necessaries of life; but supposing them to be sufficiently supplied with such goods, the just man requires persons toward whom and with whom he may act justly; and in like manner the temperate man, and the brave man, and so on with all the rest. But the wise man, if even by himself, is able to contemplate; and the more so the wiser he is; perhaps he will energize better, if he has cooperators, but nevertheless he is most self-sufficient. This would seem also to be [169]
the only energy which is loved for its own sake; for it has no result beyond the act of contemplation; but from the active energies, we gain more or less beyond the performance of the action.

Happiness seems also to consist in leisure; for we are busy in order that we may have leisure; and we go to war in order that we may be at peace. Now the energies of the active virtues are exerted in political or military affairs; and the actions with respect to these are thought to allow of no leisure. Certainly military actions altogether exclude it; for no one chooses war, nor makes preparations for war for the sake of war; for a man would be thought perfectly defiled with blood, if he made his friends enemies in order that there might be battles and massacres. The energy of the statesman is also without leisure; and besides the actual administration of the state, the statesman seeks to gain power and honors, or at least happiness for himself and his fellow citizens, different from the happiness of the state, which we are in search of, clearly as being different.

If, then, of all courses of action which are according to the virtues, those which have to do with politics and war excel in beauty and greatness; and these have no leisure, and aim at some end, and are not chosen for their own sakes; but the energy of the intellect is thought to be superior in intensity, because it is contemplative; and to aim at no end beyond itself, and to have a pleasure properly belonging to it; and if this increases the energy; and if self-sufficiency, and leisure, and freedom from cares (as far as anything [170]
human can be free), and everything which is attributed to the happy man, evidently exist

in this energy; then this must be the perfect happiness of man, when it attains the end of life complete; for nothing is incomplete of those things which belong to happiness.

But such a life would be better than man could attain to; for he would live thus, not so far forth as he is man, but as there is in him something divine. But so far as this divine part surpasses the whole compound nature, so far does its energy surpass the energy which is according to all other virtue. If, then, the intellect be divine when compared with man, the life also, which is in obedience to that, will be divine when compared with human life. But a man ought not to entertain human thoughts, as some would advise, because he is human, nor mortal thoughts, because he is mortal: but as far as it is possible he should make himself immortal, and do everything with a view to living in accordance with the best principle in him; altho it be small in size, yet in power and value it is far more excellent than all. Besides, this would seem to be each man's "self," if it really is the ruling and the better part. It would be absurd, therefore, if a man were to choose not his own life, but the life of some other thing. And what was said before will apply now; for that which peculiarly belongs to each by nature is best and most pleasant to every one; and consequently to man, the life according to intellect is most pleasant, if intellect especially constitutes Man. This life, therefore, is the most happy.

FOOTNOTES:

[78] From Book X of the "Nicomachean Ethics." Translated by R. W. Browne.

POLYBIUS [171]

Born in Megalopolis in Greece, in 204 B.C.; died about 125; celebrated as an historian; entered the service of the Achæan League; taken to Rome about 169 as a political prisoner, becoming a friend of Scipio the younger; later engaged in settling the affairs of Achaia; went to Egypt in 181 as an ambassador of the Achæan League; of his history of Rome in forty books, five only have been preserved entire.[79]

I

THE BATTLE OF CANNÆ[80]

(216 B.C.)

When the news arrived at Rome that the two armies were face to face, and that skirmishes between advanced parties of both sides were daily taking place, the city was in a state of high excitement and uneasiness; the people dreading the result, owing to the disasters which had now befallen them on more than one occasion; and foreseeing and [172] anticipating in their imaginations what would happen if they were utterly defeated. All the oracles preserved at Rome were in everybody's mouth; and every temple and house was full of prodigies and miracles: in consequence of which the city was one scene of vows, sacrifices, supplicatory processions, and prayers. For the Romans in times of danger take extraordinary pains to appease gods and men, and look upon no ceremony of that kind in such times as unbecoming or beneath their dignity.

When he took over the command on the following day, as soon as the sun was above the horizon, Gaius Terentius[81] got the army in motion from both the camps. Those from the larger camp he drew up in order of battle, as soon as he had got them across the river, and bringing up those of the smaller camp he placed them all in the same line, selecting the south as the aspect of the whole. The Roman horse he stationed on the right wing along the river, and their foot next them in the same line, placing the maniples, however, closer together than usual, and making the depth of each maniple several times greater than its front. The cavalry of the allies he stationed on the left wing, and the light-armed troops he placed slightly in advance of the whole army, which amounted with its allies to eighty thousand infantry and a little more than six thousand horse. At the same time Hannibal brought his Balearic slingers and spearmen across the river, and stationed them in advance of his main body; which he led out of their camp, and, getting them across the [173] river at two spots, drew them up opposite the enemy. On his left wing, close to the river, he stationed the Iberian and Celtic horse opposite the Roman cavalry; and next to them half the Libyan heavy-armed foot; and next to them the Iberian and Celtic foot; next, the other half of the Libyans, and, on the right wing, the Numidian horse. Having now got them all into line, he advanced with the central companies of the Iberians and Celts; and so arranged the other companies next these in regular gradations that the whole line became crescent-shaped, diminishing in depth toward its extremities: his object being to have his Libyans as a reserve in the battle, and to commence the action with his Iberians and Celts.

The armor of the Libyans was Roman, for Hannibal had armed them with a selection of the spoils taken in previous battles. The shield of the Iberians and Celts was about the same size, but their swords were quite different. For that of the Roman can thrust with as deadly effects as it can cut, while the Gallic sword can only cut, and that requires some room. And the companies coming alternately—the naked Celts, and the Iberians with their short linen tunics bordered with purple stripes, the whole appearance of the line was strange and terrifying. The whole strength of the Carthaginian cavalry was ten thousand, but that of their foot was not more than forty thousand, including the Celts. Æmilius[82] commanded on the Roman right, Gaius Terentius on the left, Marcus Atilius and Gnæus Servilius, the Consuls of the previous year, on the center. The left of the Carthaginians [174] was commanded by Hasdrubal,[83] the right by Hanno,[84] the center by Hannibal in person, attended by his brother Mago. And as the Roman line faced the south, as I said before, and the Carthaginian the north, the rays of the rising sun did not inconvenience either of them.

The battle was begun by an engagement between the advanced guard of the two armies; and at first the affair between these light-armed troops was indecisive. But as soon as the Iberian and Celtic cavalry got at the Romans, the battle began in earnest, and in the true barbaric fashion: for there was none of the usual formal advance and retreat; but when they once got to close quarters, they grappled man to man, and, dismounting from their horses, fought on foot. But when the Carthaginians had got the upper hand in this encounter and killed most of their opponents on the ground—because the Romans all maintained the fight with spirit and determination—and began chasing the remainder along the river, slaying as they went and giving no quarter; then the legionaries took the place of the light-armed and closed with the enemy. For a short time the Iberian and Celtic lines stood their ground and fought gallantly; but, presently overpowered by the weight of the heavy-armed lines, they gave way and retired to the rear, thus breaking up the crescent. The Roman maniples followed with spirit, and easily cut their way through [175] the enemy's line; since the Celts had been drawn up in a thin line, while the Romans had closed up from the wings toward the center and the point of danger. For the two wings did not come into action at the same time as the center: but the center was first engaged because the Gauls, having been stationed on the arc of the crescent, had come into contact with the enemy long before the wings, the convex of the crescent being toward the enemy. The Romans, however, going in pursuit of these troops, and hastily closing in toward the center and the part of the enemy which was giving ground, advanced so far that the Libyan heavy-armed troops on either wing got on their flanks. Those on the right,

facing to the left, charged from the right upon the Roman flank; while those who were on the left wing faced to the right, and, dressing by the left, charged their right flank, the exigency of the moment suggesting to them what they ought to do. Thus it came about, as Hannibal had planned, that the Romans were caught between two hostile lines of Libyans —thanks to their impetuous pursuit of the Celts. Still they fought, tho no longer in line, yet singly or in maniples, which faced about to meet those who charged them on the flanks.

Tho he had been from the first on the right wing, and had taken part in the cavalry engagement, Lucius Æmilius still survived. Determined to act up to his own exhortatory speech, and seeing that the decision of the battle rested mainly on the legionaries, riding up to the center of the line he led the charge himself, and personally grappled with the enemy, at the same time cheering on and exhorting his soldiers to the charge. Hannibal, [176]
on the other side, did the same, for he too had taken his place on the center from the commencement. The Numidian horse on the Carthaginian right were meanwhile charging the cavalry on the Roman left; and tho, from the peculiar nature of their mode of fighting, they neither inflicted nor received much harm, they yet rendered the enemy's horse useless by keeping them occupied, and charging them first on one side and then on another. But when Hasdrubal, after all but annihilating the cavalry by the river, came from the left to the support of the Numidians, the Roman allied cavalry, seeing his charge approaching, broke and fled.

At that point Hasdrubal appears to have acted with great skill and discretion. Seeing the Numidians to be strong in numbers, and more effective and formidable to troops that had once been forced from their ground, he left the pursuit to them; while he himself hastened to the part of the field where the infantry were engaged, and brought his men up to support the Libyans. Then, by charging the Roman legions on the rear, and harassing them by hurling squadron after squadron upon them at many points at once, he raised the spirits of the Libyans, and dismayed and deprest those of the Romans. It was at this point that Lucius Æmilius fell, in the thick of the fight, covered with wounds: a man who did his duty to his country at the last hour of his life, as he had throughout its previous years, if any man ever did. As long as the Romans could keep an unbroken front, to turn first in one direction and then in another to meet the assaults of the enemy, they held out; but the [177]
outer files of the circle continually falling, and the circle becoming more and more contracted, they at last were all killed on the field; and among them Marcus Atilius and Gnæus Servilius, the Consuls of the previous year, who had shown themselves brave men and worthy of Rome in the battle. While this struggle and carnage were going on, the Numidian horse were pursuing the fugitives, most of whom they cut down or hurled from their horses; but some few escaped into Venusia, among whom was Gaius Terentius, the Consul, who thus sought a flight, as disgraceful to himself, as his conduct in office had been disastrous to his country.

Such was the end of the battle of Cannæ,[85] in which both sides fought with the most conspicuous gallantry, the conquered no less than the conquerors. This is proved by the fact that, out of six thousand horse, only seventy escaped with Gaius Terentius to Venusia, and about three hundred of the allied cavalry to various towns in the neighborhood. Of the infantry ten thousand were taken prisoners in fair fight, but were not actually engaged in the battle: of those who were actually engaged only about three thousand perhaps escaped to the towns of the surrounding district; all the rest died nobly, to the number of seventy thousand, the Carthaginians being on this occasion, as on previous ones, mainly indebted for their victory to their superiority in cavalry: a lesson to posterity that in actual war it is better to have half the number of infantry, and the superiority in cavalry, than to engage your enemy with an equality in both. On the side of Hannibal there fell four thousand Celts, fifteen hundred Iberians and Libyans, and about two hundred horse....

The result of this battle, such as I have described it, had the consequences which both sides expected. For the Carthaginians by their victory were thenceforth masters of nearly the whole of the Italian coast which is called *Magna Græcia*. Thus the Tarentines

immediately submitted; and the Arpani and some of the Campanian states invited Hannibal to come to them; and the rest were with one consent turning their eyes to the Carthaginians: who, accordingly, began now to have high hopes of being able to carry even Rome itself by assault.

FOOTNOTES:

[79] Polybius, who, as will be noted, belongs to a period two and a half centuries later than the greatest Greek historians—Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon—is classed by Mahaffy as "the soberest and most valuable" of those who wrote with masters as their models. While he has suffered from the fate of all imitators, his work is "of the highest value to the historian, as a long series of approving critics has amply shown." He has never been read as a stylist, "nor could he be said to form a part of the classical literature of Greece."

[80] From Book IV of the "Histories." Translated by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh. In this battle Hannibal had about 50,000 men, and the Romans about 80,000.

[81] Gaius Terentius Varro, who was then Consul and died later than 200 B.C.

[82] Lucius Æmilius Paulus was then Consul.

[83] Hannibal's brother, who, nine years later, crossed the Alps and was killed in battle by the Romans. It was a tradition in Rome that Hasdrubal's head, severed from his body, was sent to Hannibal.

[84] The younger brother of Hannibal, who in 200 B.C. was defeated by Scipio at Silpia.

[85] The site of Cannæ in Apulia, southern Italy, near the Adriatic shore, lies on the bank of the river Aufidus, now called the Ofanto.

II

[178]

HANNIBAL'S ADVANCE ON ROME[86]

(211 B.C.)

When the news had arrived at Rome that Hannibal had encamped over against their lines, and was actually besieging their forces, there was a universal excitement and terror, from a feeling that the result of the impending battle would decide the whole war. Consequently, with one heart and soul, the citizens had all devoted themselves to sending [179] out reenforcements and making preparations for this struggle. On their part, the Capuans were encouraged by the receipt of Hannibal's letter, and by thus learning the object of the Carthaginian movement, to stand by their determination, and to await the issue of this new hope. At the end of the fifth day, therefore, after his arrival on the ground, Hannibal ordered his men to take their supper as usual, and leave their watch-fires burning; and started with such secrecy that none of the enemy knew what was happening. He took the road through Samnium, and marched at a great pace and without stopping, his skirmishers always keeping before him to reconnoiter and occupy all the posts along the route: and while those in Rome had their thoughts still wholly occupied with Capua,[87] and the campaign there, he crossed the Anio without being observed; and having arrived at a distance of not more than forty stades from Rome, there pitched his camp.

On this being known at Rome, the utmost confusion and terror prevailed among the inhabitants—this movement of Hannibal's being as unexpected as it was sudden; for he

had never been so close to the city before. At the same time their alarm was increased by the idea at once occurring to them that he would not have ventured so near if it were not that the armies at Capua were destroyed. Accordingly, the men at once went to line the walls, and the points of vantage in the defenses of the town; while the women went round to the temples of the gods and implored their protection, sweeping the pavements of the [180] temples with their hair: for this is their customary way of behaving when any serious danger comes upon their country. But just as Hannibal had encamped, and was intending to attempt the city itself next day, an extraordinary coincidence occurred which proved fortunate for the preservation of Rome.

For Gnæus Fulvius and Publius Sulpicius, having already enrolled one consular army, had bound the men with the usual oath to appear at Rome armed on that very day; and were also engaged on that day in drawing out the lists and testing the men for the other army: whereby it so happened that a large number of men had been collected in Rome spontaneously in the very nick of time. These troops the Consuls boldly led outside the walls, and, entrenching themselves there, checked Hannibal's intended movement. For the Carthaginians were at first eager to advance, and were not altogether without hope that they would be able to take Rome itself by assault. But when they saw the enemy drawn up in order, and learned before long from a prisoner what had happened, they abandoned the idea of attacking the city, and began devastating the country-side instead, and setting fire to the houses. In these first raids they collected an innumerable amount of booty, for the field of plunder upon which they were entered was one into which no one had ever expected an enemy to set foot.

But presently, when the Consuls ventured to encamp within ten stades of him, Hannibal broke up his quarters before daylight. He did so for three reasons: first, because he had collected an enormous booty; secondly, because he had given up all hope of taking [181] Rome; and lastly, because he reckoned that the time had now come at which he expected, according to his original idea, that Appius would have learned the danger threatening Rome, and would have raised the siege of Capua, and come with his whole force to the relief of the city; or at any rate would hurry up with the greater part, leaving a detachment to carry on the siege. Publius had caused the bridges over the Anio to be broken down, and thus compelled Hannibal to get his army across by a ford; and he now attacked the Carthaginians as they were engaged in making the passage of the stream and caused them great distress. They were not able however to strike an important blow, owing to the number of Hannibal's cavalry, and the activity of the Numidians in every part of the field. But before retiring to their camp they wrested the greater part of the booty from them, and killed about three hundred men; and then, being convinced that the Carthaginians were beating a hasty retreat in a panic, they followed in their rear, keeping along the line of hills. At first Hannibal continued to march at a rapid pace, being anxious to meet the force which he expected; but at the end of the fifth day, being informed that Appius had not left the siege of Capua, he halted; and waiting for the enemy to come up, made an attack upon his camp before daylight, killed a large number of them, and drove the rest out of their camp. But when day broke, and he saw the Romans in a strong position upon a steep hill, to which they had retired, he decided not to continue his attack upon them; but marching through Daunia and Bruttium he appeared at Rhegium so unexpectedly that [182] he was within an ace of capturing the city, and did cut off all who were out in the country; and during this excursion captured a very large number of the Rhegini....

Who could refrain from speaking in terms of admiration of this great man's strategic skill courage and ability when one looks to the length of time during which he displayed those qualities; and realizes to oneself the pitched battles, the skirmishes and sieges, the revolutions and counter-revolutions of states, the vicissitudes of fortune, and in fact the course of his design and its execution in its entirety? For sixteen continuous years Hannibal maintained the war with Rome in Italy without once releasing his army from service in the field, but keeping those vast numbers under control, like a good pilot, without any sign of disaffection toward himself or toward each other, tho he had troops in his service who, so far from being of the same tribe, were not even of the same race. He had Libyans, Iberians, Ligurians, Celts, Phœnicians, Italians, Greeks, who had naturally

nothing in common with each other, neither laws, nor customs, nor language. Yet the skill of the commander was such that these differences, so manifold and so wide, did not disturb the obedience to one word of command and to a single will. And yet circumstances were not by any means unvarying: for tho the breeze of fortune often set strongly in his favor, it as often also blew in exactly the opposite direction. There is therefore good ground for admiring Hannibal's display of ability in campaign; and there can be no fear in saying that, if he had reserved his attack upon the Romans until he had first subdued other parts of the world, there is not one of his projects which would have eluded his grasp. As it was, he began with those whom he should have attacked last, and accordingly began and ended his career with them.[88]

FOOTNOTES:

[86] From Book IX of the "Histories." Translated by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh.

[87] Capua lies seventeen miles north of Naples.

III

[183]

THE DEFENSE OF SYRACUSE BY ARCHIMEDES[89]

(214-212 B.C.)

When Epicydes and Hippocrates had occupied Syracuse, and had alienated the rest of the citizens with themselves from the friendship of Rome, the Romans who had already been informed of the murder of Hieronymus, tyrant of Syracuse, appointed Appius Claudius as Pro-prætor to command a land force, while Marcus Claudius Marcellus[90] commanded the fleet. These officers took up a position not far from Syracuse, and determined to assault the town from the land at Hexapylus, and by sea at what was called Stoa Scytice [184] in Achradina, where the wall has its foundation close down to the sea. Having prepared their wicker pent-houses, and darts, and other siege material, they felt confident that, with so many hands employed, they would in five days get their works in such an advanced state as to give them the advantage over the enemy. But in this they did not take into account the abilities of Archimedes;[91] nor calculate on the truth that, in certain circumstances, the genius of one man is more effective that any numbers whatever. However they now learned it by experience. The city was strong from the fact of its encircling wall lying along a chain of hills with overhanging brows, the ascent of which was no easy task, even with no one to hinder it, except at certain definite points. Taking advantage of this, Archimedes had constructed such defenses both in the town, and at the places where an attack might be made by sea, that the garrison would have everything at hand which they might require at any moment, and be ready to meet without delay whatever the enemy might attempt against them.

The attack was begun by Appius bringing his pent-houses, and scaling ladders, and attempting to fix the latter against that part of the wall which abuts on Hexapylus toward the east. At the same time Marcus Claudius Marcellus with sixty quinqueremes was making a descent upon Achradina. Each of these vessels were full of men armed with [185] bows and slings and javelins, with which to dislodge those who fought on the battlements. As well as these vessels he had eight quinqueremes in pairs. Each pair had had their oars removed, one on the larboard and the other on the starboard side, and then had been lasht together on the sides thus left bare. On these double vessels, rowed by the outer oars of each of the pair, they brought up under the walls some engines called "Sambucæ," the construction of which was as follows: A ladder was made four feet

broad, and of a height to reach the top of the wall from the place where its foot had to rest; each side of the ladder was protected by a railing, and a covering or pent-house was added overhead. It was then placed so that its foot rested across the sides of the lasht-together vessels, which touched each other with its other extremity protruding a considerable way beyond the prows.

On the tops of the mast pulleys were fixt with ropes: and when the engines were about to be used, men standing on the sterns of the vessels drew the ropes tied to the head of the ladder, while others standing on the prows assisted the raising of the machine and kept it steady with long poles. Having then brought the ships close in shore by using the outer oars of both vessels they tried to let the machine down upon the wall. At the head of the ladder was fixt a wooden stage secured on three sides by wicker-shields, upon which stood four men who fought and struggled with those who tried to prevent the Sambuca from being made to rest on the battlements. But when they have fixt it and so got above the level of the top of the wall, the four men unfasten the wicker-shields from either side [186] of the stage and walk out upon the battlements or towers as the case may be; they are followed by their comrades coming up by the Sambuca, since the ladder's foot is safely secured with ropes and stands upon both the ships. This construction has got the name of "Sambuca," or "Harp," for the natural reason, that when it is raised the combination of the ship and ladder has very much the appearance of such an instrument.

With such contrivances and preparations were the Romans intending to assault the towers. But Archimedes had constructed catapults to suit every range; and as the ships sailing up were still at a considerable distance, he so wounded the enemy with stones and darts, from the tighter wound and longer engines as to harass and perplex them to the last degree; and when these began to carry over their heads, he used smaller engines graduated according to the range required from time to time, and by this means caused so much confusion among them as to altogether check their advance and attack; and finally Marcellus was reduced in despair to bringing up his ships under cover of night. But when they had come close to land, and so too near to be hit by the catapults, they found that Archimedes had prepared another contrivance against the soldiers who fought from the decks. He had pierced the wall as high as a man's stature with numerous loop-holes, which, on the outside, were about as big as the palm of the hand. Inside the wall he stationed archers and cross-bows, or scorpions, and by the volleys discharged through these he made the marines useless. By these means he not only baffled the enemy, [187] whether at a distance or close at hand, but also killed the greater number of them. As often, too, as they tried to work their Sambucæ, he had engines ready all along the walls, not visible at other times, but which suddenly reared themselves above the wall from the inside, when the moment for their use had come, and stretched their beams far over the battlements, some of them carrying stones weighing as much as ten talents, and others great masses of lead. So whenever the Sambucæ were approaching, these beams swung round on their pivot the required distance, and by means of a rope running through a pulley dropt the stone, upon the Sambucæ, with the result that it not only smashed the machine itself to pieces, but put the ship also and all on board into the most serious danger.

Other machines which he invented were directed against storming parties, who, advancing under the protection of pent-houses, were secured by them from being hurt by missiles shot through the walls. Against these he either shot stones big enough to drive the marines from the prow; or let down an iron hand swung on a chain, by which the man who guided the crane, having fastened on some part of the prow where he could get a hold, prest down the lever of the machine inside the wall; and when he had thus lifted the prow and made the vessel rest upright on its stern, he fastened the lever of his machine so that it could not be moved; and then suddenly slackened the hand and chain by means of a rope and pulley. The result was that many of the vessels heeled over and fell on their sides; some completely capsized; while the greater number, by their prows coming down [188] suddenly from a height, dipt low in the sea, shipped a great quantity of water, and became a scene of the utmost confusion. Tho reduced almost to despair by these baffling inventions of Archimedes, and tho he saw that all his attempts were repulsed by the

garrison with mockery on their part and loss to himself, Marcellus could not yet refrain from making a joke at his own expense, saying that "Archimedes was using his ships to ladle out the sea-water, but that his 'harps' not having been invited to the party were buffeted and turned out with disgrace." Such was the end of the attempt at storming Syracuse by sea.

Nor was Appius Claudius more successful. He, too, was compelled by similar difficulties to desist from the attempt; for while his men were still at a considerable distance from the wall, they began falling by the stones and shots from the engines and catapults. The volleys of missiles, indeed, were extraordinarily rapid and sharp, for their construction had been provided for by all the liberality of a Hiero, and had been planned and engineered by the skill of an Archimedes. Moreover, when they did at length get near the walls, they were prevented from making an assault by the unceasing fire through the loop-holes, which I mentioned before; or if they tried to carry the place under cover of pent-houses, they were killed by the stones and beams let down upon their heads. The garrison also did them no little damage with those hands at the end of their engines; for they used to lift the men, armor, and all, into the air, and then throw them down. At last Appius retired into the camp, and summoning the Tribunes to a council of war, decided to [189] try every possible means of taking Syracuse except a storm. And this decision they carried out; for during the eight months of siege which followed, tho there was no stratagem or measure of daring which they did not attempt, they never again ventured to attempt a storm. So true it is that one man and one intellect, properly qualified for the particular undertaking, is a host in itself and of extraordinary efficacy. In this instance, at any rate, we find the Romans confident that their forces by land and sea would enable them to become masters of the town, if only one old man could be got rid of; while as long as he remained there, they did not venture even to think of making the attempt, at least by any method which made it possible for Archimedes to oppose them. They believed, however, that their best chance of reducing the garrison was by a failure of provisions sufficient for so large a number as were within the town; they therefore relied upon this hope, and with their ships tried to cut off their supplies by sea, and with their army by land.

FOOTNOTES:

[88] This paragraph is taken from Book XI.

[89] From Book VIII of the "Histories." Translated by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh. Syracuse was now an ally of Carthage in the Punic war, but in the earlier Punic war had been an ally of Rome.

[90] A celebrated statesman and general, born before 268 B.C., died in 208; five times Consul; defeated the Gauls; defended Nola; captured Syracuse; commanded Apulia against Hannibal; killed in a skirmish at Venusia.

[91] The celebrated geometrician, who discovered the principle of the lever, and after detecting an alloy uttered the famous exclamation "Eureka." He was killed at the siege of Syracuse.

PLUTARCH [190]

Born in Chæronea in Bœotia about 46 A.D.; died in 125; celebrated for his forty-six "Lives of Greeks and Romans," and for works on philosophical and moral subjects; settled at Athens at the time of Nero's visit in 66, and traveled in Greece, Egypt and Italy; being in Rome during the reign of

Vespasian; lived at Chæronea in the latter part of his life where he was elected archon.[92]

I

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO COMPARED[93]

Furthermore, leaving the comparison aside of the difference of their eloquence in their orations: methinks I may say thus much of them. That Demosthenes did wholly employ all his wit and learning (natural or artificial) unto the art of rhetoric, and that in force, and vertue of eloquence, he did excel all the orators in his time: and for gravity and magnificent style, all those also that only write for shew or ostentation: and for sharpness [191] and art, all the sophisters and masters of rhetoric. And that Cicero was a man generally learned in all sciences, and that had studied divers books, as appeareth plainly by the sundry books of philosophy of his own making, written after the manner of the Academic philosophers. Furthermore, they may see in his orations he wrote in certain causes to serve him when he pleaded: that he sought occasions in his by-talk to shew men that he was excellently well learned. Furthermore, by their phrases a man may discern some spark of their manners and conditions. For Demosthenes' phrase hath no manner of fineness, jests, nor grace in it, but is altogether grave and harsh, and not only smelleth of the lamp, as Pytheas said when he mocked him, but sheweth a great drinker of water, extreme pains, and therewith also a sharp and sour nature.

But Cicero oftentimes fell from pleasant taunts, unto plain scurrility: and turning all his pleadings of matters of importance, to sport and laughter, having a grace in it, many times he did forget the comeliness that became a man of his calling. As in his oration for Cælius, where he saith, It is no marvel if in so great abundance of wealth and fineness he give himself a little to take his pleasure: and that it was a folly not to use pleasures lawful [192] and tolerable, sith the famousest philosophers that ever were, did place the chief felicity of man, to be in pleasure. And it is reported also that Marcus Cato having accused Murena, Cicero being Consul, defended his cause, and in his oration pleasantly girded all the sect of the Stoic philosophers for Cato's sake, for the strange opinions they hold, which they call paradoxes: insomuch as he made all the people and judges also fall a-laughing a good. And Cato himself also smiling a little, said unto them that sat by him: What a laughing and mocking Consul have we, my lords? but letting that pass, it seemeth that Cicero was of a pleasant and merry nature: for his face shewed ever great life and mirth in it. Whereas in Demosthenes' countenance on the other side, they might discern a marvellous diligence and care, and a pensive man, never weary with pain: insomuch that his enemies, (as he reporteth himself) called him a perverse and froward man.

Furthermore, in their writings is discerned, that the one speaketh modestly in his own praise, so as no man can justly be offended with him: and yet not always, but when necessity enforceth him for some matter of great importance, but otherwise very discreet and modest to speak of himself. Cicero in contrary manner, using too often repetition of one self thing in all his orations, shewed an extreme ambition of glory, when incessantly he cried out:

> Let spear and shield give place to gown,
> And give the tongue the laurel crown.

[193]

Yea furthermore, he did not only praise his own acts and deeds, but the orations also which he had written or pleaded, as if he should have contended against Isocrates, or Anaximenes, a master that taught rhetoric, and not to go about to reform the people of Rome.

> Which were both fierce and stout in arms,

And fit to work their enemies harms.

For, as it is requisite for a governor of a commonwealth to seek authority by his eloquence: so, to cover the praise of his own glorious tongue, or as it were to beg it, that sheweth a base mind. And therefore in this point we must confess that Demosthenes is far graver, and of a nobler mind: who declared himself, That all his eloquence came only but by practice, the which also required the favour of his auditory: and further, he thought them fools and madmen (as indeed they be no less) that therefore would make any boast of themselves. In this they were both alike, that both of them had great credit and authority in their orations to the people, and for obtaining that they would propound: insomuch as captains, and they that had armies in their hands, stood in need of their eloquence. As Chares, Diopithes, and Leosthenes, they all were holpen of Demosthenes: and Pompey, and Octavius Cæsar the young man, of Cicero: as Cæsar himself confesseth in his commentaries he wrote unto Agrippa, and Mæcenas. But nothing sheweth a man's nature and condition more, (as it is reported, and so is it true) that when one is in authority: for that bewrayeth his humour, and the affections of his mind, and layeth open [194] all his secret vices in him.

Demosthenes could never deliver any such proof of himself, because he never bare any office, nor was called forward. For he was not general of the army, which he himself had prepared against King Philip. Cicero on the other side being sent Treasurer into Sicily, and Pro-consul into Cilicia and Cappadocia,[94] in such a time as covetousness reigned most: (insomuch that the captains and governors whom they sent to govern their provinces, thinking it villainy and dastardliness to rob, did violently take things by force, at what time also to take bribes was reckoned no shame, but to handle it discreetly, he was the better thought of, and beloved for it) he shewed plainly that he regarded not money, and gave forth many proofs of his courtesy and goodness. Furthermore, Cicero being created Consul by name, but Dictator in deed, having absolute power and authority over all things to suppress the rebellion and conspirators of Catiline: he proved Plato's prophecy true, which was: That the cities are safe from danger, when the chief magistrates and governors (by some good divine fortune) do govern with wisdom and justice. Demosthenes was reproved for his corruption, and selling of his eloquence: because secretly he wrote one oration for Phormio, and another in the self same manner for Apollodorus, they being both adversaries. Further, he was defamed also for receiving money of the king of Persia, and therewithal condemned for the money which he had [195] taken of Harpalus. And though some peradventure would object, that the reports thereof (which are many) do lie: yet they cannot possibly deny this, that Demosthenes had no power to refrain from looking on the presents which divers kings did offer him, praying him to accept them in good part for their sakes: neither was that the part of a man that did take usury by traffick on the sea, the extremest yet of all other.

In contrary manner (as we have said before) it is certain that Cicero being Treasurer, refused the gifts which the Sicilians offered him, there: and the presents also which the king of the Cappadocians offered him whilst he was Pro-consul in Cilicia, and those especially which his friends pressed upon him to take of them, being a great sum of money, when he went as a banished man out of Rome. Furthermore, the banishment of the one was infamous to him, because by judgement he was banished as a thief. The banishment of the other was for as honourable an act as ever he did, being banished for ridding his country of wicked men. And therefore of Demosthenes, there was no speech after he was gone: but for Cicero, all the Senate changed their apparel into black, and determined that they would pass no decree by their authority, before Cicero's banishment was revoked by the people. Indeed Cicero idly passed his time of banishment, and did nothing all the while he was in Macedon: and one of the chiefest acts that Demosthenes did, in all the time that he dealt in the affairs of the commonwealth, was in his banishment. For he went into every city, and did assist the ambassadors of the Grecians, and refused the ambassadors of the Macedonians. In the which he showed himself a [196] better citizen, than either Themistocles, or Alcibiades, in their like fortune and exile. So when he was called home, and returned, he fell again to his old trade which he practiced before, and was ever against Antipater,[95] and the Macedonians. Where Lælius in open

Senate sharply took up Cicero, for that he sat still and said nothing, when that Octavius Cæsar the young man made petition against the law, that he might sue for the Consulship, and being so young, that he had never a hair on his face. And Brutus self also doth reprove Cicero in his letters, for that he had maintained and nourished a more grievous and greater tyranny, than that which they had put down. And last of all, me thinketh the death of Cicero most pitiful, to see an old man carried up and down, (with tender love of his servants) seeking all the ways that might be to fly death, which did not long prevent his natural course: and in the end, old as he was, to see his head so pitifully cut off. Whereas Demosthenes, though he yielded a little, entreating him that came to take him: yet for that he had prepared the poison long before, that he had kept it long, and also used it as he did, he cannot but be marvellously commended for it. For sith the god Neptune denied him the benefit of his sanctuary, he betook him to a greater, and that was death: whereby he saved himself out of the soldiers' hands of the tyrant, and also scorned the bloody cruelty of Antipater.

FOOTNOTES:

[92] Plutarch is read for his matter, rather than for his style. In style as well as for the time in which he lived, he does not belong to the classical writers of Greece. For this reason he may be read in English almost as satisfactorily as in his own language. He is described by Mahaffy as a pure and elevating writer, full of precious information and lofty in his moral tone.

[93] From "The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans, Compared together by that Grave, Learned Philosopher and Historiographer Plutarch of Chæronea." Translated by Sir Thomas North. North was born about 1535, his translation being first published in 1579. Written throughout in the best prose of the Elizabethan period, North's version will always have another and very special interest as the store house from which Shakespeare obtained his knowledge of antiquity. It has been asserted that to this book we really owe the existence of "Julius Cæsar," "Coriolanus," and "Antony and Cleopatra." In "Coriolanus" whole speeches have been taken bodily from North, while in "Antony and Cleopatra" North's diction has been closely followed. North did not translate from the original Greek, but from an old French version by James Amyot, Bishop of Auxerre in the times of Henry II of England. The selections here given are printed with the original punctuation, etc., preserved as specimens of the style of the period.

[94] This and the province of Cilicia lay in the eastern part of Asia Minor.

[95] Antipater was a general of Macedonia under Philip and Alexander the Great and became Regent in 334.

II

[197]

THE ASSASSINATION OF CÆSAR[96]

(44 B.C.)

But Brutus in many other things tasted of the benefit of Cæsar's favor in anything he requested.[97] For if he had listed, he might have been one of Cæsar's chiefest friends, and of greater authority and credit about him. Howbeit Cassius' friends did dissuade him from it[98] (for Cassius and he were not yet reconciled together sithence their first contention and strife for the Prætorship), and prayed him to beware of Cæsar's sweet enticements, and to fly his tyrannical favors: the which they said Cæsar gave him, not to honor his

virtue, but to weaken his constant mind, framing it to the bent of his bow. Now Cæsar on the other side did not trust him overmuch, nor was not without tales brought unto him against him: howbeit he feared his great mind, authority, and friends. Yet on the other side also, he trusted his good-nature, and fair conditions. For, intelligence being brought him one day, that Mark Antony and Dolabella did conspire against him: he answered, That these fat long-haired men made him not afraid, but the lean and whitely-faced fellows, meaning that, by Brutus and Cassius.

At another time also when one accused Brutus unto him, and bade him beware of him: [198]
What, said he again, clapping his hand on his breast: think ye that Brutus will not tarry till this body die? Meaning that none but Brutus after him was meet to have such power as he had. And surely, in my opinion, I am persuaded that Brutus might indeed have come to have been the chiefest man of Rome, if he could have contented himself for a time to have been next unto Cæsar, and to have suffered his glory and authority which he had gotten by his great victories, to consume with time. But Cassius being a choleric man, and hating Cæsar privately, more than he did the tyranny openly: he incensed Brutus against him....

But for Brutus, his friends and countrymen, both by divers procurements, and sundry rumours of the city, and by many bills also, did openly call and procure him to do that he did. For, under the image of his ancestor Junius Brutus, that drave the kings out of Rome, [99] they wrote: Oh that it pleased the gods thou wert now alive, Brutus: and again, that thou wert here among us now. His tribunal (or chair) where he gave audience during the time he was Prætor, was full of such bills: Brutus, thou art asleep, and art not Brutus indeed....

Therefore Cassius considering this matter with himself, did first of all speak to Brutus, since they grew strange together for the suit they had for the Prætorship. So when he was reconciled to him again, and that they had embraced one another: Cassius asked him, If [199]
he were determined to be in the Senate-house, the first day of the month of March, because he heard say that Cæsar's friends should move the council that day, that Cæsar should be called king by the Senate. Brutus answered him, He would not be there. But if we be sent for said Cassius: how then? For myself then said Brutus, I mean not to hold my peace, but to withstand it, and rather die than lose my liberty. Cassius being bold, and taking hold of this word: Why, quoth he, what Roman is he alive that will suffer thee to die for the liberty? What, knowest thou not that thou art Brutus? Thinkest thou that they be cobblers, tapsters, or suchlike base mechanical people, that write these bills and scrolls which are found daily in thy Prætor's chair, and not the noblest men and best citizens that do it? No, be thou well assured, that of other Prætors they look for gifts, common distributions amongst the people, and for common plays, and to see fencers fight at the sharp, to show the people pastime, but at thy hands, they specially require (as a due debt unto them) the taking away of the tyranny, being fully bent to suffer any extremity for thy sake, so that thou wilt show thyself to be the man thou art taken for, and that they hope thou art. Thereupon he kissed Brutus, and embraced him. And so each taking leave of other, they went both to speak with the friends about it....

Now Brutus, who knew very well that for his sake all the noblest, valiantest, and most courageous men of Rome did venture their lives, weighing with himself the greatness of the danger, when he was out of his house, he did so frame and fashion his countenance [200]
and looks, that no man could discern he had anything to trouble his mind. But when night came that he was in his own house, then he was cleaned changed. For, either care did wake him against his will when he could have slept, or else oftentimes of himself he fell into such deep thoughts of this enterprise, casting in his mind all the dangers that might happen, that his wife lying by him, found that there was some marvellous great matter that troubled his mind, not being wont to be in that taking, and that he could not well determine with himself.

His wife Porcia[100] (as we have told you before) was the daughter of Cato, whom Brutus married being his cousin, not a maiden, but a young widow after the death of her first

husband Bibulus, by whom she had also a young son called Bibulus, who afterwards wrote a book of the acts and gests of Brutus, extant at this present day. This young lady being excellently well seen in philosophy, loving her husband well, and being of a noble courage, as she was also wise; because she would not ask her husband what he ailed before she had made some proof by herself, she took a little razor such as barbers occupy to pare men's nails, and causing her maids and women to go out of her chamber, gave herself a great gash withal in her thigh, that she was straight all of a gore-blood, and incontinently after, a vehement fever took her, by reason of the pain of her wound. [201]

Then perceiving her husband was marvellously out of quiet, and that he could take no rest, even in her greatest pain of all, she spake in this sort unto him, "I being, O Brutus," (said she) "the daughter of Cato, was married unto thee, not to be thy bedfellow and companion in bed and at board only, like a harlot, but to be partaker also with thee, of thy good and evil fortune. Now for thyself, I can find no cause of fault in thee touching our match, but for my part, how may I show my duty towards thee, and how much I would do for thy sake, if I cannot constantly bear a secret mischance or grief with thee, that requireth secrecy and fidelity? I confess, that a woman's wit commonly is too weak to keep a secret safely: but yet, Brutus, good education, and the company of virtuous men, have some power to reform the defect of nature. And for myself, I have this benefit, moreover, that I am the daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus. This notwithstanding, I did not trust to any of these things before, until that now I have found by experience, that no pain nor grief whatsoever can overcome me." With those words she showed him her wound on her thigh, and told him what she had done to prove herself. Brutus was amazed to hear what she said unto him, and lifting up his hands to heaven, he besought the gods to give him the grace he might bring his enterprise to so good pass, that he might be found a husband worthy of so noble a wife as Porcia, so he then did comfort her the best he could....

So when this day was come, Brutus went out of his house with a dagger by his side under his long gown, that nobody saw nor knew, but his wife only. The other conspirators were [202] all assembled at Cassius' house, to bring his son into the market-place, who on that day did put on the man's gown, called *toga virilis*, and from thence they came all in a troop together unto Pompey's porch, looking that Cæsar would straight come thither. But here is to be noted, the wonderful assured constancy of these conspirators, in so dangerous and weighty an enterprise as they had undertaken. For many of them being Prætors, by reason of their office, whose duty is to minister justice to everybody: they did not only with great quietness and courtesy hear them that spake unto them, or that plead matters before them, and gave them attentive ear, as if they had had no other matter in their heads: but moreover, they gave just sentence, and carefully despatched the causes before them. So there was one among them, who being condemned in a certain sum of money, refused to pay it, and cried out that he did appeal unto Cæsar. Then Brutus casting his eyes upon the conspirators said, Cæsar shall not let me to see the law executed.

Notwithstanding this, by chance there fell out many misfortunes unto them, which was enough to have marred the enterprise. The first and chiefest was, Cæsar's long tarrying, who came very late to the Senate: for because the signs of the sacrifices appeared unlucky, his wife Calpurnia[101] kept him at home, and the soothsayers bade him beware he went not abroad. The second cause was, when one came unto Casca being a conspirator, and taking him by the hand, said unto him: O Casca, thou keepest it close [203] from me, but Brutus hath told me all. Casca being amazed at it, the other went on with his tale, and said: Why, how now, how cometh it to pass thou art thus rich, that thou dost sue to be Ædile? Thus Casca being deceived by the other's doubtful words, he told them it was a thousand to one, he blabbed not out all the conspiracy. Another Senator called Popilius Lænas, after he had saluted Brutus and Cassius more friendly than he was wont to do: he rounded softly in their ears, and told them, I pray the gods you may go through with that you have taken in hand, but withal, despatch I read you, for your enterprise is bewrayed. When he had said, he presently departed from them, and left them both afraid that their conspiracy would out.

Now in the meantime, there came one of Brutus' men post-haste unto him, and told him his wife was a-dying. For Porcia being very careful and pensive for that which was to come, and being too weak to away with so great and inward grief of mind: she could hardly keep within, but was frightened with every little noise and cry she heard, as those that art taken and possessed with the fury of the Bacchants, asking every man that came from the market-place, what Brutus did, and still sent messenger after messenger, to know what news. At length Cæsar's coming being prolonged as you have heard, Porcia's weakness was not able to hold out any longer, and thereupon she suddenly swooned, that she had no leisure to go to her chamber, but was taken in the midst of her house, where her speech and senses failed her. Howbeit she soon came to her self again, and so was [204] laid in her bed, and tended by her women. When Brutus heard these news, it grieved him, as it is to be presupposed: yet he left not off the care of his country and commonwealth, neither went home to his house for any news he heard.

Now, it was reported that Cæsar was coming in his litter: for he determined not to stay in the Senate all that day (because he was afraid of the unlucky signs of the sacrifices) but to adjourn matters of importance unto the next session and council holden, feigning himself not to be well at ease. When Cæsar came out of his litter: Popilius Lænas, that had talked before with Brutus and Cassius, and had prayed the gods they might bring this enterprise to pass: went unto Cæsar, and kept him a long time with a talk. Cæsar gave good ear unto him. Wherefore the conspirators (if so they should be called) not hearing what he said to Cæsar, but conjecturing by that he had told them a little before, that his talk was none other but the very discovery of their conspiracy: they were afraid every man of them, and one looking in another's face, it was easy to see that they all were of a mind, that it was no tarrying for them till they were apprehended, but rather that they should kill themselves with their own hands. And when Cassius and certain others clapped their hands on their swords under their gowns to draw them: Brutus marking the countenance and gesture of Lænas, and considering that he did use himself rather like an humble and earnest suitor, than like an accuser: he said nothing to his companion (because there were many amongst them that were not of the conspiracy) but with a pleasant countenance [205] encouraged Cassius. And immediately after, Lænas went from Cæsar, and kissed his hand: which shewed plainly that it was for some matter concerning himself, that he had held him so long in talk. Now all the Senators being entered first into this place or chapter-house where the council should be kept, all the other conspirators straight stood about Cæsar's chair, as if they had had something to have said unto him. And some say, that Cassius casting his eyes upon Pompey's image, made his prayer unto it, as if it had been alive. Trebonius on the other side, drew Mark Antony aside, as he came into the house where the Senate sat, and held him with a long talk without.

When Cæsar was come into the house, all the Senate rose to honour him at his coming in. So when he was set, the conspirators flocked about him, and amongst them they presented one Metellus Cimber, who made humble suit for the calling home again of his brother that was banished. They all made as though they were intercessors for him, and took him by the hands, and kissed his head and breast. Cæsar at the first simply refused their kindness and entreaties: but afterwards, perceiving they still pressed on him, he violently thrust them from him. Then Cimber with both his hands plucked Cæsar's gown over his shoulders, and Casca that stood behind him, drew his dagger first, and struck Cæsar upon the shoulder, but gave him no great wound. Cæsar feeling himself hurt, took him straight by the hand he held his dagger in, and cried out in Latin: O traitor, Casca, what doest thou? Casca on the other side cried in Greek, and called his brother to help [206] him. So divers running on a heap together to fly upon Cæsar, he looking about him to have fled, saw Brutus with a sword drawn in his hand ready to strike at him: then he let Casca's hand go, and casting his gown over his face, suffered every man to strike at him that would.

Then the conspirators thronging one upon another because every man was desirous to have a cut at him, so many swords and daggers lighting upon one body, one of them hurt another, and among them Brutus caught a blow on his hand, because he would make one in murthering of him, and all the rest also were every man of them bloodied. Cæsar being

slain in this manner, Brutus standing in the midst of the house, would have spoken, and stayed the other Senators that were not of the conspiracy, to have told them the reason why they had done this fact. But they as men both affrayed and amazed, fled one upon another's neck in haste to get out at the door, and no man followed them. For it was set down, and agreed between them, that they should kill no man but Cæsar only, and should entreat all the rest to defend their liberty.

All the conspirators, but Brutus, determining upon this matter, thought it good also to kill Mark Antony,[102] because he was a wicked man, and that in nature favoured tyranny: besides also, for that he was in great estimation with soldiers, having been conversant of long time amongst them: and specially having a mind bent to great enterprises, he was also of great authority at that time, being Consul with Cæsar. But Brutus would not agree to it. First, for that he said it was not honest: secondly, because he told them there was hope of change in him. For he did not mistrust, but that Mark Antony being a noble-minded and courageous man (when he should know that Cæsar was dead) would willingly help his country to recover her liberty, having them an example unto him, to follow their courage and virtue. So Brutus by this means saved Mark Antony's life, who at that present time disguised himself, and stole away. But Brutus and his consorts, having their swords bloody in their hands, went straight to the Capitol, persuading the Romans, as they went, to take their liberty again.

FOOTNOTES:

[96] From the "Life of Julius Cæsar." Translated by North.

[97] Marcus Junius Brutus had originally been an adherent of Pompey, but after the battle at Pharsalia in 48 B.C., went over to Cæsar, and in 46 became governor of Cisalpine Gaul.

[98] Gaius Cassius Longinus, general and politician, had won distinction in the Parthian war of 53-51 B.C..

[99] Lucius Junius Brutus under whose leadership the Tarquins were expelled and the republic established in 510 B.C..

[100] Brutus first married Claudia, daughter of Appius Claudius, who was Consul in 54 B.C. It was probably in 55 B.C., after Cato's death, that he put away Claudia (for which he was much blamed), and married Porcia, daughter of Cato. Portia was the widow of Bibulus, a colleague of Cæsar in the Consulship of 59 B.C.

[101] Daughter of Calpurnius Piso Cæsonius and married to Cæsar in 59 B.C. She was his second wife, Pompeia, a relative of Pompey the Great, being the first.

[102] Mark Antony was then about forty-four years old. He had commanded the left wing of Cæsar at Pharsalia and became Consul in 44.

III

[207]

CLEOPATRA'S BARGE[103]

Mark Antony being thus inclined, the last and extremest mischief of all other (to wit, the love of Cleopatra) lighted on him, who did waken and stir up many vices yet hidden in him, and were never seen to any: and if any spark of goodness or hope of rising were left him, Cleopatra quenched it straight, and made it worse than before. The manner how he fell in love with her was this. Antony going to make war with the Parthians, sent to [208] command Cleopatra to appear personally before him, when he came into Cilicia, to

answer unto such accusations as were laid against her, being this: that she had aided Cassius and Brutus in their war against him. The messenger sent unto Cleopatra to make this summons unto her, was called Dellius: who when he had thoroughly considered her beauty, the excellent grace and sweetness of her tongue, he nothing mistrusted that Antony would do any hurt to so noble a lady, but rather assured himself, that within few days she should be in great favour with him. Thereupon he did her great honour, and persuaded her to come into Cilicia, as honourably furnished as she could possible, and bade her not to be afraid at all of Antony, for he was a more courteous lord, than any one that she had ever seen.

Cleopatra on the other side believing Dellius' words, and guessing by the former access and credit she had with Julius Cæsar, and Cneius Pompey (the son of Pompey the Great) only for her beauty: she began to have good hope that she might more easily win Antony. For Cæsar and Pompey knew her when she was but a young thing, and knew not then what the world meant: but now she went to Mark Antony at the age when a woman's beauty is at the prime, and she also of best judgement. So, she furnished herself with a world of gifts, store of gold and silver, and of riches and other sumptuous ornaments, as is credible enough she might bring from so great a house, and from so wealthy and rich a realm as Egypt was. But yet she carried nothing with her wherein she trusted more than in her self, and in the charms and enchantment of her passing beauty and grace. [209]

Therefore when she was sent unto by divers letters, both from Antony himself, and also from his friends, she made so light of it and mocked Antony so much, that she disdained to set forward otherwise, but to take her barge in the river of Cydnus, the poop whereof was of gold, the sails of purple, and the oars of silver, which kept stroke in rowing after the sound of the music of flutes, howboys, citherns, viols, and such other instruments as they played upon in the barge. And now for the person of her self: she was laid under a pavilion of cloth of gold of tissue, apparelled and attired like the goddess Venus, commonly drawn in picture: and hard by her, on either hand of her, pretty fair boys apparelled as painters do set forth god Cupid, with little fans in their hands, with the which they fanned wind upon her. Her ladies and gentlewomen also, the fairest of them were apparelled like the nymphs nereids (which are the mermaids of the waters) and like the Graces, some steering the helm, others tending the tackle and ropes of the barge, out of the which there came a wonderful passing sweet savour of perfumes, that perfumed the wharf's side, pestered with innumerable multitudes of people. Some of them followed the barge all alongst the river-side: others also ran out of the city to see her coming in. So that in the end, there ran such multitudes of people one after another to see her, that Antony was left post alone in the market-place, in his imperial seat to give audience: and there went a rumour in the people's mouths, that the goddess Venus was come to play [210] with the god Bacchus, for the general good of all Asia.[104] When Cleopatra landed, Antony sent to invite her to supper to him. But she sent him word again, he should do better rather to come and sup with her. Antony therefore to shew himself courteous unto her at her arrival, was contented to obey her, and went to supper to her: where he found such passing sumptuous fare, that no tongue can express it.

FOOTNOTES:

[103] From the "Life of Mark Antony." Translated by Sir Thomas North.

[104] The following description of Cleopatra's barge, taken from Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," when compared with the foregoing paragraph, will illustrate to the reader the closeness with which Shakespeare followed North:

> "The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
> Burn'd on the water. The poop was beaten gold;
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
> The winds were love-sick with them. The oars were silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,

As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With diverse colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

"Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,
And made their bends adornings. At the helm
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Antony
Enthron'd i' the market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air, which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature."

IV

[211]

THE DEATH OF ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA[105]

When Mark Antony saw that his men did forsake him, and yielded unto Cæsar,[106] and that his footmen were broken and overthrown: he then fled into the city, crying out that Cleopatra had betrayed him unto them, with whom he had made war for her sake. Then she being afraid of his fury, fled into the tomb which she had caused to be made, and there locked the doors unto her, and shut all the springs of the locks with great bolts, and in the meantime sent unto Antony to tell him that she was dead. Antony believing it, said unto himself: What dost thou look for further, Antony, sith spiteful fortune had taken from thee the only joy thou hadst, for whom thou yet reservedst thy life? when he had said these words, he went into a chamber and unarmed himself, and being naked said thus: O Cleopatra, it grieveth me not that I have lost thy company, for I will not be long from thee: but I am sorry, that having been so great a captain and emperor, I am indeed condemned to be judged of less courage and noble mind, than a woman.

Now he had a man of his called Eros, whom he loved and trusted much, and whom he had long before caused to swear unto him, that he should kill him when he did command him: and then he willed him to keep his promise. His man drawing his sword, lift it up as [212] though he had meant to have stricken his master: but turning his head at one side he thrust his sword into himself, and fell down dead at his master's foot. Then said Antony, O noble Eros, I thank thee for this, and it is valiantly done of thee, to shew me what I should do to my self, which thou couldst not do for me. Therewithal he took his sword, and thrust it into his belly, and so fell down upon a little bed. The wound he had killed him not presently, for the blood stinted a little when he was laid: and when he came somewhat to himself again, he prayed them that were about him to despatch him. But they all fled out of the chamber, and left him crying out and tormenting himself: until at last there came a secretary unto him called Diomedes, who was commanded to bring him unto the tomb or monument where Cleopatra was.

When he heard that she was alive, he very earnestly prayed his men to carry his body thither, and so he was carried in his men's arms into the entry of the monument. Notwithstanding, Cleopatra would not open the gates, but came to the high windows, and cast out certain chains and ropes, in the which Antony was trussed: and Cleopatra her own self, with two women only, which she had suffered to come with her into these monuments, triced Antony up. They that were present to behold it, said they never saw so pitiful a sight. For, they plucked up poor Antony all bloody as he was, and drawing on with pangs of death, who holding up his hands to Cleopatra raised up himself as well as he could. It was a hard thing for these women to do, to lift him up: but Cleopatra stooping [213] down with her head, putting to all her strength to her uttermost power, did lift him up with much ado, and never let go her hold, with the help of the women beneath that bade her be of good courage, and were as sorry to see her labour so, as she her self.

So when she had gotten him in after that sort, and laid him on a bed: she rent her garments upon him, clapping her breast, and scratching her face and stomach. Then she dried up his blood that had berayed his face, and called him her lord, her husband, and emperor, forgetting her own misery and calamity, for the pity and compassion she took of him. Antony made her cease her lamenting, and called for wine, either because he was athirst, or else for that he thought thereby to hasten his death. When he had drunk, he earnestly prayed her, and persuaded her, that she would seek to save her life, if she could possible, without reproach and dishonour: and that chiefly she should trust Proculeius above any man else about Cæsar. And as for himself, that she should not lament nor sorrow for the miserable change of his fortune at the end of his days: but rather that she should think him the more fortunate, for the former triumphs and honours he had received, considering that while he lived he was the noblest and greatest prince of the world, and that now he was overcome, not cowardly, but valiantly, a Roman by another Roman.

As Antony gave the last gasp, Proculeius came that was sent from Cæsar. For after Antony had thrust his sword in himself, as they carried him into the tombs and monuments of Cleopatra, one of his guard called Dercetæus, took his sword with the [214] which he had stricken himself, and hid it: then he secretly stole away, and brought Octavius Cæsar the first news of his death, and shewed him his sword that was bloodied. Cæsar hearing these news, straight withdrew himself into a secret place of his tent, and there burst out with tears, lamenting his hard and miserable fortune, that had been his friend and brother-in-law,[107] his equal in the empire, and companion with him in sundry great exploits and battels. Then he called for all his friends, and shewed them the letters Antony had written to him, and his answers also sent him again, during their quarrel and strife: and how fiercely and proudly the other answered him, to all just and reasonable matters he wrote unto him.

After this, he sent Proculeius, and commanded him to do what he could possible to get Cleopatra alive, fearing lest otherwise all the treasure would be lost: and furthermore, he thought that if he could take Cleopatra, and bring her alive to Rome, she would marvellously beautify and set out his triumph. But Cleopatra would never put her self into Proculeius' hands, although they spake together. For Proculeius came to the gates that were very thick and strong, and surely barred, but yet there were some crannies through the which her voice might be heard, and so they without understood, that Cleopatra demanded the kingdom of Egypt for her sons: and that Proculeius answered her, That she should be of good cheer, and not be affrayed to refer all unto Cæsar. After he had viewed the place very well, he came and reported her answer unto Cæsar. Who [215] immediately sent Gallus to speak once again with her, and bade him purposely hold her with talk, whilst Proculeius did set up a ladder against that high window, by the which Antony was triced up, and came down into the monument with two of his men hard by the gate, where Cleopatra stood to hear what Gallus said unto her.

One of her women which was shut in her monuments with her, saw Proculeius by chance as he came down, and shrieked out: O poor Cleopatra, thou art taken. Then when she saw Proculeius behind her as she came from the gate, she thought to have stabbed her self in

with a short dagger she wore of purpose by her side. But Proculeius came suddenly upon her, and taking her by both the hands, said unto her: Cleopatra, first thou shalt do thy self great wrong, and secondly unto Cæsar: to deprive him of the occasion and opportunity, openly to shew his bounty and mercy, and to give his enemies cause to accuse the most courteous and noble prince that ever was, and to appeach him, as though he were a cruel and merciless man, that were not to be trusted. So even as he spake the word, he took her dagger from her, and shook her clothes for fear of any poison hidden about her. Afterwards Cæsar sent one of his enfranchised men called Epaphroditus, whom he straightly charged to look well unto her, and to beware in any case that she made not her self away: and for the rest, to use her with all the courtesy possible.

And for himself, he in the meantime entered the city of Alexandria, and as he went, talked with the philosopher Arrius, and held him by the hand, to the end that his countrymen should reverence him the more, because they saw Cæsar so highly esteem [216] and honour him. Then he went into the shew-place of exercises, and so up to his chair of state which was prepared for him of a great height: and there according to his commandment, all the people of Alexandria were assembled, who quaking for fear, fell down on their knees before him, and craved mercy. Cæsar bade them all stand up, and told them openly that he forgave the people, and pardoned the felonies and offences they had committed against him in this war. First, for the founder sake of the same city, which was Alexander the Great: secondly, for the beauty of the city, which he much esteemed and wondered at: thirdly, for the love he bare unto his very friend Arrius. Thus did Cæsar honour Arrius, who craved pardon for himself and many others, and especially for Philostratus, the eloquentest man of all the sophisters and orators of his time, for present and sudden speech: howbeit he falsely named himself an academic philosopher. Therefore, Cæsar that hated his nature and conditions, would not hear his suit. Thereupon he let his grey beard grow long, and followed Arrius step by step in a long mourning gown, still buzzing in his ears this Greek verse:

> A wise man if that he be wise indeed,
> May by a wise man have the better speed.

Cæsar understanding this, not for the desire he had to deliver Philostratus of his fear, as to rid Arrius of malice and envy that might have fallen out against him: he pardoned him.

Now touching Antony's sons, Antyllus, his eldest son by Fulvia was slain, because his [217] schoolmaster Theodorus did betray him unto the soldiers, who strake off his head. And the villain took a precious stone of great value from his neck, the which he did sew in his girdle, and afterwards denied that he had it: but it was found about him, and so Cæsar trussed him up for it. For Cleopatra's children, they were very honourably kept, with their governors and train that waited on them. But for Cæsarion, who was said to be Julius Cæsar's son:[108] his mother Cleopatra had sent him unto the Indians through Ethiopia, with a great sum of money. But one of his governors also called Rhodon, even such another as Theodorus, persuaded him to return into his country, and told him that Cæsar sent for him to give him his mother's kingdom. So, as Cæsar was determining with himself what he should do, Arrius said unto him:

> Too many Cæsars is not good.

Alluding unto a certain verse of Homer that saith:

> Too many lords doth not well.

Therefore Cæsar did put Cæsarion to death, after the death of his mother Cleopatra. Many princes, great kings and captains did crave Antony's body of Octavius Cæsar, to [218] give him honourable burial: but Cæsar would never take it from Cleopatra, who did sumptuously and royally bury him with her own hands, whom Cæsar suffered to take as much as she would to bestow upon his funerals.

Now was she altogether overcome with sorrow and passion of mind, for she had knocked her breast so pitifully, that she had martyred it, and in divers places had raised ulcers and inflammations, so that she fell into a fever withal: whereof she was very glad, hoping thereby to have good colour to abstain from meat, and that so she might have died easily without any trouble. She had a physician called Olympus, whom she made privy of her intent, to the end he should help her rid her out of her life: as Olympus writeth himself, who wrote a book of all these things. But Cæsar mistrusted the matter, by many conjectures he had, and therefore did put her in fear, and threatened her to put her children to shameful death. With these threats, Cleopatra for fear yielded straight, as she would have yielded unto strokes: and afterwards suffered her self to be cured and dieted as they listed.

Shortly after, Cæsar came himself in person to see her, and to comfort her. Cleopatra being laid upon a little low bed in poor state, when she saw Cæsar come into her chamber, she suddenly rose up, naked in her smock, and fell down at his feet marvellously disfigured: both for that she had plucked her hair from her head, as also for that she had martyred all her face with her nails, and besides, her voice was small and trembling, her eyes sunk into her head with continual blubbering and moreover, they might see the most part of her stomach torn in sunder. To be short, her body was not [219] much better than her mind: yet her good grace and comeliness, and the force of her beauty was not altogether defaced. But notwithstanding this ugly and pitiful state of hers, yet she shewed her self within, by her outward looks and countenance.

When Cæsar had made her lie down again, and sat by her bedside: Cleopatra began to clear and excuse her self for that she had done, laying all to the fear she had of Antony; Cæsar, in contrary manner, reproved her in every point. Then she suddenly altered her speech, and prayed him to pardon her, as though she were affrayed to die, and desirous to live. At length, she gave him a brief and memorial of all the ready money and treasure she had. But by chance there stood Seleucus by, one of her treasurers, who to seem a good servant, came straight to Cæsar to disprove Cleopatra, that she had had not set in all, but kept many things back of purpose. Cleopatra was in such a rage with him, that she flew upon him, and took him by the hair of the head, and boxed him well-favouredly. Cæsar fell a-laughing and parted the fray. Alas, said she, O Cæsar: is not this a great shame and reproach, that thou having vouchsafed to take the pains to come unto me, and has done me this honour, poor wretch, and caitiff creature, brought into this pitiful and miserable state: and that mine own servants should come now to accuse me, though it may be I have reserved some jewels and trifles meet for women, but not for me (poor soul) to set out my self withal, but meaning to give some pretty presents and gifts unto Octavia and Livia, that they making means and intercessions for me to thee, thou [220] mightest yet extend thy favour and mercy upon me? Cæsar was glad to hear her say so, persuading himself thereby that she had yet a desire to save her life. So he made her answer, That he did not only give her that to dispose of at her pleasure, which she had kept back, but further promised to use her more honourably and bountifully that she would think for: and so he took his leave of her, supposing he had deceived her, but indeed he was deceived himself.

There was a young gentleman Cornelius Dolabella,[109] that was of Cæsar's very great familiars, and besides did bear no evil will unto Cleopatra. He sent her word secretly as she had requested him, that Cæsar determined to take his journey through Syria, and that within three days he would send her away before with her children. When this was told Cleopatra, she requested Cæsar that it would please him to suffer her to offer the last oblations of the dead, unto the soul of Antony. This being granted her, she was carried to the place where his tomb was, and there falling down on her knees, embracing the tomb with her women, the tears running down her cheeks, she began to speak in this sort:

"O my dearn lord Antony, not long sithence I buried thee here, being a freewoman: and now I offer unto thee the funeral springlings and oblations, being a captive and prisoner, and yet I am forbidden and kept from tearing and murdering this captive body of mine with blows, which they carefully guard and keep, only to triumph of thee: look therefore [221]

henceforth for no other honours, offerings, nor sacrifices from me, for these are the last which Cleopatra can give thee, sith now they carry her away. Whilst we lived together, nothing could sever our companies: but now at our death, I fear me they will make us change our countries. For as thou being a Roman, has been buried in Egypt: even so wretched creature I, an Egyptian, shall be buried in Italy, which shall be all the good that I have received by thy country. If therefore the gods where thou art now have any power and authority, sith our gods here have forsaken us: suffer not thy true friend and lover to be carried away alive, that in me, they triumph of thee: but receive me with thee, and let me be buried in one self tomb with thee. For though my griefs and miseries be infinite, yet none hath grieved me more, nor that I could less bear withal: than this small time, which I have been driven to live alone without thee."

Then having ended these doleful plaints, and crowned the tomb with garlands and sundry nosegays, and marvellous lovingly embraced the same: she commanded they should prepare her bath, and when she had bathed and washed her self, she fell to her meat, and was sumptuously served. Now whilst she was at dinner, there came a countryman, and brought her a basket. The soldiers that warded at the gate, asked him straight what he had in his basket. He opened the basket, and took out the leaves that covered the figs, and shewed them that they were figs he brought. They all of them marvelled to see so goodly figs. The countryman laughed to hear them, and bade them take some if they would. They [222] believed he told them truly, and so bade him carry them in. After Cleopatra had dined, she sent a certain table written and sealed unto Cæsar, and commanded them all to go out of the tombs where she was, but the two women, then she shut the doors to her. Cæsar when he received this table, and began to read her lamentation and petition, requesting him that he would let her be buried with Antony, found straight what she meant, and thought to have gone thither himself: howbeit he sent one before in all haste that might be, to see what it was.

Her death was very sodain. For those whom Cæsar sent unto her ran thither in all haste possible, and found the soldiers standing at the gate, mistrusting nothing, nor understanding of her death. But when they had opened the doors, they found Cleopatra stark dead, laid upon a bed of gold, attired and arrayed in her royal robes, and one of her two women, which was called Iras, dead at her feet: and her other woman called Charmion half-dead, and trembling, trimming the diadem which Cleopatra wore upon her head. One of the soldiers seeing her, angrily said unto her: Is that well done Charmion? Very well said she again, and meet for a princess descended from the race of so many noble kings. She said no more, but fell down dead hard by the bed.

FOOTNOTES:

[105] From the "Life of Mark Antony." Translated by Sir Thomas North.

[106] That is Octavius, afterward the Emperor Augustus.

[107] Antony's mother was Julia, sister of Julius Cæsar; his wife was Octavia, sister of Octavius, the Emperor Augustus.

[108] Cæsarion was born in 47 B.C., and is believed to have gone to Rome with his mother Cleopatra in the following year. It has been pointed out that there could be no reason for putting Cæsarion to death as a possible competitor with Octavius at Rome, for tho Octavius was only the nephew of Julius Cæsar, Cæsarion, his son, was not a Roman citizen. Inasmuch, however, as it was the object of Octavius to retain Egypt, Cæsarion might have been an obstacle to him there.

[109] A son of the elder Dolabella by his first marriage. Dolabella the elder married Cicero's daughter Tullia, and became one of Cæsar's murderers.

EPICTETUS

[223]

Born, about the middle of the first century, A.D., in Hierapolis, Phrygia; originally a slave, but became a freedman of Epaphroditus, a favorite of the emperor Nero; a pupil of Musonius Rufus; taught philosophy at Rome; banished with other philosophers by Domitian and settled in Nicopolis, Epirus, where he taught philosophy, his doctrines being compiled by his pupil Arrian, the historian; he wrote nothing himself.

I

OF FREEDOM[110]

He is free who lives as he likes; who is not subject to compulsion, to restraint, or to violence; whose pursuits are unhindered, his desires successful, his aversions unincurred. Who, then, would wish to lead a wrong course of life? "No one." Who would live deceived, erring, unjust, dissolute, discontented, dejected? "No one." No wicked man, then, lives as he likes; therefore no such man is free. And who would live in sorrow, fear, envy, pity, with disappointed desires and unavailing aversions? "No one." Do we then find any of the wicked exempt from these evils? "Not one." Consequently, then, they are [224] not free.

If some person who has been twice Consul should hear this, he will forgive you, provided you add, "but you are wise, and this has no reference to you." But if you tell him the truth, that, in point of slavery, he does not necessarily differ from those who have been thrice sold, what but chastisement can you expect? "For how," he says, "am I a slave? My father was free, my mother free. Besides, I am a senator, too, and the friend of Cæsar, and have been twice Consul, and have myself many slaves." In the first place, most worthy sir, perhaps your father too was a slave of the same kind; and your mother, and your grandfather, and all your series of ancestors. But even were they ever so free, what is that to you? For what if they were of a generous, you of a mean spirit; they brave, and you a coward; they sober, and you dissolute?

"But what," he says, "has this to do with my being a slave?" Is it no part of slavery to act against your will, under compulsion, and lamenting? "Be it so. But who can compel me but the master of all, Cæsar?" By your own confession, then, you have one master; and let not his being, as you say, master of all, give you any comfort; for then you are merely a slave in a large family. Thus the Nicopolitans, too, frequently cry out, "By the genius of Cæsar we are free!"

For the present, however, if you please, we will let Cæsar alone. But tell me this. Have you never been in love with any one, either of a servile or liberal condition? "Why, what has that to do with being slave or free?" Were you never commanded anything by your [225] mistress that you did not choose? Have you never flattered your fair slave? Have you never kissed her feet? And yet if you were commanded to kiss Cæsar's feet, you would think it an outrage and an excess of tyranny. What else is this than slavery? Have you never gone out by night where you did not desire? Have you never spent more than you chose? Have you not sometimes uttered your words with sighs and groans? Have you never borne to be reviled and shut out-of-doors? But if you are ashamed to confess your own follies, see what Thrasonides says and does; who, after having fought more battles perhaps than you, went out by night, when [his slave] Geta would not dare to go; nay, had he been compelled to do it, would have gone bewailing and lamenting the bitterness of servitude. And what says he afterward? "A contemptible girl has enslaved me, whom no enemy ever enslaved." Wretch! to be the slave of a girl and a contemptible girl too! Why, then, do you still call yourself free? Why do you boast your military expeditions? Then

he calls for a sword, and is angry with the person who, out of kindness, denies it; and sends presents to her who hates him; and begs, and weeps, and then again is elated on every little success. But what elation? Is he raised above desire or fear?

Consider what is our idea of freedom in animals. Some keep tame lions, and feed them and even lead them about; and who will say that any such lion is free? Nay, does he not live the more slavishly the more he lives at ease? And who that had sense and reason would wish to be one of those lions? Again, how much will caged birds suffer in trying to [226] escape? Nay, some of them starve themselves rather than undergo such a life; others are saved only with difficulty and in a pining condition; and the moment they find any opening, out they go. Such a desire have they for their natural freedom, and to be at their own disposal, and unrestrained. "And what harm can this confinement do you?" "What say you? I was born to fly where I please, to live in the open air, to sing when I please. You deprive me of all this, and then ask what harm I suffer?"

Hence we will allow those only to be free who will not endure captivity, but, so soon as they are taken, die and escape. Thus Diogenes somewhere says that the only way to freedom is to die with ease. And he writes to the Persian king, "You can no more enslave the Athenians than you can fish." "How? Can I not get possession of them?" "If you do," said he, "they will leave you and be gone like fish. For catch a fish, and it dies. And if the Athenians, too, die as soon as you have caught them, of what use are your warlike preparations?" This is the voice of a free man who had examined the matter in earnest, and, as it might be expected, found it all out. But if you seek it where it is not, what wonder if you never find it?

A slave wishes to be immediately set free. Think you it is because he is desirous to pay his fee [of manumission] to the officer? No, but because he fancies that, for want of acquiring his freedom, he has hitherto lived under restraint and unprosperously. "If I am once set free," he says, "it is all prosperity; I care for no one; I can speak to all as being [227] their equal and on a level with them. I go where I will, I come when and how I will." He is at last made free, and presently having nowhere to eat he seeks whom he may flatter, with whom he may sup. He then either submits to the basest and most infamous degradation, and if he can obtain admission to some great man's table, falls into a slavery much worse than the former; or perhaps, if the ignorant fellow should grow rich, he dotes upon some girl, laments, and is unhappy, and wishes for slavery again. "For what harm did it do me? Another clothed me, another shod me, another fed me, another took care of me when I was sick. It was but in a few things, by way of return, I used to serve him. But now, miserable wretch! what do I suffer, in being a slave to many, instead of one! Yet, if I can be promoted to equestrian rank, I shall live in the utmost prosperity and happiness." In order to obtain this, he first deservedly suffers; and as soon as he has obtained it, it is all the same again. "But then," he says, "if I do but get a military command, I shall be delivered from all my troubles." He gets a military command. He suffers as much as the vilest rogue of a slave; and, nevertheless, he asks for a second command and a third; and when he has put the finishing touch, and is made a senator, then he is a slave indeed. When he comes into the public assembly, it is then that he undergoes his finest and most splendid slavery.

[It is needful] not to be foolish, but to learn what Socrates taught, the nature of things; and not rashly to apply general principles to particulars. For the cause of all human evils [228] is the not being able to apply general principles to special cases. But different people have different grounds of complaint; one, for instance, that he is sick. That is not the trouble; it is in his principles. Another, that he is poor; another, that he has a harsh father and mother; another, that he is not in the good graces of Cæsar. This is nothing else but not understanding how to apply our principles. For who has not an idea of evil, that it is hurtful; that it is to be avoided; that it is by all means to be prudently guarded against? One principle does not contradict another, except when it comes to be applied. What, then, is this evil—thus hurtful and to be avoided? "Not to be the friend of Cæsar," says some one. He is gone; he has failed in applying his principles; he is embarrassed; he seeks what is nothing to the purpose. For if he comes to be Cæsar's friend, he is still no

nearer to what he sought. For what is it that every man seeks? To be secure, to be happy, to do what he pleases without restraint and without compulsion. When he becomes the friend of Cæsar, then does he cease to be restrained; to be compelled? Is he secure? Is he happy? Whom shall we ask? Whom can we better credit than this very man who has been his friend? Come forth and tell us whether you sleep more quietly now than before you were the friend of Cæsar. You presently hear him cry, "Leave off, for Heaven's sake! and do not insult me. You know not the miseries I suffer; there is no sleep for me; but one comes and says that Cæsar is already awake; another, that he is just going out. Then follow perturbations, then cares." Well, and when did you use to sup the more pleasantly —formerly, or now? Hear what he says about this too. When he is not invited, he is distracted; and if he is, he sups like a slave with his master, solicitous all the while not to say or do anything foolish. And what think you? Is he afraid of being whipt like a slave! No such easy penalty. No; but rather, as becomes so great a man, Cæsar's friend, of losing his head. And when did you bathe the more quietly; when did you perform your exercises the more at your leisure; in short, which life would you rather wish to live—your present, or the former? I could swear there is no one so stupid and insensible as not to deplore his miseries, in proportion as he is the more the friend of Cæsar.

Since, then, neither they who are called kings nor the friends of kings live as they like, who, then, after all, is free?...

FOOTNOTES:

[110] From the "Discourses." Translated by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. Copyright, 1865 and 1890, by Little, Brown & Co. Epictetus has been valued not alone as an exposition of the Stoic philosophy, but as a specimen of Greek of the later or Silver Age. Marcus Aurelius, who in a later generation wrote in Greek himself, is said to have ranked Epictetus with Socrates as a teacher. Origen, the early Christian father, asserted that his writings had been of more value to the world's morals than those of Plato.

II

[229]

OF FRIENDSHIP[111]

To whatever objects a person devotes his attention, these objects he probably loves. Do men ever devote their attention, then, to [what they think] evils? By no means. Or even to things indifferent? No, nor this. It remains, then, that good must be the sole object of their attention; and if of their attention, of their love too. Whoever, therefore, understands [230] good, is capable likewise of love; and he who can not distinguish good from evil, and things indifferent from both, how is it possible that he can love? The wise person alone, then, is capable of loving.

"How so? I am not this wise person, yet I love my child."

I protest it surprizes me that you should, in the first place, confess yourself unwise. For in what are you deficient? Have not you the use of your senses? Do you not distinguish the semblances of things? Do you not provide such food and clothing and habitation as are suitable to you? Why then do you confess that you want wisdom? In truth, because you are often struck and disconcerted by semblances, and their speciousness gets the better of you; and hence you sometimes suppose the very same things to be good, then evil, and lastly, neither; and, in a word, you grieve, you fear, you envy, you are disconcerted, you change. Is it from this that you confess yourself unwise? And are you not changeable too in love? Riches, pleasure, in short, the very same things, you sometimes esteem good,

and at other times evil. And do you not esteem the same persons too alternately as good and bad, at one time treating them with kindness, at another with enmity; at one time commending, and at another time censuring them?

"Yes. This too is the case with me."

Well, then; can he who is deceived in another be his friend, think you?

"No, surely."

Or does he who loves him with a changeable affection bear him genuine good-will? [231]

"Nor he, neither."

Or he who now vilifies, then admires him?

"Nor he."

Do you not often see little dogs caressing and playing with each other, so that you would say nothing could be more friendly? But to learn what this friendship is, throw a bit of meat between them, and you will see. Do you too throw a bit of an estate betwixt you and your son, and you will see that he will quickly wish you under ground, and you him; and then you, no doubt, on the other hand will exclaim, What a son have I brought up! He would bury me alive! Throw in a pretty girl, and the old fellow and the young one will both fall in love with her; or let fame or danger intervene, the words of the father of Admetus will be yours:

> "You love to see the light. Doth not your father?
> You fain would still behold it. Would not he?"

Do you suppose that he did not love his own child when it was little; that he was not in agonies when it had a fever, and often wished to undergo that fever in its stead? But, after all, when the trial comes home, you see what expressions he uses. Were not Eteocles and Polynices born of the same mother and of the same father? Were they not brought up, and did they not live and eat and sleep, together? Did not they kiss and fondle each other? So that any one, who saw them, would have laughed at all the paradoxes which philosophers utter about love. And yet when a kingdom, like a bit of meat, was thrown betwixt them, see what they say— [232]

Polynices. Where wilt thou stand before the towers?

Eteocles. Why askest thou this of me?

Polynices. I will oppose myself to thee, to slay thee.

Eteocles. Me too the desire of this seizes.

Such are the prayers they offer. Be not therefore deceived. No living being is held by anything so strongly as by its own needs. Whatever therefore appears a hindrance to these, be it brother or father or child or mistress or friend, is hated, abhorred, execrated; for by nature it loves nothing like its own needs. This motive is father and brother and family and country and God. Whenever, therefore, the gods seem to hinder this, we vilify even them, and throw down their statues, and burn their temples; as Alexander ordered the temple of Æsculapius to be burnt, because he had lost the man he loved.

When, therefore, any one identifies his interest with those of sanctity, virtue, country, parents, and friends, all these are secured; but whenever he places his interest in anything else than friends, country, family and justice, then these all give way, borne down by the weight of self-interest. For wherever I and mine are placed, thither must every living being gravitate. If in body, that will sway us; if in our own will, that; if in externals, these. If, therefore, I rest my personality in the will, then only shall I be a friend, a son, or a father, such as I ought. For in that case it will be for my interest to preserve the faithful, the modest, the patient, the abstinent, the beneficent character; to keep the relations of life

inviolate. But if I place my personality in one thing, and virtue in another, the doctrine of [233]
Epicurus will stand its ground, that virtue is nothing, or mere opinion.

From this ignorance it was that the Athenians and Lacedæmonians quarreled with each other, and the Thebans with both; the Persian king with Greece, and the Macedonians with both; and now the Romans with the Getes.[112] And in still remoter times the Trojan war arose from the same cause. Alexander [Paris] was the guest of Menelaus; and whoever had seen the mutual proofs of good-will that passed between them would never have believed that they were not friends. But a tempting bait, a pretty woman, was thrown in between them; and thence came war. At present, therefore, when you see that dear brothers have, in appearance, but one soul, do not immediately pronounce upon their love; not tho they should swear it, and affirm it was impossible to live asunder. For the governing faculty of a bad man is faithless, unsettled, undiscriminating, successively vanquished by different semblances. But inquire, not as others do, whether they were born of the same parents, and brought up together, and under the same preceptor; but this thing only, in what they place their interest—in externals or in their own wills. If in externals, you can no more pronounce them friends, than you can call them faithful, or constant, or brave, or free; nay, nor even truly men, if you are wise. For it is no principle of humanity that makes them bite and vilify each other, and take possession of public assemblies, as wild beasts do of solitudes and mountains; and convert courts of justice [234]
into dens of robbers; that prompts them to be intemperate, adulterers, seducers; or leads them into other offenses that men commit against each other—all from that one single error, by which they risk themselves and their own concerns on things uncontrollable by will.

But if you hear that these men in reality suppose good to be placed only in the will, and in a right use of things as they appear, no longer take the trouble of inquiring if they are father and son, or old companions and acquaintances; but boldly pronounce that they are friends, and also that they are faithful and just. For where else can friendship be met, but joined with fidelity and modesty, and the intercommunication of virtue alone?

"Well; but such a one paid me the utmost regard for so long a time, and did he not love me?"

How can you tell, foolish man, if that regard be any other than he pays to his shoes, or his horse, when he cleans them? And how do you know but that when you cease to be a necessary utensil, he may throw you away, like a broken stool?

"Well; but it is my wife, and we have lived together many years."

And how many did Eriphyle live with Amphiaraus, and was the mother of children not a few? But a bauble came between them. What was this bauble? A false conviction concerning certain things. This turned her into a savage animal; this cut asunder all love, and suffered neither the wife nor the mother to continue such.

Whoever, therefore, among you studies either to be or to gain a friend, let him cut up all false convictions by the root, hate them, drive them utterly out of his soul. Thus, in the first place, he will be secure from inward reproaches and contests, from vacillation and self-torment. Then, with respect to others, to every like-minded person he will be without disguise; to such as are unlike he will be patient, mild, gentle, and ready to forgive them, as failing in points of the greatest importance; but severe to none, being fully convinced of Plato's doctrine, that the soul is never willingly deprived of truth. Without all this, you may, in many respects, live as friends do; and drink and lodge and travel together, and even be born of the same parents; and so may serpents too; but neither they nor you can ever be really friends, while your accustomed principles remain brutal and execrable.

FOOTNOTES:

[111] From the "Discourses." Translated by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. Copyright, 1890, by Little, Brown & Co.

[112] The Getes were a Thracian people who dwelt north of the Danube, at one time in what is now Bulgaria, and at another in what is Bessarabia.

III

[235]

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE CROWD[113]

The first difference between one of the crowd and a philosopher is this: the one says, "I am undone on the account of my child, my brother, my father"; but the other, if ever he be obliged to say, "I am undone!" reflects, and adds, "on account of myself." For the Will can not be restrained or hurt by anything to which the Will does not extend, but only by [236] itself. If, therefore, we always would incline this way, and whenever we are unsuccessful, would lay the fault on ourselves, and remember that there is no cause of perturbation and inconstancy but wrong principles, I pledge myself to you that we should make some proficiency. But we set out in a very different way from the very beginning. In infancy, for example, if we happen to stumble, our nurse does not chide us, but beats the stone. Why, what harm has the stone done? Was it to move out of its place for the folly of your child? Again, if we do not find something to eat when we come out of the bath, our tutor does not try to moderate our appetite, but beats the cook. Why, did we appoint you tutor of the cook, man? No; but of our child. It is he whom you are to correct and improve. By these means even when we are grown up, we appear children. For an unmusical person is a child in music; an illiterate person, a child in learning; and an untaught one, a child in life.

FOOTNOTES:

[113] From the "Discourses." Translated by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. Copyright, 1890, by Little, Brown & Co.

LUCIAN

[237]

Born at Samosata, Syria, about 120 A.D.; died about 200; apprenticed to his maternal uncle, who was a sculptor, but ran away in dislike of the art; becoming interested in the Rhetoricians, began to write himself; his works, as collected in English, comprize four volumes, among them "Dialogues of the Gods," "Dialogues of the Dead," "Zeus, the Tragedian," "The Ferryboat," and "Toxaris."[114]

I

A DESCENT TO THE UNKNOWN[115]

Dawn was approaching when we went down to the river to embark; he had provided a boat, victims, hydromel, and all necessaries for our mystic enterprise. We put all aboard,

and then, Troubled at heart, with welling tears, we went. For some distance we floated [238] down stream, until we entered the marshy lake in which the Euphrates disappears. Beyond this we came to a desolate, wooded, sunless spot; there we landed, Mithrobarzanes leading the way, and proceeded to dig a pit, slay our sheep, and sprinkle their blood round the edge. Meanwhile the Mage, with a lighted torch in his hand, abandoning his customary whisper, shouted at the top of his voice an invocation to all spirits, particularly the Pœnæ and Erinyes,

Hecate's dark might, and dread Persephone,

with a string of other names, outlandish, unintelligible, and polysyllabic.

As he ended, there was a great commotion, earth was burst open by the incantation, the barking of Cerberus was heard far off, and all was overcast and lowering:

Quaked in his dark abyss the King of Shades;

for almost all was now unveiled to us, the lake, and Phlegethon, and the abode of Pluto. Undeterred, we made our way down the chasm, and came upon Rhadamanthus half dead with fear. Cerberus barked and looked like getting up; but I quickly touched my lyre, and the first note sufficed to lull him. Reaching the lake, we nearly missed our passage for that time, the ferry-boat being already full; there was incessant lamentation, and all the passengers had wounds upon them; mangled legs, mangled heads, mangled everything; no doubt there was a war going on. Nevertheless, when good Charon saw the lion's skin, [239] taking me for Heracles, he made room, was delighted to give me a passage, and showed us our direction when we got off.

We were now in darkness; so Mithrobarzanes led the way, and I followed holding on to him, until we reached a great meadow of asphodel, where the shades of the dead, with their thin voices, came flitting round us. Working gradually on, we reached the court of Minos; he was sitting on a high throne, with the Pœnæ, Avengers, and Erinyes standing at the sides. From another direction was being brought a long row of persons chained together; I heard that they were adulterers, procurers, publicans, sycophants, informers, and all the filth that pollutes the stream of life. Separate from them came the rich and usurers, pale, pot-bellied, and gouty, each with a hundredweight of spiked collar upon him. There we stood looking at the proceedings and listening to the pleas they put in; their accusers were orators of a strange and novel species.

We left the court at last, and came to the place of punishment. Many a piteous sight and sound was there—cracking of whips, shrieks of the burning, rack and gibbet and wheel; Chimera tearing, Cerberus devouring; all tortured together, kings and slaves, governors and paupers, rich and beggars, and all repenting their sins. A few of them, the lately dead, we recognized. These would turn away and shrink from observation; or if they met our eyes, it would be with a slavish cringing glance—how different from the arrogance and contempt that had marked them in life! The poor were allowed half-time in their tortures, respite and punishment alternating. Those with whom legend is so busy I saw with my [240] eyes—Ixion,[116] Sisyphus, the Phrygian Tantalus in all his misery, and the giant Tityus—how vast, his bulk covering a whole field!

Leaving these, we entered the Acherusian plain, and there found the demigods, men and women both, and the common dead, dwelling in their nations and tribes, some of them ancient and moldering "strengthless heads," as Homer has it, others fresh, with substance yet in them, Egyptians chiefly, these—so long last their embalming drugs. But to know one from another was no easy task; all men are so like when the bones are bared; yet with pains and long scrutiny we could make them out. They lay pell-mell in undistinguished heaps, with none of their earthly beauties left. With all those anatomies piled together as like as could be, eyes glaring ghastly and vacant, teeth gleaming bare, I knew not how to tell Thersites[117] from Nireus the beauty, beggar Irus from the Phæacian king, or cook Pyrrhias from Agamemnon's self. Their ancient marks were gone, and their bones alike—uncertain, unlabeled, indistinguishable.

When I saw all this, the life of man came before me under the likeness of a great pageant, [241] arranged and marshaled by Chance, who distributed infinitely varied costumes to the performers. She would take one and array him like a king, with tiara, body-guard, and crown complete; another she drest like a slave; one was adorned with beauty, another got up as a ridiculous hunchback: there must be all kinds in the show. Often before the procession was over she made individuals exchange characters; they could not be allowed to keep the same to the end; Crœsus must double parts and appear as slave and captive; Mæandrius, starting as slave, would take over Polycrates'[118] despotism, and be allowed to keep his new clothes for a little while. And when the procession is done, every one disrobes, gives up his character with his body, and appears, as he originally was, just like his neighbor. Some, when Chance comes round collecting the properties, are silly enough to sulk and protest, as tho they were being robbed of their own instead of only returning loans. You know the kind of thing on the stage—tragic actors shifting as the play requires from Creon to Priam, from Priam to Agamemnon; the same man, very likely, whom you saw just now in all the majesty of Cecrops or Erechtheus, treads the boards next as a slave, because the author tells him to. The play over, each of them throws off his gold-spangled robe and his mask, descends from the buskin's height, and moves a mean ordinary creature; his name is not now Agamemnon son of Atreus, or Creon son of Menœceus, but Polus son of Charicles of Sunium, or Satyrus son of [242] Theogiton of Marathon. Such is the condition of mankind, or so that sight presented it to me.

Philip. Now, if a man occupies a costly towering sepulcher, or leaves monuments, statues, inscriptions behind him on earth, does not this place him in a class above the common dead?

Menippus. Nonsense, my good man; if you had looked on Mausolus[119] himself—the Carian so famous for his tomb—I assure you, you would never have stopt laughing; he was a miserable unconsidered unit among the general mass of the dead, flung aside in a dusty hole, with no profit of his sepulcher but its extra weight upon him. No, friend, when Æacus gives a man his allowance of space—and it never exceeds a foot's breadth, he must be content to pack himself into its limits. You might have laughed still more if you had beheld the kings and governors of earth begging in Hades, selling salt fish for a living, it might be, or giving elementary lessons, insulted by any one who met them, and cuffed like the most worthless of slaves. When I saw Philip of Macedon,[120] I could not contain myself; some one showed him to me cobbling old shoes for money in a corner. Many others were to be seen begging—people like Xerxes, Darius, or Polycrates.

Philip. These royal downfalls are extraordinary—almost incredible. But what of Socrates, Diogenes, and such wise men?

Menippus. Socrates still goes about proving everybody wrong, the same as ever; Palamedes, Odysseus, Nestor, and a few other conversational shades, keep him company. His legs, by the way, were still puffy and swollen from the poison. Good Diogenes pitches close to Sardanapalus, Midas, and other specimens of magnificence. The sound of their lamentations and better-day memories keeps him in laughter and spirits; he is generally stretched on his back roaring out a noisy song which drowns lamentations; it annoys them, and they are looking out for a new pitch where he may not molest them.

FOOTNOTES:

[114] Lucian lived under four Roman emperors and possibly five,—Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, Commodus and Pertinax. The Fowlers, whose translation is used in these specimens, regard Lucian as "a linguistic miracle," stating the case as follows: "A Syrian writes in Greek, and not in the Greek of his own time, but in that of five or six centuries before, and he does it, if not with absolute correctness, yet with the easy mastery that we expect from one in a million of those who write in their mother tongue and takes place as an immortal classic. The miracle may be repeated; an English-educated Hindu

may produce masterpieces of Elizabethan English that will rank him with Bacon and Ben Jonson; but it will surprize us when it does happen."

[115] From "Menippus: A Necromantic Experiment." Translated by H. W. and F. G. Fowler. Menippus was a Cynic philosopher, originally a slave, born in Syria. He lived about 60 B.C., and wrote much, but all his works have been lost.

[116] Ixion, of whom the familiar legend is that he was punished in the lower world by being chained to an ever-revolving wheel, was King of the Lapithæ. Sisyphus, whose punishment was to roll a stone up a hill and then see it roll back again, being condemned perpetually to attempt rolling it completely to the top, belonged to a period anterior to Homer, and was the founder of Corinth. Homer describes him as the craftiest of men. Tantalus, one of the kings of Lydia, was condemned to stand in water, but whenever he sought to quench his thirst the water retreated from him.

[117] Thersites is represented as the most insolent and hateful of the Greeks who went to Troy.

[118] Polycrates was tyrant of Samos from 536 to 522 B.C., but was put to death.

[119] Mausolus was King of Caria, a country lying on the Ægean Sea in Asia Minor. Its chief town was Helicarnassus. Mausolus died about 353 B.C. His sister-wife, Artemisia, erected above his body the famous tomb named after him the Mausoleum, which was one of the "seven wonders of the world."

[120] The father of Alexander the Great, and the king against whom several of the orations of Demosthenes were delivered.

II

[243]

AMONG THE PHILOSOPHERS[121]

Socrates. Stone the miscreant; stone him with many stones; clod him with clods; pot him with pots; let the culprit feel your sticks; leave him no way out. At him, Plato! come, Chrysippus, let him have it! Shoulder to shoulder, close the ranks;

> Let wallet succor wallet, staff aid staff!

We are all parties in this war; not one of us but he has assailed. You, Diogenes, now if ever is the time for that stick of yours; stand firm, all of you. Let him reap the fruits of his revilings. What, Epicurus, Aristippus, tired already? 'tis too soon; ye sages, [244]

> Be men; resume that erstwhile furious wrath.

Aristotle, one more sprint. There! the brute is caught; we have you, villain. You shall soon know a little more about the characters you have assailed. Now, what shall we do with him? it must be rather an elaborate execution, to meet all our claims upon him; he owes a separate death to every one of us.

First Philosopher. Impale him, say I.

Second Philosopher. Yes, but scourge him first.

Third Philosopher. Tear out his eyes.

Fourth Philosopher. Ah, but first out with the offending tongue.

Socrates. What say you, Empedocles?

Empedocles. Oh, fling him into a crater; that will teach him to vilify his betters.

Plato. 'Twere best for him, Orpheus or Pentheus like, to

Find death, dashed all to pieces on the rock;

so each might have taken a piece home with him....

Lucian. Believe me, good gentlemen, I have been at much pains on your behalf; to slay me is to slay one who should rather be selected for commendation; a kindred spirit, a well-wisher, a man after your own heart, a promoter, if I may be bold to say it, of your pursuits. See to it that you catch not the tone of our latter-day philosophers, and be thankless, petulant and hard of heart, to him that deserves better of you. [245]

Plato. Talk of a brazen front! So to abuse us is to oblige us. I believe you are under the delusion that you are really talking to slaves; after the insolent excesses of your tongue, do you propose to chop gratitude with us?

Lucian. How or when was I ever insolent to you? I have always been an admirer of philosophy, your panegyrist, and a student of the writings you left. All that comes from my pen is but what you give me; I deflower you, like a bee, for the behoof of mankind; and then there is praise and recognition; they know the flowers, whence and whose the honey was, and the manner of my gathering; their surface feeling is for my selective art, but deeper down it is for you and your meadow, where you put forth such bright blooms and myriad dyes, if one knows but how to sort and mix and match, that one be not in discord with another. Could he that had found you such have the heart to abuse these benefactors to whom his little fame was due? then he must be a Thamyris or Eurytus, defying the Muses who gave his gift of song, or challenging Apollo with the bow, forgetful from whom he had his marksmanship.

Plato. All this, good sir, is quite according to the principles of rhetoric; that is to say, it is clean contrary to the facts; your unscrupulousness is only emphasized by this adding of insult to injury; you confess that your arrows are from our quiver, and you use them against us; your one aim is to abuse us. This is our reward for showing you that meadow, letting you pluck freely, fill your bosom, and depart. For this alone you richly deserve death. [246]

Lucian. There; your ears are partial; they are deaf to the right. Why, I would never have believed that personal feeling could affect a Plato, a Chrysippus,[122] an Aristotle; with you, of all men, I thought there was dry light. But, dear sirs, do not condemn me unheard; give me trial first....

Plato. Pythagoras,[123] Socrates, what do you think? perhaps the man's appeal to law is not unreasonable.

Socrates. No; come along, form the court, fetch Philosophy, and see what he has to say for himself. To condemn unheard is a sadly crude proceeding, not for us; leave that to the hasty people with whom might is right. We shall give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme if we stone a man without a hearing, profest lovers of justice as we are. We shall have to keep quiet about Anytus and Meletus, my accusers, and the jury on that occasion, if we can not spare an hour to hear this fellow before he suffers.

Plato. Very true, Socrates. We will go and fetch Philosophy. The decision shall be hers, and we will accept it, whatever it is....

Philosophy. Well, well. Here we are at the appointed place. We will hold the trial in the forecourt of Athene Polias.[124] Priestess, arrange our seats, while we salute the goddess.

Lucian. Polias, come to my aid against these pretenders, mindful of the daily perjuries thou hearest from them. Their deeds too are revealed to thee alone, in virtue of thy charge. Thou hast now thine hour of vengeance. If thou see me in evil case, if blacks be more than whites, then cast thou thy vote and save me! [247]

Philosophy. So. Now we are seated, ready to hear your words. Choose one of your number, the best accuser you may, make your charge, and bring your proofs. Were all to speak, there would be no end. And you, Parrhesiades, shall afterward make your defense....

Parrhesiades. Philosophy, Diogenes has been far indeed from exhausting his material; the greater part of it, and the more strongly exprest, he has passed by, for reasons best known to himself. I refer to statements of mine which I am as far from denying that I made as from having provided myself with any elaborate defense of them. Any of these that have been omitted by him, and not previously emphasized by myself, I propose now to quote; this will be the best way to show you who were the persons that I sold by auction and inveighed against as pretenders and impostors; please to concentrate your vigilance on the truth or falsehood of my descriptions. If what I say is injurious or severe, your censure will be more fairly directed at the perpetrators than at the discoverer of such iniquities. I had no sooner realized the odious practises which his profession imposes on an advocate—the deceit, falsehood, bluster, clamor, pushing, and all the long hateful list, than I fled as a matter of course from these, betook myself to your dear service, [248] Philosophy, and pleased myself with the thought of a remainder of life spent far from the tossing waves in a calm haven beneath your shadow.

At my first peep into your realm, how could I but admire yourself and all these your disciples? There they were, legislating for the perfect life, holding out hands of help to those that would reach it, commending all that was fairest and best; fairest and best—but a man must keep straight on for it and never slip, must set his eyes unwaveringly on the laws that you have laid down, must tune and test his life thereby; and that, Zeus be my witness, there are few enough in these days of ours to do.

So I saw how many were in love, not with Philosophy, but with the credit it brings; in the vulgar externals, so easy for any one to ape, they showed a striking resemblance to the real article, perfect in beard and walk and attire; but in life and conduct they belied their looks, read your lessons backwards, and degraded their profession. Then I was wroth; methought it was as tho some soft womanish actor on the tragic stage should give us Achilles or Theseus or Heracles himself; he can not stride nor speak out as a hero should, but minces along under his enormous mask; Helen or Polyxena would find him too realistically feminine to pass for them; and what shall an invincible Heracles say? Will he not swiftly pound man and mask together into nothingness with his club, for womanizing and disgracing him?

Well, these people were about as fit to represent you, and the degradation of it all was too much for me. Apes daring to masquerade as heroes! emulators of the ass at Cyme! The Cymeans, you know, had never seen ass or lion; so the ass came the lion over them, with [249] the aid of a borrowed skin and his most awe-inspiring bray; however, a stranger who had often seen both brought the truth to light with a stick. But what most distrest me, Philosophy, was this: when one of these people was detected in rascality, impropriety, or immorality, every one put it down to philosophy, and to the particular philosopher whose name the delinquent took in vain without ever acting on his principles; the living rascal disgraced you, the long dead; for you were not there in the flesh to point the contrast; so, as it was clear enough that his life was vile and disgusting, your case was given away by association with his, and you had to share his disgrace.

This spectacle, I say, was too much for me; I began exposing them, and distinguishing between them and you; and for this good work you now arraign me. So then, if I find one of the Initiated betraying and parodying the Mysteries of the two Goddesses, and if I protest and denounce him, the transgression will be mine? There is something wrong there; why, at the Games, if an actor who has to present Athene or Poseidon or Zeus plays his part badly, derogating from the divine dignity, the stewards have him whipt; well, the gods are not angry with them for having the officers whip the man who wears their mask and their attire; I imagine they approve of the punishment. To play a slave or a messenger

badly is a trifling offense, but to represent Zeus or Heracles to the spectators in an unworthy manner—that is a crime and a sacrilege.

I can indeed conceive nothing more extraordinary than that so many of them should get [250] themselves absolutely perfect in your words, and then live precisely as if the sole object of reading and studying them had been to reverse them in practise. All their professions of despising wealth and appearances, of admiring nothing but what is noble, of superiority to passion, of being proof against splendor, and associating with its owners only on equal terms—how fair and wise and laudable they all are! But they take pay for imparting them, they are abashed in presence of the rich, their lips water at sight of coin; they are dogs for temper, hares for cowardice, apes for imitativeness, asses for lust, cats for thievery, cocks for jealousy. They are a perfect laughingstock with their strivings after vile ends, their jostling of each other at rich men's doors, their attendance at crowded dinners, and their vulgar obsequiousness at table. They swill more than they should and would like to swill more than they do, they spoil the wine with unwelcome and untimely disquisitions, and they can not carry their liquor. The ordinary people who are present naturally flout them, and are revolted by the philosophy which breeds such brutes.

What is so monstrous is that every man of them says he has no needs, proclaims aloud that wisdom is the only wealth, and directly afterward comes begging and makes a fuss if he is refused; it would hardly be stranger to see one in kingly attire, with tall tiara, crown, and all the attributes of royalty, asking his inferiors for a little something more. When they want to get something, we hear a great deal, to be sure, about community of goods —how wealth is a thing indifferent—and what is gold and silver?—neither more nor less [251] worth than pebbles on the beach. But when an old comrade and tried friend needs help and comes to them with his modest requirements, ah, then there is silence and searchings of heart, unlearning of tenets and flat renunciation of doctrines. All their fine talk of friendship, with Virtue and The Good, have vanished and flown, who knows whither? they were winged words in sad truth, empty fantoms, only meant for daily conversational use.

These men are excellent friends so long as there is no gold or silver for them to dispute the possession of; exhibit but a copper or two, and peace is broken, truce void, armistice ended; their books are blank, their virtue fled, and they so many dogs; some one has flung a bone into the pack, and up they spring to bite each other and snarl at the one which has pounced successfully. There is a story of an Egyptian king who taught some apes the sword-dance; the imitative creatures very soon picked it up; and used to perform in purple robes and masks; for some time the show was a great success, till at last an ingenious spectator brought some nuts in with him and threw them down. The apes forgot their dancing at the sight, dropt their humanity, resumed their ape-hood, and, smashing masks and tearing dresses, had a free fight for the provender. Alas for the *corps de ballet* and the gravity of the audience!

These people are just those apes; it is they that I reviled; and I shall never cease exposing and ridiculing them; but about you and your like—for there are, in spite of all, some true lovers of philosophy and keepers of your laws—about you or them may I never be mad [252] enough to utter an injurious or rude word! Why, what could I find to say? what is there in your lives that lends itself to such treatment? but those pretenders deserve my detestation, as they have that of heaven. Why, tell me, all of you, what have such creatures to do with you? Is there a trace in their lives of kindred and affinity? Does oil mix with water? If they grow their beards and call themselves philosophers and look solemn, do these things make them like you? I could have contained myself if there had been any touch of plausibility in their acting; but the vulture is more like the nightingale than they like philosophers. And now I have pleaded my cause to the best of my ability. Truth, I rely upon you to confirm my words.

Philosophy. Parrhesiades, retire to a further distance. Well, and our verdict? How think you the man has spoken?

Truth. Ah, Philosophy, while he was speaking I was ready to sink through the ground; it was all so true. As I listened, I could identify every offender, and I was fitting caps all the time—this is so-and-so, that is the other man, all over. I tell you they were all as plain as in a picture—speaking likenesses not of their bodies only, but of their very souls.

Temperance. Yes, Truth, I could not help blushing at it.

Philosophy. What say you, gentlemen?

Res. Why, of course, that he is acquitted of the charge, and stands recorded as our friend and benefactor. Our case is just that of the Trojans, who entertained the tragic actor only to find him reciting their own calamities. Well, recite away, our tragedian, with these pests of ours for dramatis personæ.

Diogenes. I too, Philosophy, give him my meed of praise; I withdraw my charges, and count him a worthy friend.

Philosophy. I congratulate you, Parrhesiades; you are unanimously acquitted, and are henceforth one of us.

FOOTNOTES:

[121] From the "Fisher: A Resurrection Piece." Translated by H. W. and F. G. Fowler.

[122] Famous as a mathematician as well as philosopher; born in Samos about 582 B.C. He founded a famous school of philosophy at Crotona in Southern Italy.

[123] After Zeno the most eminent of the Stoic philosophers; born in 280 B.C.

[124] The guardian of the city of Athens. A famous statue of Athenia Polias of the fifth century B.C. is preserved in the Villa Albani at Rome.

III

[253]

OF LIARS AND LYING[125]

Tychiades. Philocles, what is it that makes most men so fond of a lie? Can you explain it? Their delight in romancing themselves is only equaled by the earnest attention with which they receive other people's efforts in the same direction.

Philocles. Why, in some cases there is no lack of motives for lying—motives of self-interest.

Tychiades. Ah, but that is neither here nor there. I am not speaking of men who lie with an object. There is some excuse for that: indeed, it is sometimes to their credit, when they deceive their country's enemies, for instance, or when mendacity is but the medicine to heal their sickness. Odysseus, seeking to preserve his life and bring his companions safe home, was a liar of that kind. The men I mean are innocent of any ulterior motive: they prefer a lie to truth, simply on its own merits; they like lying, it is their favorite occupation; there is no necessity in the case. Now what good can they get out of it?

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Philocles. Why, have you ever known any one with such a strong natural turn for lying?

Tychiades. Any number of them.

Philocles. Then I can only say they must be fools, if they really prefer evil to good.

Tychiades. Oh, that is not it. I could point you out plenty of men of first-rate ability, sensible enough in all other respects, who have somehow picked up this vice of romancing. It makes me quite angry: what satisfaction can there be to men of their good qualities in deceiving themselves and their neighbors? There are instances among the ancients with which you must be more familiar than I. Look at Herodotus, or Ctesias of Cnidus;[126] or, to go further back, take the poets—Homer himself: here are men of world-wide celebrity, perpetuating their mendacity in black and white; not content with deceiving their hearers, they must send their lies down to posterity, under the protection of the most admirable verse. Many a time I have blushed for them, as I read of the mutilation of Uranus, the fetters of Prometheus, the revolt of the giants, the torments of hell; enamored Zeus taking the shape of bull or swan; women turning into birds and bears; Pegasuses, Chimæras, Gorgons, Cyclopes, and the rest of it; monstrous medley! fit only to charm the imaginations of children for whom Mormo and Lamia have still their terrors. However, poets, I suppose, will be poets. But when it comes to national lies, [255] when one finds whole cities bouncing collectively like one man, how is one to keep one's countenance? A Cretan will look you in the face, and tell you that yonder is Zeus' tomb. In Athens, you are informed that Erichthonius sprang out of the earth, and that the first Athenians grew up from the soil like so many cabbages; and this story assumes quite a sober aspect when compared with that of the Sparti, for whom the Thebans claim descent from a dragon's teeth. If you presume to doubt these stories, if you choose to exert your common sense, and leave Triptolemus' winged aerial car, and Pan's Marathonian exploits, and Orithyia's mishap, to the stronger digestions of a Corœbus and a Margites, you are a fool and a blasphemer, for questioning such palpable truths. Such is the power of lies!

Philocles. I must say I think there is some excuse, Tychiades, both for your national liars and for the poets. The latter are quite right in throwing in a little mythology: it has a very pleasing effect, and is just the thing to secure the attention of their hearers. On the other hand, the Athenians and the Thebans and the rest are only trying to add to the luster of their respective cities. Take away the legendary treasures of Greece, and you condemn the whole race of ciceroni to starvation: sightseers do not want the truth; they would not take it at a gift. However, I surrender to your ridicule any one who has no such motive, and yet rejoices in lies.

Tychiades. Very well: now I have just been with the great Eucrates, who treated me to a whole string of old wives' tales. I came away in the middle of it; he was too much for me [256] altogether; Furies could not have driven me out more effectually than his marvel-working tongue.

Philocles. What, Eucrates, of all credible witnesses? That venerably bearded sexagenarian, with his philosophic leanings? I could never have believed that he would lend his countenance to other people's lies, much less that he was capable of such things himself.

Tychiades. My dear sir, you should have heard the stuff he told me; the way in which he vouched for the truth of it all too, solemnly staking the lives of his children on his veracity! I stared at him in amazement, not knowing what to make of it: one moment I thought he must be out of his mind; the next I concluded he had been a humbug all along, an ape in a lion's skin. Oh, it was monstrous....

"When I was a young man," said he, "I passed some time in Egypt, my father having sent me to that country for my education. I took it into my head to sail up the Nile to Coptus, and thence pay a visit to the statue of Memnon,[127] and hear the curious sound that proceeds from it at sunrise. In this respect, I was more fortunate than most people, who hear nothing but an indistinct voice: Memnon actually opened his lips, and delivered me an oracle in seven hexameters; it is foreign to my present purpose, or I would quote you the very lines."

FOOTNOTES:

[125] From "The Liar." Translated by H. W. and F. G. Fowler.

[126] Ctesias who died after 398 B.C., and wrote a history of Persia in twenty-four books and a treatise on India. Parts only of both are now extant.

[127] A legendary king of Ethiopia, who was slain at Troy by Achilles—a fable, says Rawlinson, which is "one of those in which it is difficult to determine any germs of truth." His name was given by the Greeks to one of the Colossi at Thebes in Egypt, from which, when touched by the rays of the rising sun, there was said to proceed a strange sound.

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