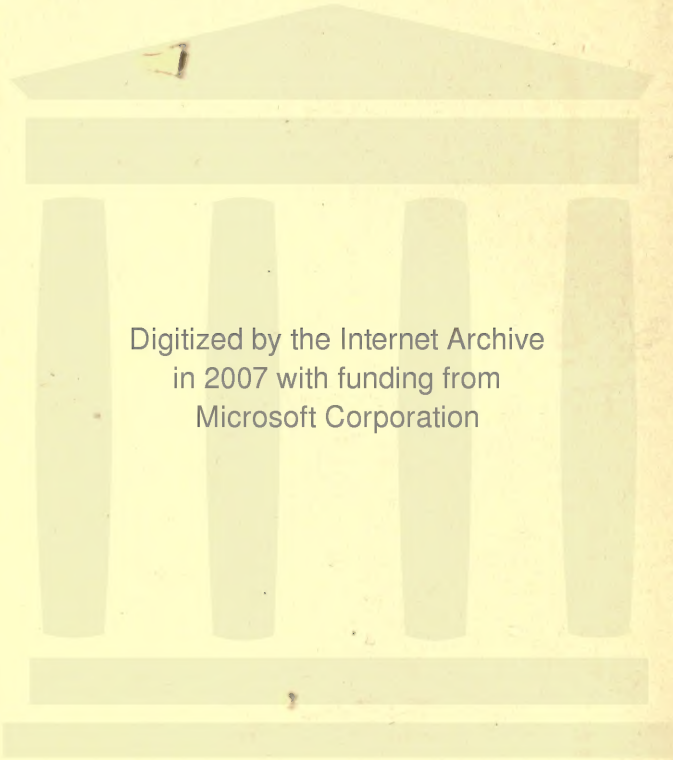

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XV

ESSAYS ON THE STUDY AND USE OF POETRY

BY

PLUTARCH AND BASIL THE GREAT

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

FREDERICK MORGAN PADELFORD, PH.D.

Professor of the English Language and Literature in the University of Washington

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TO

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN PEPPER

AND

ADONIRAM JUDSON PADELFORD

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PREFACE

The recent very general interest in poetics has led me to prepare these translations of the essays on poetry by Plutarch and Basil the Great, in the hope that they may prove useful to students of literature. Although they were not epoch-making, these essays are worthy of consideration, for, besides their intrinsic value, they mark interesting stages in the history of poetic criticism.

The essay on *How a Young Man Ought to Study Poetry* was first rendered into English by Philemon Holland, who made a complete translation of the *Morals,* which was issued in octavo from the press of Arnold Hatfield, a London printer, in 1603. Its title reads as follows: 'The Philosophie, commonlie called *The Morals,* written by the learned Philosopher Plutarch of Chaeronea. Translated out of Greek into English, and conferred with the Latin translations and the French, by Philemon Holland of Coventrie, Doctor in Physicke. Whereunto are annexed the Summaries necessary to be read before every Treatise.' This version, though its archaism possesses an undeniable charm, is not altogether adapted to modern requirements. A second edition, 'newly revised and corrected,' appeared in 1657, and this was followed not many years later by the translation of the *Morals* 'by Several Hands,' published in London in 1684-1694. To this work Simon Ford contributed the version of the essay on *How a Young Man Ought to Study Poetry.* Ford's translation is clumsy, frequently obscure, and often wide of the Greek. In 1870 Professor Goodwin offered a corrected and revised text of this rendering of the *Morals,* and the fact that the sixth edition appeared in 1898 attests the usefulness of this revised version. However, of the essay under consideration much more than a revision of

Ford's translation is needed, if the essay is to assume its proper place in our study of poetics.

There seems to have been one separate translation of Basil's homily into English, although it is not recorded in the catalogue of the British Museum. It appeared at the press of John Cawood in octavo form, and was printed in black letter. According to Ames and Herbert[1] it bore the following title: 'An Homelye of Basilius Magnus, Howe Younge Men oughte to reade Poets and Oratours. Translated out of Greke. Anno M. D. LVII.' Nothing seems to be known about the author.

It is interesting to find that the two essays of Plutarch and Basil were associated by Archbishop Potter of Canterbury in the first of his learned publications. In 1694, when barely twenty,[2] and just after he was made a Fellow of Lincoln College, he published at Oxford an octavo volume with the following title: 'Variantes Lectiones et Notae ad Plutarchi librum de Audiendis Poetis; et ad Basilii Magni Orationem ad Juvenes.' In 1753 a second edition of this book was issued at Glasgow. Potter, however, was not the first to associate these essays; in 1600 Martin Haynoccius published them in an *Enchiridion Ethicum,* and Grotius brought out an edition of the two at Paris in 1623.

A German dissertation, *De Fontibus Plutarchi Comment. de Audiendis Poetis et de Fortuna,* written by August Schlemm, and published at Göttingen in 1894, shows the probable indebtedness of Plutarch's essay to the lost writings of the Stoics and Peripatetics. I am indebted to Herr Schlemm for several of my notes, and offer his conclusions in an appendix.

In the present renderings an attempt has been made to express the spirit and style of the originals, and thus to reproduce the looseness and indirectness of Plutarch's thought, as well as the conciseness and rapid movement of Basil's language. The translation of Plutarch follows the

[1] *Typographical Antiquities*, London, 1785–6–90.

[2] See *Dict. Nat. Biog.* s. v. John Potter.

text of Bernardakis, and the rendering of Basil the text of Migne. Acknowledgment should be made of suggestions taken from the earlier English translations of Plutarch, from the German version of Basil by Kaltwasser, and from Maloney's school edition of Basil's essay. For the many quotations from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* the translations by Lang, Leaf, and Myers, and by Butcher and Lang, have been adopted; wherever quotations from Plato or from Aristotle's *Poetics* have been embodied in the notes, the versions of Jowett and of Butcher have been followed.

The notes attempt to show the indebtedness of the essays to earlier Greek literature, and to furnish interesting parallels from the classics, but do not cite the many passages from modern writers which are similar in thought. Biographical notices are taken from Johnson's *Encyclopaedia,* Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology,* and Müller's *Handbuch der Klassischen Alterthumswissenschaft.* Fragments from the Greek philosophers, dramatists, and lyrists, are referred to the collections of Mullach, Nauck, Meineke, and Bergk, even when these essays furnish the sources for the fragments. A few quotations and allusions have escaped me, and I shall be grateful to any reader who will direct my attention to the originals.

The preparation of this volume was undertaken at the suggestion of Professor Albert S. Cook, and it owes much to his interest. Professor George D. B. Pepper, ex-President of Colby College, has read the translations with painstaking care, and Dr. Charles Grosvenor Osgood, Jr., of Yale University, has read both translations and introduction; to their suggestions the book, whatever its imperfections, is greatly indebted. To my colleagues, Dr. Thomas F. Kane and Dr. Arthur S. Haggett, with whom I have frequently advised, I also acknowledge my obligations.

F. M. P.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.
August 16, 1902.

INTRODUCTION

PLUTARCH'S THEORY OF POETRY

Unless one accepts the theory, playfully or otherwise advanced in the *Ion*, that the poet is but the instrument of an overmastering divinity, he is often at a loss to explain the inability of many a genius in the world of art and letters to judge of the relative excellence of his own creations. Michel Angelo eagerly dropped the brush and resumed the chisel, with the joy of one who returns to the work he loves after interruption, and yet succeeding generations have been unable to tell whether they admire more the frescoes of the Chapel or the Pietà; Wordsworth, the author of *Michael,* the *Daffodils,* and 'There Was a Boy,' with infinite self-satisfaction drew out the prolonged monotony of the *Excursion* as the supreme work of a lifetime; and he whose imagination swept from the 'visible darkness' of the throne of Chaos to the skirts of God, 'dark with excessive bright,' failed to see how far the intensity, sublimity, and mighty organ-tones of *Paradise Lost* excel the unimpassioned finish of *Paradise Regained.*

In a similar way Plutarch misjudged his productions, for although he regarded philosophy as the ideal field for the mind's activity, he was not profound enough nor subtle enough to excel as a philosopher, so that the *Morals* are hardly known more than by title to the cultivated reader of to-day, while the *Lives,* those 'idealized ethical portraits,' as Professor Perrin calls them, have charmed generations of English readers by their freshness and spirit, and are found on many a book-shelf where poverty allows them no other companions save Shakespeare and the Bible.

And yet the *Morals* have great value historically. No other extant writings give so complete and satisfactory a record of custom and thought in the late Greek period.

Domestic life in its many phases, affairs of government, questions of religion and ethics, the investigations of science, and the problems of art, all find a place in the pages of this multifarious collection of essays.

The student of poetry, and of aesthetics in general, will find these essays fruitful or barren according to the point of view from which they are approached. If, in the essay on poetry, the reader looks for intrinsic excellence in criticism, he will be disappointed, and will find many pages that are distressingly pedantic, and many that are commonplace and trivial; thus, when the charming episode of Nausicaa and Odysseus is made the subject of prudish speculation, the reader is equally offended by the triteness of the thought and by the writer's pragmatism. If, however, Plutarch is regarded as an exponent of the thought and feeling of his time, the essay is full of significance, for it shows the attempts of decadent Greece to deal with an art which had been the glory of the classical period.

Accordingly, the following pages will attempt an analysis of Plutarch's theory of poetry, the material furnished by the essay on poetry being supplemented by gleanings here and there from essays on other subjects. First will be considered Plutarch's theory of the distinction between poetry and prose; secondly, his theory of the relation of poetry to nature and to truth; thirdly, his theory of the end of fine art.

Wherein do poetry and prose differ? Although Plutarch does not follow Aristotle in threatening the established tradition which made metrical form essential to poetry,[1] he does agree with him in saying that the nature of its subject largely determines whether a composition is prose or poetry.[2] With playful disdain he criticizes the early Greek philosophers and naturalists for presenting didactic subjects metrically: 'The verses of Empedocles and Parmenides, Nicander's verses on antidotes to poisons, and the maxims of Theognis, borrowed the poetic form and dignity only as a sort of riding-carriage to avoid footing it.'[3]

[1] *Poet.* i. 5; ix. 9. [2] Ibid. i. 7–8; ix. 2. [3] See p. 53.

This idea is more elaborately developed in the essay entitled *Why the Pythian Priestess Ceases her Oracles in Verse:*[1] Vanity and love of display, united with a certain racial aptitude, led men to clothe history and philosophy in verse, though these subjects, being of a grave and solid nature, and designed to teach rather than to move, demand the severity and directness of prose. Subjects of a didactic nature are purely intellectual, and demand perfect simplicity in expression.

Poetry, on the other hand, is the product of intellect and feeling combined, and hence, because its appeal is quite as much to the feelings as to the intellect, requires the sensuousness of verse. In the *Symposiacs* there is a discussion of why it is commonly said that love makes a man a poet, and one Sossius offers the following explanation: 'One would do well to explain it in the light of Theophrastus' discourse on music, a book that I have just finished reading. Theophrastus holds that music has three causes, grief, joy, and inspiration, since each one of these alters the wonted tone of the voice. Grief utters its mournful lamentations in song, which explains why orators in their perorations, and actors in their lamentings, employ soft and musical cadence. Intense and excessive joy completely carries away the lighter-minded fellows, and incites them to hop about and frisk and keep their steps, even though they know nothing about dancing; as Pindar has it, "The frenzy and shouts of those aroused, and their wild tossings of the head." But men of taste and refinement, when subject to this emotion, are incited only to sing and to give voice to verse and melody. Inspiration most of all changes the customary state of body and voice. Whence the Bacchae use rhythm, and the inspired give forth their oracles in metre, and one sees few madmen who do not utter their insane ravings in poetry and song. Such being the case, if you should observe love with a critical eye and examine closely into it, you would find that no other passion is attended with more

[1] 23–24.

bitter grief, more intense and excessive joy, or greater ecstasy and madness. A lover's soul looks like Sophocles' city, "At the same moment it is full of sacrifices, of paeans, and of lamentations."[1] Wherefore it is not strange or surprising that, since love contains all the causes of music—grief, joy, and inspiration—and is also prone to talk and babble, it should be more inclined than any other passion to the making of poetry and songs. But although the poet must be a man of sensitive emotions, not every man of sensibility will be a poet. The power to express passionate feeling in language melodious, rhythmical, and nobly embellished is a gift to rare temperaments. Consequently, when Euripides says that "Love makes men poets who before no music knew,"[2] he does not mean that love infuses music and poetry into men that were not already inclined to them, but that it warms and awakens that disposition which lay inactive and drowsy before. . . . Poetic rapture, like the raptures of love, makes use of the ability of its subject.'[3] It was because this temperamental aptitude was general among the early Greeks that they produced such a wealth of poetry. A people whose civilization favored a natural and sincere play of the emotions was equipped with a genius for metrical utterance, and responded to the slightest excitation with spontaneous and melodious poetry; accordingly their banquets, where wine flowed and spirits were high, were graced with charming odes and love-songs.[4]

But while emotion plays a large part in poetry, as already stated poetry is the product, not of feeling alone, but of intellect as well; one must therefore not allow such a passage as that quoted above, which, moreover, is dealing strictly with lyrics, to cause him to overlook the emphasis laid upon wisdom and judgment as factors in the production of poetry. Indeed, by this very word 'enthusiasm,' Plutarch does not mean that the poet's personality is lost while the

[1] *Oed. Tyr.* 4.
[2] Nauck 666.
[3] *Why the Pythian Priestess Ceases her Oracles in Verse* 23.
[4] Ibid. 23.

god is speaking through him, for he is too much of a rationalist to entertain such a theory of divine possession; rather, that the god uses each poet according to the ability which nature and training have given him. Even the Pythian priestess, if brought up among the ignorant, must utter her oracles in prose.[1]

The necessity for this element of judgment in the production of works of art is considered at length in the essay *On Music*.[2] The thought is that he is the best musician who combines the greatest amount of skill with the best judgment. By skill is meant the technical understanding of the different modes, such as the Dorian, the Ionian, and the Phrygian, and the ability to play or sing in any one of them without violating the laws of harmony. Judgment is an inclusive term, comprising the ability to discover the nature and genius of the poem, to choose for it the mode which is most appropriate, and to judge of the coherency of all the component parts.[3] As to the importance of a knowledge of philosophy for the production, or the appreciation, of music, Plutarch does not go to the extreme of Pythagoras, who 'rejected the judging of music by the senses, affirming that the virtue of music could be appreciated only by the intellect,'[4] yet he does advise him who would be proficient in this art to acquaint himself with all sciences, and especially to make philosophy his tutor.[5]

It is needless to enforce this point further by citing passages from the essay on poetry; suffice it to say that Plutarch thought that poetry of real excellence must be grounded in philosophy.

To summarize the conclusions already reached: while prose is didactic, and appeals to the intellect, poetry is

[1] Ibid. 22.

[2] Among the Greeks music was accessory to poetry. Throughout this essay the intimate relation of poetry and music is apparent on every page, at times it being almost impossible to tell whether the writer is speaking of the one or the other. In this essay Plutarch follows the theories of Aristoxenus and Heraclides.

[3] 31 ff. [4] Ibid. 37; see Plato, *Laws* ii. 659. [5] Ibid. 23.

emotional, and the product of feeling as well as of intellect. Further, poetical power is a gift, but a gift that may be refined by proper training—indeed, a gift that cannot be possessed by the altogether untutored.

So much for Plutarch's distinction between prose and poetry. Let us now consider his theory of the relation of poetry to nature and to truth.

Does poetry copy nature or transcend it? Is it truthful or untruthful? Is it universal or restricted? We shall find an answer to these questions in determining Plutarch's use of the expression 'imitation.' Imitation as applied to the arts was employed by Greek writers very generally, and widely differing theories of its nature were held. As both Plato and Aristotle give much prominence to this term in their discussions of art, it will be helpful to examine somewhat carefully their employment of the word, in order that Plutarch's views may be seen against the background of earlier Greek thought. In the tenth book of the *Republic*,[1] where the work of poet and painter is discussed, we find the following train of thought: The artist is one who turns a mirror round and round, and catches the reflection of objects—of the sun, the heavens, the earth, plants, animals, men. There is the ideal world as it exists in the mind of God, for example, the ideal plant, table, or man; the actual world which produces plants, tables, or men imitative of the ideal; and the world of the artist, in which are copied the appearances of the objects in the actual world. Imitative art is therefore an imitation of an imitation, and further from truth than the world of nature about us; it is three removes from God. Useful art is superior to imitative art, for the carpenter who makes a bed is better employed than the painter who reproduces the appearance of the bed, and the general who conducts a campaign than Homer, the poet of battles.[2]

[1] 595–607.

[2] See Plutarch, *Whether the Athenians were More Renowned for their Warlike Achievements or their Learning* cc. vi–viii, for an elaborate argument that more honor belongs to commanders than to poets, orators, and historians.

Further light is thrown on this conception of imitation in the Third Book,[1] where it is defined as the assimilation of oneself to another, whose character is assumed. Precisely because any such assumption of the character of another is undignified, unnatural, and insincere, because, for example, the poet, not being a cobbler, can never really act the cobbler, all imitative artists were to leave the Republic, even though the banishment included the much loved Homer. All art, however, was not excluded, for Plato implies a distinction between imitative art and true art. The best art is the sincere and direct expression of a courageous and harmonious life, not the product of the fancy of some 'pantomimically-versatile' imitator. The Republic is a return to simplicity, and that poetry alone is permissible which expresses the simplicity of a mind so nobly ordered that, whether in action or repose, it expresses the highest moral energy. The temper of this, the true artist-soul, gives character to the words, and through the words to the rhythm and harmony. Rhythm and harmony, then, become formal expressions of the great virtues, bravery and temperance; they give to the senses graceful and beautiful expression of true beauty and grace, for, in Plato's very words, 'grace and harmony are the sisters and images of goodness and virtue.'[2] Such rhythm and harmony find their way into the inmost part of the soul of the listener, and render right the form of his soul through their rightness of form.[3] Such art is one with the music of the spheres; it is divine beauty and loveliness.[4]

In the *Poetics* of Aristotle imitation is used in two senses. In an early chapter, where Aristotle simply wishes to show that the instinct of imitation is universal, occurs the follow-

[1] 393. [2] 401. [3] 402.

[4] In *Laws* vii. 817, in a less severe vein Plato is more generous to tragedy, speaking of it as above of ideal art: 'Our whole state is an imitation of the best and noblest life, which we affirm to be indeed the very truth of tragedy.' Likewise, in *Laws* ii. 667–669, imitative art is defined as good when it truthfully reproduces the original as to proportions, etc., and is *beautiful*.

ing statement: 'Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures; and through imitation he learns his earliest lessons; and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. We have evidence of this in the facts of experience. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity, such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies. The cause of this again is, that to learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers, but to men in general, whose capacity of learning, however, is more limited. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring, and saying perhaps, "Ah, that is he." For if you happen not to have seen the original, the pleasure will be due not to the imitation as such, but to the execution, the coloring, or some such thing.'[1]

That Aristotle is speaking of imitation in general, and not of artistic imitation, is at once apparent when one reads in other chapters that 'Poetry imitates men as they ought to be;'[2] that it 'is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history,'[3] for the 'one relates what has happened, the other what may happen;'[4] that 'poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular.'[5] In essence Aristotle says that poetry is not limited to the actual deeds of men who have lived, but that, freeing itself from the trammels of the accidental, the temporary, and the local, it portrays men nobler than nature, though such men as nature's tendencies toward the ideal would produce. The poet sees through and

[1] iv. 1–5.

[2] *Poet.* i. 5; see also xxv. 6: 'Further, if it be objected that the description is not true to fact, the poet may perhaps reply, "But the objects are as they ought to be;" just as Sophocles said that he drew men as they ought to be drawn; Euripides as they are.'

[3] Ibid. ix. 3. [4] Ibid. ix. 2. [5] Ibid. ix. 3.

beyond nature to the models of her workmanship. Thus, good portrait-painters, 'while reproducing the distinctive form of the original, make a likeness which is true to life, and yet more beautiful. So, too, the poet, in representing men quick or slow to anger, or with other defects of character, should preserve the type and yet ennoble it. In this way Achilles is portrayed by Agathon and Homer.'[1]

Further, artistic imitation does not include the portrayal of animals and of still life. The objects of aesthetic imitation are ἤθη, πάθη, and πράξεις, which Butcher defines as 'the characteristic moral qualities, transient emotions, and actions in their proper and inward sense,'[2] meaning by the last, actions which are the inevitable expression of intellectual and emotional activity. *Men acting,* therefore, Aristotle defines as the objects imitated by the fine arts, because such actions as the artist makes use of spring from a deep source, and are but the outward manifestations of the movements of the soul.

Plutarch treats the subject of imitation as follows: 'We shall still more thoroughly ground the young man, if, on introducing him to poetry, we explain to him that it is an imitative art and agent, analogous to painting. Not only must he be made acquainted with the common saying that poetry is vocal painting, and painting silent poetry, but we must teach him also that when we see a painting of a lizard, an ape, or the face of Thersites, our pleasure and surprise are occasioned, not by the beauty of the object, but by its likeness. For it is naturally impossible for the ugly to be beautiful, but it is the imitation which is praised if it reproduce to the life either an ugly or a beautiful object. On the other hand, if an ugly object is represented as beautiful, we deny the truthfulness or the consistency of the picture. Now there are some artists who paint uncomely actions; thus Timotheus pictured Medea killing her children; Theon showed Orestes murdering his mother; Parr-

[1] Ibid. xv. 8.

[2] Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* c. ii.

hasius, Odysseus counterfeiting madness; and Chaerephanes, the unchaste converse of women with men. In such instances it is especially important that the young man come to understand that we do not praise the action which is imitated, but the art, provided the subject is treated accurately. Since now poetry also frequently describes base actions and depraved emotions and character, the youth must not confound their artistic admirableness and success with truth, nor rank them as beautiful, but he is to praise them only as accurate and natural likenesses of the things treated. For as we are annoyed when we hear the grunting of a hog, the noise of pulleys, the whistling of the wind, and the roaring of the seas, but are pleased if any one imitates them with naturalness, as Parmenio did the hog,[1] and Theodorus the pulleys; and as we avoid the unpleasant sight of an unhealthy man with festering sores, but take pleasure in witnessing the *Philoctetes* of Aristophon and the *Jocasta* of Silanion[2]—which are realistic likenesses of wasting and dying

[1] See *Symposiacs* v. 1: 'For upon what account, for God's sake, from what external impression upon our organ, should men be moved to admire Parmenio's sow so much as to pass it into a proverb? Yet it is reported, that Parmenio being very famous for imitating the grunting of a pig, some endeavored to rival and outdo him. And when the hearers, being prejudiced, cried out, "Very well indeed, but nothing comparable to Parmenio's sow;" one took a pig under his arm and came upon the stage. And when, though they heard the very pig, they still continued, "This is nothing comparable to Parmenio's sow;" he threw his pig amongst them, to show that they judged according to opinion and not truth.' [This translation is taken from the Goodwin edition.] See *Rep.* iii. 397, for Plato's condemnation of this kind of imitation: 'But another sort of character will narrate anything, and the worse he is the more unscrupulous he will be; nothing will be beneath him: moreover he will be ready to imitate anything, not as a joke, but in right good earnest, and before a large audience. As I was just now saying, he will attempt to represent the roll of thunder, the rattle of wind and hail, or the various sounds of pulleys, of pipes, of flutes, and all sorts of instruments: also he will bark like a dog, bleat like a sheep, and crow like a cock; his entire art will consist in imitation of voice and gesture, and there will be very little narration.'

[2] Ibid.: 'And therefore, because he that is really affected with grief or anger presents us with nothing but the common bare passion, but in

persons—so when the youth reads what Thersites the buffoon, or Sisyphus the debaucher, or Batrachus the brothel-keeper says or does, he must be taught to praise the genius and the art which imitates them, but to censure the subjects and actions with opprobrium. For the excellence of a thing and the excellence of its imitation are not the same. Fitness and naturalness constitute excellence, but to things base, the base is natural and fit.'[1]

To this passage two questions address themselves: What are the subjects of aesthetic imitation, and what is its nature?

The first may be answered without trouble: clearly all forms of life are legitimate for artistic treatment—inferior types of animal life, such as a lizard or an ape, as well as heroic men like Achilles and Hector; and in human conduct, immorality and obscenity, as well as self-control and heroism.

In making all objects proper for artistic reproduction, Plutarch showed that, in theory at least, he was far from assigning poetry the exalted place which Aristotle had given it. Not only did Aristotle exclude all but human

the imitation some dexterity and persuasiveness appears, we are naturally inclined to be disturbed at the former, whilst the latter delights us. It is unpleasant to see a sick man, or one that is at his last gasp; yet with content we can look upon the picture of *Philoctetes*, or the statue of *Jocasta*, in whose face it is commonly said that the workmen mixed silver, so that the brass might represent the face and color of one ready to faint and yield up the ghost. And this, said I, the Cyreniacs may use as a strong argument against you Epicureans, that all the sense of pleasure which arises from the working of any object on the ear or eye is not in those organs, but in the intellect itself. Thus the continued cackling of a hen or cawing of a crow is very ungrateful and disturbing; yet he that imitates those noises well pleases the hearers. Thus to behold a consumptive man is no delightful spectacle; yet with pleasure we can view the pictures and statues of such persons, because the very imitating hath something in it very agreeable to the mind, which allures and captivates its faculties.' [Goodwin ed.]

[1] See pp. 58–60. See also the *Symposiacs* i. 1, where is discussed the question of why we take delight in hearing those that represent the passions of men angry or sorrowful, and yet cannot without concern behold those who are really so affected.

life from art, but he discriminated between the artistic excellence of noble and of ignoble conduct. To such subjects as Chaerephanes painted he all but denied the name of art, for they represent conduct false and temporary, and stand for nothing permanent nor structural. The nobler the types of character which the poet imitates the more will his work be artistic. Aristotle would have had little sympathy with one who could find matter for artistic approval in the ugly or in the immoral, however correctly delineated.

We find further evidence that Plutarch did not appreciate Aristotle's conception of the proper subject-matter for art in his use of the terms *ἤθη*, *πάθη*, and *πράξεις*, since, although he employed them freely, he did not appreciate their combined idea, for he robbed the expression *men acting* of its Aristotelian significance by using *ἔργα*, *πράγμα*, and *πρᾶξις* quite interchangeably.[1]

Turning now to the consideration of the *nature* of aesthetic imitation, we find such expressions in the above passage as *likeness* (*ὅμοιον*), *truthfulness* (*εἰκός*) *consistency* (*πρέπον*), *reproduction to the life* (*ἐφίκηται τῆς ὁμοιότητος*), and *naturalness* (*πιθανῶς*) bringing us face to face with the question of the relation of poetry to truth. Is poetry a reproduction of life as it appears to the outward eye, or is it rather a reproduction of that archetypal existence of which life as we commonly see it is but a reflection?

The answer is furnished by the chapter of the essay on poetry which discusses poetic deception (c. ii.). I venture to outline the thought of this rather incoherent passage: The poets falsify both intentionally and unintentionally; intentionally in two ways, and first through the use of plot. To gain an audience the poet weaves a fabric of fiction. This is winsome and engaging in proportion to its illusion

[1] See the *Essay on Poetry* c. iii: *ἐν οἷς μάλιστα δεῖ τὸν νέον ἐθίζεσθαι, διδασκόμενον ὅτι τὴν πρᾶξιν οὐκ ἐπαινοῦμεν ἧς γέγονεν ἡ μίμησις, ἀλλὰ τὴν τέχνην εἰ μεμίμηται προσηκόντως τὸ ὑποκείμενον. ἐπεὶ τοίνυν καὶ ποιητικὴ πολλάκις ἔργα φαῦλα καὶ πάθη μοχθηρὰ καὶ ἤθη μιμητικῶς ἀπαγγέλλει—; ἀλλὰ τοὐναντίον ἡ πρὸς τὸ πρόσωπον ὑποψία διαβάλλει καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ τὸν λόγον —.*

and its probability, but illusion and probability must be secured in spite of a departure from the events of real life and from the fixed truth. Actual events are not pleasant to contemplate, but poetry is made attractive by so shaping events that an agreeable *dénouement* results. This makes the writer of fiction relatively indifferent to truth, and therefore Socrates, the champion of truth, found it impossible to invent plots, and was forced to borrow the fables of Aesop when he would write poetry.

Again, the poets falsify intentionally by attributing to the gods or to the dead, actions which are untrue to their natures, or by putting faulty moral sentiments in the mouths of characters. These things they do to secure emotional effects, wherefore one must not surrender himself unduly to the influence of poetry, but must remember its deceptive juggling, and bear in mind that the poet is an enchanter whose magic it is not safe to trust.

The poets also falsify unintentionally. They are constantly giving utterance to doctrines which are vicious and dangerous in their tendencies, such as the doctrine that death is pitiable, and the want of burial a terrible disaster. The reason for this is that since his productions may be entertaining and convincing without much heed to morality, the poet is not compelled to search out the basic ethical truths.

Returning now to the point of departure, in the light of this chapter there is little trouble in understanding what Plutarch means by *likeness, truthfulness, consistency, reproduction to the life,* and *naturalness.* Evidently he means nothing more than that poetry reproduces life with an acceptable degree of probability. There is no hint that poetry unveils the lovely figure of nature in her essential truthfulness, nature which, aside from poetry, is seen only in imperfect outline. Plutarch thinks poetry less truthful than real life, because it is concerned with what has never actually taken place. He fails to discriminate between actuality and truth.

Here we are at the opposite pole from Aristotle, who

conceived of poetry as more truthful than history, because free to present life as it ought to be, life as it would be under ideal conditions,[1] and who held that seriousness is an essential quality in poetry, since such action as reveals the inner significance of life must be grave and great. To the following words in the above passage: 'Since now poetry also frequently describes base actions, and unseemly emotions and characters, the youth must not confound their artistic admirableness and success with truth, or rank them as beautiful, but is to praise them only as accurate and natural likenesses of the things treated,' Aristotle would probably have rejoined: 'One must of necessity confound artistic admirableness with truth, for there can be no artistic excellence apart from truth; you cannot present an accurate likeness of an object if truth be absent, else your likeness will be but a superficial and spiritless semblance.'

In thus failing to discriminate between actuality and truth, Plutarch accords with Plato in his idea of imitation. However, one must bear in mind that the great philosopher's implied distinction between imitative art and art that is sincere finds no correspondence in Plutarch.

If poetry does not express truth in large measure, if it is not based upon that underlying reality, that ἀρχή, which from the time of Thales had stood to the Greeks as both beginning and end, as source and destiny, whither does Plutarch turn for truth? To that source from which poetry has derived what measure of truth it possesses, namely, phi-

[1] Of the relation of poetry to history, Plutarch writes as follows, in the opening paragraph of the *Life of Theseus*: 'As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about, adding notes in the margin to the effect that beyond this lies nothing but sandy deserts full of wild beasts, unapproachable bogs, Scythian ice, or a frozen sea, so, in this work of mine, in which I have compared the lives of the greatest men with one another, after passing through those periods which probable reasoning can reach and real history find a footing in, I might very well say of those that are farther off: Beyond this there is nothing but prodigies and fictions, the only inhabitants are the poets and inventors of fables; there is no credit or certainty any farther.'

losophy. Philosophy is the search for reality; it is the supreme achievement of the mind.[1] With philosophy, poetry, being relatively independent of truth, has no necessary connection. To be sure, poetry may be measurably truthful, may be infused with moral feeling, as are the works of Homer, yet it is none the less poetry if it be false and a violation of moral teaching, as is much dramatic and lyric poetry.

Plutarch's unrestricted use of the term *poetry* explains what might seem endless contradiction in his writings. Since poetry is so inclusive a term, embracing indifferently the bad as well as the good, he can entertain Plato's fears lest poetry mislead and injure youth, and, on the other hand, he can commend the Homeric poems as the formative influence in the life of his favorite hero, Alexander.[2] He can

[1] See *Of the Training of Children* c. x: 'We ought to make philosophy the chief of all our learning. . . . There is but one remedy for the distempers of the mind, and that is philosophy. For by the advice and assistance thereof it is that we come to understand what is honest, and what dishonest; what is just and what unjust; in a word, what we are to seek, and what to avoid. We learn by it how we are to demean ourselves towards the gods, towards our parents, our elders, the laws, strangers, governors, friends, wives, children, and servants. That is, we are to worship the gods, to honor our parents, to reverence our elders, to be subject to the laws, to obey our governor, to love our friends, to use sobriety towards our wives, to be affectionate to our children, and not to treat our servants insolently; and, which is the chiefest lesson of all, not to be overjoyed in prosperity nor too much dejected in adversity; not to be dissolute in our pleasures, nor in our anger to be transported with brutish rage and fury. These things I account the principal advantages which we gain by philosophy.' *Of the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander the Great*, Orat. ii. c. xi: 'And for my part, I know not how to give a greater applause to the action of Alexander, than by adding the word *philosophically*, for in that word all other things are included.' [These translations are taken from the Goodwin edition.]

[2] *Of the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander the Great*, Orat. ii. c. iv: 'Then again, if any dispute arose or judgment were to be given upon any of Homer's verses, either in the schools or at meals, this that follows Alexander always preferred above the rest: "Both a good king, and far renowned in war (*Il.* iii. 179)," believing that the praise which

even accept the Aristotelian theory[1] that the tragic or epic hero should be a man of noble and heroic parts, one just enough infected with passion to be vulnerable, for he says: 'Poetry is an imitation of character and of life, and of men who are not wholly perfect, pure, and blameless, but in some degree subject to passion, error, and ignorance.'[2]

If now we summarize this discussion of Plutarch's theory of the relation of poetry to nature and to truth, we find that he merely accepted the traditional interpretation of the technical term, imitation, quite failing to comprehend the peculiar significance of the word in the criticism of Aristotle, and, further, that he did not appreciate the distinction which Plato made by implication between imitative and true poetry. As the result of so crude a conception of this significant term in aesthetics, he demanded nothing more of poetry than that it reproduce character, emotion, and action with reasonable probability; poetry may be truthful, but truth is a fundamental requisite only in philosophy.

There remains for consideration Plutarch's theory of the end of poetry. The traditional Greek view of the mission of poetry is concretely expressed in the following sentence from Strabo: 'The ancients called poetry a kind of elementary philosophy, which introduces us to life while we are yet youths, and teaches character, emotion, and action through pleasure.'[3] In accordance with this theory, the poets, especially Homer, were taught in the schools, the boys committing choice passages; and, as we know from St. Chrysostom, this custom was followed among the Greeks even as late as the fourth century.[4] That this traditional

another by precedence of time had anticipated was to be a law also unto himself, and saying that Homer in the same verse had extolled the fortitude of Agamemnon and prophesied of Alexander.'

[1] *Poet.* xiii. 2–3; xv. 8. [2] See p. 74. [3] i. 2. 3.

[4] *Orat.* xi. p. 308: 'To accept this inspired and wise man (Homer), and to teach his words to youth even from infancy.' See also Plato, *Protagoras* 326: 'And when the boy has learned his letters and is beginning to understand what is written, . . . they put into his hands the works of great poets, which he reads at school; in these are contained many admonitions, and many tales, and praises, and encomia of

and persistent theory of the incidental character of pleasure in poetry was inherited by the Romans is clear from passages in Lucretius, Horace, and other writers.[1]

It is very difficult to determine just how far Plato departs from this accepted theory of the purpose of poetry. The moral bias was so great with him that it prevented his recognizing with satisfactory clearness the view to which his poetic sensitiveness would naturally have made him incline. After he has declared that art should make men temperate, brave, and altogether virtuous,[2] he yet feels that all has not been said, and he is ready to admit that the excellence of art may be gauged by pleasure, provided it is the kind of pleasure that may be experienced by 'the one man preëminent in virtue and education,'[3] for 'the view which identifies the pleasant and the just and the good and the noble has an excellent moral and religious tendency.'[4]

ancient famous men, which he is required to learn by heart, in order that he may imitate or emulate them, and desire to become like them.' See Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 95 ; Xenophon, *Symposium* iii. 5.

[1] Lucretius i. 936 : 'But as physicians, when they attempt to give bitter wormwood to children, first tinge the rim round the cup with the sweet and yellow liquid of honey, that the age of childhood, as yet unsuspicious, may find its lips deluded, and may in the meantime drink of the bitter juice of the wormwood, and though deceived, may not be injured, but rather, being recruited by such a process, may acquire strength; so now I, since this argument seems generally too severe and forbidding to those by whom it has not been handled, and since the multitude shrink back from it, was desirous to set forth my chain of reasoning to thee, O Memmius, in sweetly-speaking Pierian verse, and, as it were, to tinge it with the honey of the Muses ; if perchance, by such a method, I might detain thy attention upon my strains, until thou lookest through the whole nature of things, and understandest with what shape and beauty it is adorned.' [Watson.] See Horace, *Art of Poetry* 333–334 :

> To teach—to please—comprise the poet's views,
> Or else at once to profit and amuse. [Howes.]

[2] *Laws* ii. 660. [3] Ibid. 659.

[4] Ibid. 663. See Pater, *Plato and Platonism* c. x, for the theory that 'art for art's sake' is anticipated by Plato. Pater bases his opinion upon this passage : *'Αρ' οὖν καὶ ἑκάστῃ τῶν τεχνῶν ἔστι τι συμφέρον ἄλλο ἢ ὅτι μάλιστα τελέαν εἶναι* ; but see Saintsbury, *Hist. of Criticism* i. 2. 17–19, for the opposite view.

In Aristotle we find the first critic who declares unqualifiedly for the hedonistic theory. Pleasure is, indeed, the end of fine art, for the subject of all art is the beautiful, and the beautiful is only perfect when enjoyed.[1] A work of art is excellent in proportion as it furnishes its distinctive pleasure to the man of good taste,[2] and such pleasure, far from being vulgar, is noble and refined. Pleasure being the end of fine art, the standard of correctness in poetry and ethics is therefore not the same; to be sure, the pleasure afforded by art must not violate moral feeling,[3] but this for aesthetic, rather than for moral, reasons, since action represented in poetry in which the moral values are wanting is not correctly delineated, and therefore is not good imitation.[4]

Plutarch nowhere says what he considers the end of poetry to be, if indeed it ever occurred to him that poetry in itself may have an end. However, the opening and closing chapters of the essay on poetry are an appeal to those having charge of youth so to direct their reading that poetry will serve the end of introducing them to philosophy. Poetry should be the fitting-school for philosophy, the vestibule to its temple; it should 'prepare and predispose the young man's mind to the teachings of philosophy,' so that, 'without prejudice, he may advance to the study of philosophy in a gracious, friendly, and congenial spirit.'[5]

Not all poetry, however, may thus be turned to account, for only a limited number of poems have good moral influence. Consequently youth must be taught to discriminate between those which are helpful and those which are harmful.

Again, lest the youth fail to catch the moral lessons implied in the better poetry, the teacher must by example encourage him to discover parallelisms between poetry and philosophy, as it were wedding the strength of the one to the beauty of the other.[6]

[1] See Erdmann, *Hist. of Philosophy*, for a longer discussion of the relation of beauty and pleasure in Aristotle.

[2] *Poet.* xxvi. 1. 7. [3] Ibid. xiii. 2. [4] Ibid. xxv. 19.

[5] See pp. 95–96. [6] See pp. 93–96.

But what of pleasure? Plutarch takes it for granted that all poetry furnishes pleasure.[1] Why, then, it may be asked, is not pleasure the end of fine art? It may be that Plutarch thinks it is, but, in that case, he considers it an unworthy end; wherefore poetry should be turned out of its natural channel, and made to serve an artificial end. Pleasure is to be regarded as a sauce, as a disguise for making attractive doctrines which, stated in philosophical and serious form, would fail to interest the young.[2]

This subordination of pleasure is by no means an easy matter, and the temptation to read for the sake of pleasure alone is great. Consequently, special care must be taken lest one yield unduly to the charms of poetry, and accept unawares the false views of life which often lie concealed beneath its engaging surface.[3]

Now, having discussed the differences between poetry and prose, the relation of poetry to nature and to truth, and the end of poetry, the various conclusions should be brought together to afford a synthetic view of Plutarch's theory of the art. First, poetry, a gift of rare temperaments, is the intelligent expression of strong feeling in metrical language; secondly, it does not necessarily bear any very close relation to truth, and is therefore inferior to philosophy, the supreme study; finally, the element of pleasure must occupy a subordinate place in our study of poetry, for poetry is to be regarded first and foremost as an introduction to philosophy.

If, in conclusion, we would view this theory of poetry in the broader light of Plutarch's work as a whole, we can best do so through the comprehensive summary offered by Professor Christ: 'Finally, to sum up the writings and the philosophy of our author, Plutarch was one of the most accomplished, most amiable, and most prolific writers of the period of the empire, who, through his astonishing acquaintance with books, offers us invaluable compensation for the many and great losses which the Greek literature of the classical, as of the Alexandrian, period has suffered.

[1] See §§ i, ii, iii, vii, xiv. [2] See p. 49. [3] See § i.

But he was not simply an illustrious connoisseur of classical literature and history, for he had also appropriated the spirit of genuine humanity and Greek culture, and turned it to account in word and deed. In him with broad culture and exalted morality were joined extreme moderation in praise and censure, simple candor, and an optimistic philosophy, which together make the reading of his works as engaging as it is elevating.

'But yet these qualities are not enough to make Plutarch a Greek of the age of Pericles. The vulgarity of the times and the optimistic tranquillity of his nature suffer in him no high aspirations and no burning zeal for independence. The narrowness of his ethical creed prevents him from appreciating unfettered originality in art and poetry, and his conservative traditionalism clouds his vision. Not only do we miss logical sequence of thought, but the power of creative thought as well, and we can neither praise him as a critical historian, nor as an original philosopher, nor, finally, as a good grammarian. . . . One ventures to call him the classicist of the time of the empire, and yet he is far, far from possessing the sincere and unadorned grace and the creative originality of the classical period.'[1]

[1] *Handbuch d. k. A.* vii. 556.

THE LIFE OF ST. BASIL AND THE ADDRESS TO YOUNG MEN

The *Address to Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature* is not the anxious admonition of a bigoted ecclesiastic, apprehensive for the supremacy of the Sacred Writings. Rather, it is the educational theory of a cultured man, whose familiarity with classical learning and enthusiasm for it were second only to his knowledge of the Scriptures and zeal for righteousness. No student of the classics in Christian times has been more significantly placed for estimating justly the peculiar excellencies and defects of the Greek learning, and no other scholar has written with a truer perspective, and with more sanity, large-mindedness, and justice. These qualities in the address can be adequately appreciated only after the reader has become acquainted with the remarkable life of the author.

Moreover, the appreciation of the address demands not only that its pages be read in the light of the author's career, but also that the place of the essay in the development of ecclesiastical philosophy be understood.

Accordingly the following pages will attempt to give, first a survey of the life of Basil, and secondly, a review of the varieties of attitude assumed toward classical learning by those ecclesiastics who wrote prior to the time of Basil.

St. Basil was born at Caesarea in the year 329, in a home of culture and piety. His father, who came from a family which had stood high in military and civic affairs, followed the profession of rhetoric, and was a man of wealth and of public spirit, noted for his benefactions. His grandmother Macrina, and mother St. Emmelia, were to him a Lois and a Eunice, and trained him in the Holy Scriptures from his infancy. Thus Basil grew up in an atmosphere of gentleness, of learning, and of Christian fervor. It is a sufficient comment upon this home life that of the ten children four

became saints, St. Macrina, St. Gregory Nyssen, St. Peter, and St. Basil; that three became bishops; and that St. Basil is one of thirteen upon whom the Catholic Church has conferred the title of Doctor Ecclesiae.

When a lad, Basil was sent to Byzantium to study under Libanius, the celebrated rhetorician and sophist, then at the height of his popularity. Under this teacher the youth was trained in the felicities of Greek expression, and from him derived that love for Greek literature which led him, at the age of twenty-one, to seek the refined atmosphere of Athens, the centre of learning, and the home of arts and letters. To this city resorted the most promising young men of Europe and Asia, and there they devoted themselves to the acquisition of learning with an intensity which rivaled the most flourishing days of the schools at Alexandria.

Basil was welcomed to Athens by a Cappadocian youth who had himself but just arrived, Gregory Nazianzen, and the two young men soon became fast friends. They were well adapted to each other, for the judicial exactness of Basil, and his poise—one might almost say his melancholy—were happily complemented by Gregory's intellectual brilliancy, and his liveliness of disposition. Of this friendship Gregory wrote as follows: 'It was one soul which had two bodies. Eloquence, the most inspiring pursuit in the world, incited us to an equal ardor, yet without creating any jealousy whatever. We lived in each other. We knew but two walks: the first and dearest, that which led to the church and its teachers; the other, less exalted, which led to the school and its masters.' [*Orat.* 43.]

A third young man who shared to some extent in this friendship was Julian, the cousin of Constantius II, then a scholarly recluse and a Christian, but soon to become emperor and an apostate.

Within a very short time, their attainments in scholarship and their remarkable ability as public speakers gave Basil and Gregory an enviable reputation, not only in Athens itself, but in every other city where learning was fostered.

After five years spent in Athens, and when he was giving every promise of an exceptional career, Basil suddenly announced his purpose to leave the city; he had been coming to feel that, with all of its learning, Athens laid emphasis upon the less essential things, that, as he expressed it, 'life there was hollow blessedness.' In this feeling Gregory to some extent shared, and accordingly decided to leave with his friend. When the day of departure arrived, companions and even teachers crowded around and besought them to stay, even offering violence; but although they prevailed for the time upon the more yielding Gregory, Basil was resolute, and retired to Caesarea.

For a short period he practiced law in his native city, yet, despite his brilliant *début,* his heart was not in his work, and he decided to escape from business cares and renounce the world. Accordingly, that he might determine what kind of retirement would prove most agreeable, 'he traveled over much sea and land,'[1] and visited the hermits in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor. On his return he sought out a wild and beautiful retreat in Pontus, where, surrounded by lofty crags, a mountain stream tossing and leaping near by, and a lovely plain spread out beneath, he erected a monastery, and established a brotherhood. This was in 358.

For four years he led here a serene and joyous life, devoted to prayer and psalmody, the study of the inspired writers, and peaceful labor. In the course of time he experienced the pleasure of a visit from his beloved friend, and years later Gregory drew a charming picture of those happy days, in which he recalled with equal pleasure the songs of praise in the rustic chapel, and the little plane-tree which he had planted with his own hands.[2]

Occasionally Basil left his retreat to preach to the country people, or to perform deeds of mercy, as when, for example, in the course of a famine he sold his lands to provide bread for the starving inhabitants of the province. It was characteristic of the man that Jews, pagans, and Christians were treated with equal consideration.

[1] *Epistle* 204. [2] *Epistle* 6.

But this attractive life was not allowed to be permanent, for Basil was summoned to Constantinople to aid the bishop of Ancyrus in his struggle with Eunomius, the new and forceful exponent of the Arian heresy. Henceforth he was never long absent from public life.

In 362 occurred an event which occasioned bitter enmity between Basil and Gregory and their college friend Julian, and threatened great injury to the cause of the church. Julian, then emperor, had invited Basil to Rome, and he was preparing to embark, when word was received that upon the standards of the army the cross of Christ had been replaced by the images of the gods. Basil correctly interpreted this as indicative of apostasy, and refused to have any further intercourse with the Emperor. Julian was greatly angered, and in retaliation decreed that the study of the classics should be denied to Christians. These were his haughty and ironical words: 'For us are the eloquence and the arts of the Greeks, and the worship of the gods; for you, ignorance and rusticity, and nothing else, I fear; so, your wisdom.'[1] This was indeed bitter revenge, for the Church had found her hold upon classical learning the most effective weapon against the pagans. The indignation of Gregory gives some idea of the consternation which this decree occasioned, and of the value which he and his friend placed upon classical learning: 'I forego all the rest, riches, birth, honor, authority, and all goods here below of which the charm vanishes like a dream; but I cling to oratory, nor do I regret the toil, nor the journeys by land and sea, which I have undertaken to master it.'[2]

This announcement promised to be but the beginning of a series of persecutions, but death providentially cut short the career of Julian in 363.

In the following year Basil was ordained priest by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, but the fame which his sermons upon the death of Julian secured for the young priest aroused

[1] Villemain, *L'Éloquence Chrétienne au Quatrième Siècle* 106.
[2] Migne, *Patr. Graec.* xxxv. 636.

the jealousy of the bishop, and Basil retired to Pontus. However, by his modest conduct he succeeded in regaining the friendship of Eusebius, and after three years was recalled to help check the Arian heresy. His learning, his ability as an orator, and his fearless but gentle conduct, all fitted him for such a task.

In 370, despite much bitter opposition, not simply on the part of strangers, but from his own uncle as well, Basil was raised to the episcopate of Caesarea. The task which devolved upon him as bishop was to cultivate a spirit of harmony and of whole-hearted service among his clergy, and, both in his own province and indirectly in the neighboring provinces, to cherish the orthodox faith as outlined in the Nicene creed.

In many respects this was the most trying period in the history of the early Church. Christians were no longer called upon to be martyrs, as had been the case a century before, but the wealth and prestige to which the Church had attained was impairing that simplicity which had made the Church of the first centuries so effective. As a result, many selfish and ambitious men were attracted to ecclesiastical service, and it was more difficult for even an unselfish man to lead a godly life. Moreover, the Church was divided into many warring factions, such as the Arians, the Semi-Arians, and the Sabellians, the Arians being especially determined and overbearing, because they had gained the support of the emperor Valens. It is to the glory of Basil that at such a time he stood for the Apostolic ideals.

Immediately upon the assumption of his new office Basil set about gaining the good will and allegiance of those of the clergy who had opposed his election. This work was progressing with reasonable expedition, when suddenly he was confronted by the emperor himself and commanded to renounce the orthodox faith. This Basil flatly refused to do, and the cowardly Valens was awed into admiration. Henceforth Basil had nothing to fear from imperial intervention, and yet, because most of the other bishops of the

East had complied with the emperor's demands, the task of supporting the true faith was rendered correspondingly more difficult. The Arians opposed him at every turn, and, what was harder to bear, the Sabellians misinterpreted his motives in trying to win back the Semi-Arians to the true faith by mildness and sympathy, and accused him of heresy. Even some of those who professed the orthodox belief, and who should have supported him in his heroic efforts to preserve the integrity of the faith, misunderstood him, and, most distressing of all, his lifelong friend Gregory accused him of attempting to turn their friendship to selfish ends. Lastly, even the Pope and the bishops of the West turned a deaf ear to his appeals for help. Is it any wonder that a body already weakened by asceticism and wasted by disease gave way in this unequal struggle?

Basil did not live to behold the triumph of the Catholic faith. He saw but the dark hour before the dawn. And yet he was victorious, victorious because he kept the rank and file of the Church in Cappadocia true to the faith of the fathers. The simple folk who hungered and thirsted after righteousness loved and followed him, attracted by his austere living, the sweetness and integrity of his character, his singleness of purpose, and his high thoughts. Small wonder that this was so, for even when oppressed with the duties of his high office and broken in body, he frequently stole away to be with these simple people, to comfort them in their afflictions, and to teach them, in sermons which delight us to-day equally by their Hebraic fervor and their classical form and idiom, to behold God in his handiwork. Listen as he points out to them the glory of the heavens: 'There is our ancient native seat, from which the murderous demon has cast us down. If things created for time are so grand, what will be the things of eternity? If things visible are so beautiful, what will be the invisible? If the immensity of the skies surpasses the measure of human thought, what intelligence can fathom the depths of eternity? If this eye of nature, which so adorns it, this sun, which, though perish-

able, is yet so beautiful, so rapid in movement, so well adapted in size to the world, offers us an inexhaustible theme for contemplation, what will be the beauty of the sun of divine righteousness?'[1]

Or again: 'If the ocean is beautiful and worthy of praise to God, how much more beautiful is the conduct of this Christian assembly, where the voices of men, women, and children, blended and sonorous like the waves that break upon the beach, rise amidst our prayers to the very presence of God!'[2]

Basil's death occurred on January 1st, 379, when he was but fifty years of age. Like many another valiant soldier of the Cross, he died with these words upon his lips: 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit.' The scene at his funeral was an impressive one. The entire province was given over to grief, and pagans and Jews united with Christians in their lamentations. As the funeral procession advanced, many perished in their desire to approach the coffin, but they were accounted happy to die on such a day, and the people called them the funeral victims.

So lived and died this scholar and man of God.

Let us now turn from the life of St. Basil to a brief consideration of the *Address to Young Men* in relation to the attitude assumed by earlier ecclesiastics toward Greek learning.

If we condense the thought of the essay into the fewest words, the result is something as follows: While classical philosophy, oratory, and poetry even at their best do not reveal the truth with absolute accuracy, they yet reflect it as in a mirror; the truth may be seen face to face only in the Scriptures, yet it is possible in the pagan writings to trace, as it were, its silhouette. Accordingly, for those who are not yet prepared for the strong meat of the Scriptures, the study of Greek literature is a valuable preparatory course.

This is virtually the attitude taken toward classical learn-

[1] Migne, *Patr. Graec.* 29. 118–119. [2] Ibid. 29. 94.

ing by several of the early Church writers, and, therefore a survey of so much of the ecclesiastical philosophy as concerns Greek poetry and philosophy will help to establish the antecedents of Basil's essay.

It was inevitable that, when Christianity came in contact with the speculative genius of the Greeks and the Oriental pantheistic naturalism, there should be an effort to advance from Christian faith to Christian knowledge, and to discover a philosophic basis for the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. This first effort was made by the so-called Gnostics, who exerted their greatest influence in the middle of the second century. The Hellenic Gnostics attempted to employ the writings of the Greek philosophers to explain the Scriptures, but the many perplexing questions which they strove to answer soon led them as far away from the doctrines of Plato as from those of Paul. Beginning with the attempt to discover the allegorical significance of the Scriptures, Gnosticism ended in mere chimerical speculation, in mysticism, mythology, and theosophy. It exerted little permanent influence, and by the time of Basil was no longer a force in religious controversy.

Contemporaneously with the flourishing of Gnosticism, however, wrote Justin Martyr, who influenced very much the ecclesiastical writers of the East during the third and fourth centuries. As a young man Justin made a thorough study of the Greek philosophy, being especially attracted to the writings of Plato and of the Stoics, but as he grew older his admiration for the fortitude of the Christians, and for their sublime faith—an admiration which was intensified by his growing distrust in the sovereignty of human reason—led him to embrace Christianity. Henceforth he was the champion of the new religion. This, however, was not at the expense of Greek philosophy, for his breadth of view enabled him to recognize the worth both of the profane and of the Sacred Writings.

Justin bases his philosophy upon the Logos of John's Gospel. Wherever truth is found, it is an expression of the

divine Logos; Plato, Homer, Pythagoras, and Solon received partial revelations of it, and indeed it reveals itself somewhat to every man, though the one perfect and complete revelation is Christ, who is the Logos incarnate.

For our present purpose we need observe in detail only that phase of Justin's philosophy which is concerned with classical literature. Greek philosophy and poetry are to be esteemed highly, because, to an unusual degree, they express the divine revelation. Not only did such men as Homer and Plato experience revelations of the truth, but they were also familiar with the teachings of Moses, and indeed with all of the Old Testament. Such doctrines in Plato as eternal punishment, the immortality of the soul, and the freedom of the will, were borrowed from the early Jewish books.[1]

Of the other four prominent apologists of the second century, Tatian, Hermas, and Theophilus condemn and ridicule Greek philosophy, and Athenagoras assumes an attitude similar to that of Justin. Tatian, who was an Assyrian, abused all things Greek with barbaric severity,[2] Hermas wrote an *Abuse of the Pagan Philosophers,* and Theophilus called the doctrines of the Greek philosophers foolishness.[3] Athenagoras, on the other hand, esteemed the Greek philosophers, and quoted them in support of the unity of God, a truth which he believed the Spirit had revealed to them despite the prevailing polytheism of their country.[4]

The closing years of the second century and the first half of the third were engrossed in the controversy which the Gnostics had aroused. Anti-Gnosticism found its most spirited champion in Tertullian, the foremost Latin ecclesiastical writer of the early centuries. Tertullian believed that Christianity alone possessed the truth, that philosophy was the source of all heresies, and that Plato and other Greek philosophers, though they had stolen certain isolated truths

[1] See *Apology* i. 44; *Cohortatio ad Graecos* 14.
[2] See *Oratio ad Graecos* 2.
[3] See *Ad Autolycus* i. ii. iii.
[4] See *Supplicatio* v.

from Moses, which they arrogated to themselves, were exponents of falsehood. So extreme was his antipathy to philosophy that he eventually declared: *Credo quia absurdum est.*

On the other hand Clement of Alexandria and his pupil, Origen, the founder of the school to which Basil, Gregory Nyssen, and Gregory Nazianzen adhered, endeavored to separate the true from the false in Gnosticism. Both of them laid much stress upon the value of Greek philosophy.

Ueberweg gives the following comprehensive digest of Clement's views concerning the relation of the pagan writings to the Scriptures: 'Clement adopts the view of Justin, that to Christianity, as the whole truth, the conceptions of ante-Christian times are opposed, not as mere errors, but as partial truths. The divine Logos, which is everywhere poured out, like the light of the sun (*Stromata* v. 3), enlightened the souls of men from the beginning. It instructed the Jews through Moses and the prophets (*Paedagogus* i. 7). Among the Greeks, on the contrary, it called forth wise men, and gave them, through the mediation of the lower angels, whom the Logos had appointed to be shepherds of the nations (*Strom.* vii. 2), philosophy as a guide to righteousness (*Strom.* i. 5; vi. 5). Like Justin, Clement maintains that the philosophers took much of their doctrine secretly from the Orientals, and, in particular, from the religious books of the Jews, which doctrine they then, from desire of renown, falsely proclaimed as the result of their own independent investigations, besides falsifying and corrupting it (*Strom.* i. 1. 17; *Paed.* ii. 1). Yet some things pertaining to true doctrine were really discovered by the Greek philosophers, by the aid of the seed of the divine Logos implanted in them (*Cohortatio* vi. 59). Plato was the best of the Greek philosophers (ὁ πάντα ἄριστος Πλάτων, ... οἷον θεοφορούμενος, *Paed.* iii. 11; *Strom.* v. 8). The Christian must choose out that which is true in the writings of the different philosophers, *i. e.,* whatever agrees with Christianity (*Strom.* i. 7; vi. 17). We need the aid of philoso-

phy in order to advance from faith (πίστις) to knowledge (γνῶσις). The Gnostic is to him who merely believes without knowing as the grown-up man to the child; having outgrown the fear of the Old Testament, he has arrived at a higher stage of the divine plan of man's education. Whoever will attain to Gnosis without philosophy, dialectic, and the study of nature, is like him who expects to gather grapes without cultivating the grapevine (*Strom.* i. 9). But the criterion of true science must always be the harmony of the latter with faith (*Strom.* ii. 4).'[1]

Of Origen, who was the last ecclesiastical philosopher of influence in the Eastern church prior to the fourth century, it is enough to say that he assumed the same attitude toward the Greek writers as did his master.

One who has read Basil's essay will readily appreciate the similarity between the views of Basil and those of Justin, Athenagoras, Clement, and Origen. The chapters in the essay might almost be arranged as expositions of the various elements in the above digest from Clement's writings. There is the same belief in the partial inspiration of the Greek poets and philosophers, the same advocacy of the study of Hellenic literature as an introduction to the study of Christianity, the common credence in the indebtedness of Plato and other philosophers to Moses and the Prophets, and the like insistence upon life as a growth, and upon knowledge as the complement of faith.

To summarize this brief review: For at least two centuries before Basil wrote his *Address to Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature* efforts had been made to determine the true relation between Greek learning and Christianity. Some writers bitterly opposed Hellenic philosophy and poetry, others recognized that it contained a partial revelation of the truth. To the latter view Justin and his followers inclined, and among these followers one of the most pronounced is Basil.

[1] *Hist. of Philosophy* i. 314.

HOW A YOUNG MAN SHOULD STUDY POETRY

OUTLINE

I. General introduction. Poetry renders philosophy attractive to young men; therefore, even though it embraces things bad as well as good, it is to be studied, and the youth is to exercise his judgment in discriminating between true and false ideas.

II. Introductory principle. Poets deceive, sometimes wittingly, sometimes unwittingly; wittingly, by the use of invented plots, dramatic devices, and characters who live or speak untruthfully; unwittingly, by giving expression to erroneous, though sincere, ideas.

III. Again, poetry is an imitative art, and the imitation is good or bad according as the object is faithfully or unfaithfully reproduced.

IV. The young man is to observe whether the poet indicates his own attitude toward the words and acts of his characters; the poet may do this by embodying his own explanations in the context, or he may make his characters pass judgment upon one another, or he may teach his lessons by the fate which attends his characters. Further, disgusting speeches which for any reason are not refuted in the context may be canceled by contradictory sentiments from the same author; if this cannot be done, then by contradictory sentiments from other authors.

V. The youth is to study the phrasing in order to get the exact meaning of a passage.

VI. He is to study a word which admits of more than one interpretation, as *ἀρετή*, *εὐδαιμονία*, in order to discover in just what sense it is used.

VII. Certain principles from Aristotle. The effectiveness of poetry as an imitative art lies in probability, and in likeness to reality. Consequently, to secure variety and

complication, reversals of fortune are employed, and these necessitate characters capable of error.

VIII. Therefore the youth must not accept unchallenged the words of a character, nor put his stamp of approval on all, but must boldly and confidently distinguish between the good and bad acts of a man.

IX. It is most important to inquire the poet's reason for every utterance; if this is not done, the young man will be victimized by absurd and vicious declarations.

X. He should not overlook the half-hidden excellencies in a poem, such as the difference between the actions of a gentleman and of a boor in similar situations, or between the conduct of Greeks and of barbarians.

XI. While one reads poetry to cull the flowers of history, and another to enjoy the beauty of the diction, the lover of honor and virtue should read it to dwell upon examples of manliness, temperance, and justice.

XII. Passages which look very suspicious from one point of view, may contain good lessons if viewed from another; but if they allow of no good interpretation, what hinders us from so altering the thought that it may conform to our ideas?

XIII. Generalizations are not to be confined to the one specific thing to which they are at first applied by the poet, but should be transferred to other things of a like character; this will help young men to become familiar with truth, and so teach them self-control and generosity.

XIV. The refined and helpful sentiments found in poetry should be strengthened by comparison with the teachings of philosophy. Indeed, if we wed poetry to philosophy we rob it of its fictitious element and lend it seriousness.

Conclusion. Young men need to be guided in their reading, in order that their study of poetry may serve as the natural and pleasing introduction to philosophy.

HOW A YOUNG MAN SHOULD STUDY POETRY

I

Whether or not, Marcus Sedatus, the saying of Philoxenus[1] the poet be true, that the most savory meat and fish are those which are not meat and fish at all, we would leave to the judgment of those to whom Cato said that their palates were more sensitive than their hearts. But a statement that strikes me as admitting of no controversy is, that very young men enjoy the most those philosophical precepts which are not delivered in philosophical and serious form, and that such they accept and adopt. For not only the fables of Aesop and the fictions of poets, but the *Abaris* of Heraclides[2] and Ariston's[3] *Lyco*, and, if they are embodied in fiction, the doctrines relating to the soul, are read with keen zest from cover to cover. Wherefore not only are they to observe due moderation in the pleasures of eating and drinking, but still further in their hearing and reading must they become accustomed to indulge in pleasure merely as a relish,[4] and to seek for the useful and the wholesome. For barred gates do not secure a city if a single entrance is open to the enemy, nor does continence in the pleasures of the other senses save a youth if he unwittingly betrays himself through the ear. And the

[1] Dithyrambic poet (435–380 B.C.) of Cythera. *The Banquet*, fragments of which survive, gives an account of the luxury of the Sicilian table.

[2] Learned author, born probably 378 B.C., who studied under Plato and Aristotle, accepted the Pythagorean philosophy, and wrote on philosophy, natural science, mathematics, music, grammar, history and poetry.

[3] Stoic philosopher, about 275 B.C., who taught at Athens. Ariston maintained that the chief good consists in indifference to everything except virtue and vice.

[4] See Introduction, pp. 29–31 and notes.

better his grasp of the products of thought and reason, the more, if care be not taken, is he injured and corrupted.[1]

Since now it is not possible, nor perhaps desirable, to prevent young men of the size of my Soclarus and your Cleandrus from reading the poets, let us keep a very careful watch over them, as they have more need of guidance in their reading than in their walks. Accordingly it occurred to me to send you in writing the discourse concerning poetry which I had occasion to deliver recently. Please run through it yourself; and if you find it worth at least as much as the so-called amethyst-plant, which some men wear in their drinking-bouts as a charm against drunkenness, then hand it to Cleandrus, and thus charm him betimes, making sure of his tastes and affections; they will prove the more tractable to such an appeal, since the boy is no dunce, but thoroughly observant and quick to learn.

'In the head of the polypus dwell both good and ill;'[2] the plant is very good to eat, but, they say, disturbs one's sleep with confused and unnatural dreams. Likewise in poetry there is much good and nutritious food for a young man's mind, which becomes no less a source of confusion and distraction to him if his study of poetry is not guided aright. For of poetry as of Egypt it may be said, that, for those using its products, it yields 'herbs in greatest plenty, many that are healing in the cup and many baneful.'[3] 'Therein are love, and desire, and loving enticement, that steals the wits even of the wise.'[4] Indeed the charms of poetry do not appeal to those who are altogether stupid and void of understanding. Wherefore to one who asked Simonides,[5]

[1] See Plutarch, *Symposiacs* vii. 5; *That we Ought to Preserve Ourselves from Pleasure arising from Bad Music;* where, though at greater length, the same ideas are expressed and even the same illustrations are employed. Schlemm, 8–13, argues that Plutarch is here influenced by the ideas of the Peripatetics, and quotes at length from Aristotle. See Plato, *Repub.* iii. 387.

[2] See Plutarch, *Symposiacs* viii. 10. 1.

[3] *Odys.* iv. 230.

[4] *Il.* xiv. 216.

[5] One of the great lyric poets (556?—468? B.C.); noted for the tenderness and sympathy of his poems. 'His sunny temper and his easy philosophy of life made him welcome wherever his vocation called him.'

why, of all men, the Thessalians were the only ones whom he could not deceive, he replied that they were too stupid to be cajoled by him. Likewise Gorgias[1] called tragedy a deception, wherein he who deceived was more just than he who did not deceive, and he who was deceived was wiser than he who was not deceived. Shall we then stop the ears of our young men with a hard and impenetrable wax, as the ears of the Ithacans[2] were stopped, and compel them, as it were, to add the Epicurean sail, and to flee past poetry under full sail and with all oars out? Rather, shall we not bind them in subjection to right reason, and guide and guard their judgments, lest pleasure turn them aside to their hurt! 'Nay moreover even Drya's son, mighty Lykurgos'[3] did not show good judgment when he went about cutting down the vineyards because many were given to drunkenness and rioting; instead, he should have seen that wells were nearer at hand to act as a corrective, so that, as Plato puts it,[4] the drunken god would be held in check by the sober one. For water mixed with wine does not affect its usefulness, and removes what is hurtful. Accordingly, we should not cut down nor utterly destroy the muse's vine, poetry, but where fiction and drama, bold and presumptuous from ungoverned delight in popular applause, luxuriate and grow wild, we must lay hold of them to prune and restrain them, and where poetry affects one by its poetic grace, and its sweetness and attractiveness are not fruitless and barren, there let us introduce philosophy to be mingled with it.

For as when the mandrake grows beside the vineyard it imparts its influence to the wine, and makes the sleep of those who drink it more refreshing, so when poetry tempers

[1] Rhetorician and sophist, contemporary of Socrates; he inaugurated an elaborate and artificial style, which was much imitated.

[2] *Odys.* xii. 37–101. See p. 104.

[3] *Il.* vi. 130.

[4] *Laws* vi. 773: 'For there is a difficulty in perceiving that the city ought to be well mingled like a cup, in which the raging draught overflows and spills, but when chastened by another god not drunk with wine, receives a fair admixture and becomes an excellent and temperate drink.'

its fictitious creations with the principles of philosophy, it makes study easy and attractive to young men. Wherefore poetry is not to be scrupulously avoided by those who intend to be philosophers, but they are to make poetry a fitting-school for philosophy, by forming the habit of seeking and gaining the profitable in the pleasant, and of utterly resisting and spurning that poetry in which they find no profit.[1] For this discrimination is the beginning of education, and, according to Sophocles, 'If an undertaking begins well, the chances are it will end well.'[2]

II

In introducing the young to the study of poetry, one should take care that nothing is more thoroughly understood and kept in mind than that the bards often falsify, sometimes intentionally, and sometimes unintentionally. This they do intentionally, since they think that the severity of truth is less adapted to that pleasing grace of expression which captivates most people than is fiction. In actual life events do not change, however unpleasing the outcome, but fiction steps aside and turns with the greatest ease from that which distresses to that which gives pleasure. For neither metre, nor tropes, nor harmony of construction is so winsome and engaging as a well-woven fabric of fiction.[3] Just as color in

[1] See § 14.

[2] See Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 246. Compare the last two paragraphs with the similar passage in Plutarch's essay *Of Moral Virtue* 12,

[3] See Aristotle, *Poet.* vi. 9–11: 'But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life,—of happiness and misery; and happiness and misery consist in action, the end of human life being a mode of action, not a quality. Now the characters of men determine their qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character. Character comes in as subsidiary to the action. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without character.' iv. 14: 'The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of the tragedy.' viii. 4: 'As therefore, in the other imita

a painting is more effective than line, because more lifelike and illusive,[1] so in poetry a probable fiction[2] is more impressive and acceptable than the fixed truth, which is without plot, and simple in metre and diction.[3] Wherefore, when, at the instigation of certain dreams, Socrates undertook to write poetry, of which the fictitious is an essential element, because he was unable to fabricate plausible and clever fictions, having been the champion of truth all his life, he undertook to turn into verse the fables of Aesop. And though we have known of sacrifices without pipes and dances, we have never known of a poem without plot and fiction. Thus the verses of Empedocles[4] and Parmenides,[5] Nicander's[6] verses on antidotes to poisons, and the maxims

tive arts, the imitation is one, when the object imitated is one, so the plot, being an imitation of an action, must imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that if any one of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed.'

[1] Ibid. vi. 5 : 'The most beautiful colors, laid on confusedly, will not give as much pleasure as the chalk outline of a portrait.'

[2] Ibid. viii. 4 : 'The universal tells us how a person of given character will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of probability or necessity.'

[3] Ibid. vi. 7 : 'Every tragedy, therefore, must have six parts, which parts determine its quality—namely, Plot, Character, Diction, Thought, Scenery, Song.' See also Introd., pp. 24–25.

[4] Empedocles (about 450 B.C.), who acquired great fame and influence by his talents and varied attainments in science, maintained that the world is developed from, or compounded of, four primary elements, fire, earth, air, and water, and that there are two forces, love and hate (attraction and repulsion). Of his poem on *Nature*, important fragments are extant. According to the custom of the time it was written in dactylic hexameters. See *Poet.* i. 8.

[5] The most notable of the philosophers of the Eleatic School (b. about 519 B.C.). 'His work on *Nature* was divided into three parts : (1) an introduction, describing in highly figurative language the manner in which the philosopher reached the citadel of truth ; (2) a treatise on Truth ; and (3) a treatise on Opinion.'

[6] Didactic poet of the second century B.C. The poem here mentioned, the *Theriaca*, is extant. 'The author has sought to enliven the ungrateful theme by digressions and descriptions.'

of Theognis,[1] borrowed the poetic form and dignity only as a sort of riding-carriage, to avoid footing it.

Once more, when anything absurd or distressing about the gods, or departed souls, or virtue, is expressed in the poetry of a famous and illustrious man, he who takes such statement for the truth is misled and corrupted by error,[2] but he who always remembers and keeps clearly in mind the deceptive juggling of poetry, and is able to say to it at every turn, '"O cunning device, more wily than the lynx,"[3] why, when jesting, dost thou knit thy brows, and why, when deceiving, dost thou pretend to teach?' such a one, I say, will not suffer harm nor be misled in his belief. Rather he will check his fears lest Poseidon rip open the earth and lay bare the infernal regions,[4] and he will restrain his anger against Apollo for killing the chief of the Achaeans, when he reads that, 'The man who sang his praises at the banquet and uttered these words, was the very one who slew him.'[5] Likewise he will repress his tears for Achilles and Agamemnon in Hades,[6] as they stretch forth impotent and feeble hands in supplication for life. And if at any time he is disturbed by sufferings, and the enchantment of poetry is prevailing against him, he will not hesitate to say to himself, as Homer very aptly said in his Necyia—considering how attentive women are to fiction—'But haste with all thine heart toward the sunlight, and mark all this, that even hereafter thou mayst tell it to thy wife.'[7] Such are the things that the poets purposely invent.

But there are other conceptions not feigned at all, but to which, since they themselves entertain and believe them, the poets impart a false color, as when Homer says of Zeus, that he 'set therein two lots of dreary death, one of Achilles,

[1] Elegiac poet of the sixth century B.C. 'In the verses that have been preserved under his name, 1,389 in number, we have the creed of a Doric oligarch set forth for the instruction of a young favorite who belonged to the same order.'

[2] See Plato, *Rep.* ii–iii, where this idea is developd at length.

[3] Nauck 694. [4] *Il.* xx. 57 ff. [5] Nauck 694.

[6] *Odys.* xi. 384 ff. [7] *Odys.* xi. 222.

one of horse-taming Hector, and held them by the midst and poised. Then Hector's fated day sank down, and fell to the house of Hades, and Phoebus Apollo left him.'[1] Aeschylus has made a whole tragedy, called *Psychostasia,* out of this legend, in which he introduces Thetis and Eos standing on either side of the balance of Zeus, soliciting favor for their contending sons. Now of course every one sees that this is a plot invented by the poet, and designed to cause the hearer pleasurable fear. But this passage on the other hand, 'Zeus, that is men's dispenser of battle;'[2] and this other, 'When 'tis God's will to bring an utter doom upon a house, he first in mortal men implants what works it out;'[3] express the judgments and convictions of those who thus discover and betray to us how deceived and ignorant they are concerning the gods.

Again when, in necromancy, conjurations by gruesome names are employed to call up spectres, visions of burning rivers, savage wastes, and terrible tortures, very few fail to perceive that there is here a copious mixture of the fabulous and false, as of poison with food.[4] Neither Homer nor Pindar nor Sophocles believed that he was telling the truth in such passages as 'Thence the sluggish streams of murky

[1] *Il.* xxii. 210. See Plato, *Rep.* ii. 379: 'Then we must not listen to Homer or any other poet who is guilty of the folly of saying that:

"At the threshold of Zeus lie two cakes full of lots, one of good, the other of evil;"

And that he to whom Zeus gives a mixture of the two—

"Sometimes meets with good, at other times with evil fortune;"

But that he to whom is given the cup of unmingled ill—

"Him wild hunger drives over the divine earth."

And again—

"Zeus, who is the dispenser of good and evil to us."'

[2] *Il.* 4. 84.

[3] Nauck 39. The translation is after Plumptre.

[4] See Plato, *Rep.* iii. 386–387: 'Well, I said, and if they are to be courageous, must they not learn, besides these, other lessons also, such as will have the effect of taking away the fear of death? . . . I said, we shall have to obliterate obnoxious passages, beginning with the verse,—

"I would rather be a serf on the land of a poor portionless man who is

might disgorge the endless darkness;'[1] 'Past the streams of Oceanus and the White Rock . . . they sped;'[2] 'The narrow straits of Hades and the ebbing of the deeps.'[3]

On the other hand, whenever the poets deplore death as pitiable, or the want of burial as terrible, and utter in trembling tones such sentiments as the following: 'Leave me not unwept and unburied as thou goest hence;'[4] and 'His soul, fleeting from his limbs, went down to the house of Hades, wailing its own doom, leaving manhood and youth;'[5] and 'Cut me not off untimely, for sweet it is to see the light; force me not to see the realms below;'[6] they express the convictions of men who have suffered because they have

not well to do, than rule over all the dead who have come to naught."—(*Odys.* xi. 489.)

We must also expunge the verse—

"He feared lest the mansions grim and squalid which the gods abhor should be seen both by mortals and immortals."—(*Il.* xx. 64.)

Or again—

"O heavens! is there in the house of Hades soul and ghostly form but no mind?"—(*Il.* xxiii. 103.)

Again—

"To him (Teiresias) alone had the gods given wisdom; the other souls do but flit as shadows."—(*Odys.* x. 495.)

Again—

"The soul flying from the limbs had gone to Hades, lamenting her fate, leaving strength and youth."—(*Il.* xvi. 856.)

Again—

"And the soul, with shrilling cry, passed like smoke beneath the earth."—(*Il.* xxiii. 100.)

And—

"As bats in hollow of mystic cavern, whenever any of them dropping out of the string falls from the rock, fly shrilling and hold to one another, so did they with shrilling cry hold together as they moved."—(*Odys.* xxiv. 6.)

'Also we shall have to reject all the terrible and appalling names which describe the world below—Cocytus and Styx, ghosts under the earth, and sapless shades, and any other words of the same type, the very mention of which causes a shudder to pass through the inmost soul of him who hears them.'

[1] Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici* i. 426.
[2] *Odys.* xxiv. 11.
[3] Nauck 246.
[4] *Odys.* xi. 72.
[5] *Il.* xvi. 856.
[6] Euripides, *Iph. Aul.* 1218.

been prepossessed and deceived by error, and such ideas cling to us and distress us the more because we are filled to the full with the same impotent passion which gave them utterance.

Now we may fortify ourselves against such ideas by bearing in mind from the very first that poetry is not much concerned about the truth; indeed, what the truth is in regard to these matters, even those men who give their undivided attention to the search for truth confess that they find it very hard to determine. Therefore let us have these words of Empedocles at hand, 'So eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the mind of man comprehended these things;'[1] and these of Xenophanes,[2] 'No man ever lived, nor ever shall, who knows the truth about the gods and a thousand other things;'[3] and especially let us remember the passage from Plato in which Socrates denies knowledge of these things.[4] For when young men see that these matters make the heads of philosophers swim, they will pay less heed to the poets.[5]

[1] Mullach, *Fr. Phil. Graec.* i. 2.

[2] Founder of the Eleatic School of philosophy; flourished in the second half of the sixth century B.C. 'His epic poems have for their themes, *The Founding of Colophon*, and *The Colonization of Elea*, but his reputation rested on his didactic poem, *On Nature*, and on his satires, in which he attacked the doctrines of other philosophers and poets. He was a zealous upholder of monotheism.'

[3] Mullach i. 103.

[4] *Phaedo* 69: 'In the number of whom (the philosophers) I have been seeking, according to my ability, to find a place during my whole life, whether I have sought in a right way or not, and whether I have succeeded or not, I shall truly know in a little while, if God will, when I myself arrive in the other world: that is my belief.'

[5] See Introd. pp. 24–28, for discussion of this section.

III

We shall still more thoroughly ground the young man, if, on introducing him to poetry, we explain to him that it is an imitative art and agent,[1] analogous to painting. Not only must he be made acquainted with the common saying that poetry is vocal painting, and painting, silent poetry,[2] but we must also teach him that when we see a painting of a lizard, an ape, or the face of Thersites, our pleasure and surprise are occasioned, not by the beauty of the object, but by the likeness of the painting to it. For it is naturally impossible for the ugly to be beautiful, but it is the imitation which is praised, if it reproduce to the life either an ugly or a beautiful object. On the contrary, if an ugly object is represented as beautiful, we deny the truthfulness or the consistency of the picture. Now there are some artists who paint shameful actions: thus Timotheus[3] pictured Medea killing her children; Theon[4] showed Orestes murdering his mother; Par-

[1] See Introd. pp. 18–24.

[2] In the essay entitled *Whether the Athenians were More Renowned for their Warlike Achievements or for their Learning* c. iii, Plutarch attributes this saying to Simonides: 'Indeed, Simonides calls painting silent poetry, and poetry speaking painting. For those actions which painters represent as occurrent history relates as past. And what the one sets forth in colors and figures, the other relates in words and sentences; only they differ in the materials and manner of imitation.' See also Horace, *Art of Poetry* 361 ff.:

> For poems are like pictures: some appear
> Best in the distance, others standing near;
> This loves the shade, while that the light endures,
> Nor shuns the nicest ken of connoisseurs;
> This charms for once, and then the charm is o'er,
> While that, the more surveyed, still charms the more.

[3] A statuary and sculptor who belonged to the later Attic school of the time of Scopas and Praxiteles. He was one of the artists who executed the bas-relief which adorned the frieze of the mausoleum, about 352 B.C.

[4] Of Samos, a painter who flourished from the time of Philip onward to that of the successors of Alexander. The peculiar merit of Theon was his prolific fancy.

rhasius,[1] Odysseus counterfeiting madness; and Chaerephanes,[2] the unchaste converse of women with men. In such instances it is especially important that the young man come to understand that we do not praise the action imitated, but the art, provided the subject is treated accurately. Since now poetry also frequently describes base actions and depraved emotions and character, the youth must not confound their artistic admirableness and success with truth, nor rank them as beautiful, but is only to praise them as accurate and truthful likenesses of the things treated. For as we are annoyed when we hear the grunting of a hog, the noise of pulleys, the whistling of the wind, and the roaring of the seas, but are pleased if any one imitates them with naturalness, as Parmenio did the hog,[3] and Theodorus the pulleys, and as we avoid the unpleasant sight of an unhealthy man with festering sores, but take pleasure in witnessing the *Philoctetes* of Aristophon[4] and the *Jocasta* of Silanion,[5] which are realistic likenesses of wasting and dying persons, so when the youth reads what Thersites the fool, or Sisyphus the debaucher, or Batrachus the brothel-keeper says or does, he must be taught to praise the genius and the art which imitates, but to censure the subjects and actions with opprobrium.[6] For the excellence of a thing

[1] A contemporary and rival of Zeuxis, who flourished 400–380 B.C. Zeuxis deceived the birds by his painted grapes; Parrhasius deceived Zeuxis himself by his painting of a curtain.

[2] Better known as Nicophanes: Greek painter, younger contemporary or successor of Apelles, but inferior to him; he chose subjects of a meretricious character for his painting.

[3] See Introd. p. 22, note.

[4] A painter of some distinction. See Introd. p. 22, note.

[5] A distinguished statuary in bronze. His statues belonged to two classes, ideal and actual portraits. Of the former, the most celebrated was his dying Jocasta, in which a deadly paleness was given to the face by the mixture of silver with the bronze. His statue of Sappho, which stood in the Prytaneum at Syracuse in the time of Verres, is alluded to by Cicero in terms of the highest praise. See Introd. p. 22, note.

[6] See Milton, *Apology for Smectymnuus*: 'By the firm settling of these persuasions, I became, to my best memory, so much a proficient, that

and the excellence of its imitation are not the same; fitness and naturalness constitute excellence, but to things base the base is natural and fit. To be sure, the boots of Demonides the cripple, which, when they were lost, he wished might fit the feet of him who stole them, were sorry objects, but they fitted him. Take also the following passage, 'If one must needs do wrong, let it be for power's sake;'[1] and this, 'Gain a reputation for fair dealing, and you may do the deeds of a knave;'[2] and, 'A talent for my dowry! Shall I not have it? Can I live if I slight it? Shall I meet with sleep if I chance to loose it? Will I not suffer hell's torments if I sin against a silver talent?'[3] these are false and villainous speeches, but suited to Eteocles, Ixion, and an old griping usurer. If now we suggest to young men that the poets do not commend and praise these sentiments, but assign disgusting and base words to base and disgusting characters, they will not get wrong notions about the poets. On the contrary, their suspicion of the character will extend to his acts and words, the assumption being that the words and acts of a base man must likewise be base.[4] Of such a sort is the representation of Paris stealing away from the battle to lie with Helen; for as this lascivious and adulterous fellow is the only man whom the poet represents as lying with a woman in the daytime, it is clear that he regards incontinence as a shame and a reproach.[5]

if I found those authors anywhere speaking unworthy things of themselves, or unchaste of those names which before they had extolled, this effect it wrought with me—from that time forward their art I still applauded, but the men I deplored.'

[1] Euripides, *Phoeniss* 524. See Cicero, *De Off.* iii. 21. 82: 'Nam si violendum est jus, regnandi gratia violandum est.'

[2] Nauck 652.

[3] Meineke, *Fragmenta Comicorum Graecorum* iv. 668.

[4] See *Poet.* xxv. 8.

[5] *Il.* iii. 380–461. See *Symposiacs* iii. 6. 4, for similar comment on this episode.

IV

In such passages one must observe very carefully whether or not the poet gives any intimation that he himself is displeased with these ignoble sentiments. Instance Menander in the prologue to his *Thetis:* 'Now sing to me, goddess, of such a maid, bold, youthful, and enticing, ever sinning, ever wronging others, ever shutting her doors to men, and craving ever, loving no man, though always feigning love.'[1] But Homer is the most particular of all the poets in this respect, for condemnation precedes the expression of base sentiments, and commendation, of the good. Of commendation, note the following: 'So straightway he spake a sweet and cunning word;'[2] 'He stood by his side, and refrained him with gentle words.'[3] And as for condemnation, his testimony is all but a command to us not to use nor heed disgusting and base speeches. Thus, when he is about to narrate how uncivilly Agamemnon treated the priest, he premises, 'Yet the thing pleased not the heart of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, but he roughly sent him away,'[4] intimating that such an act is brutal, hard-hearted, and unbecoming. And when he attributes these rash words to Achilles, 'Thou heavy with wine, thou with face of dog and heart of deer,'[5] he passes this judgment upon them, 'Then Peleus' son spake again with bitter words to Atreus' son, and in no wise ceased from anger,'[6] for it is against reason that words spoken in such anger and bitterness should be just. In a similar way he passes comment upon actions; thus, 'He

[1] Meineke iv. 131.

[2] *Odys.* vi. 148.

[3] *Il.* ii. 189.

[4] *Il.* i. 124.

[5] See Plato, *Rep.* iii. 390: 'What again of this line,—

"O heavy with wine, who hast the eyes of a dog and the heart of a stag." (*Il.* i. 225.)

And of the verses which follow? Would you say that these or any other impertinent words which private men are supposed to address to their rulers, whether in verse or prose, are well or ill spoken?

They are ill spoken.'

[6] *Il.* i. 223.

said, and devised foul entreatment of noble Hector, stretching him prone in the dust beside the bier of Menoitios' son.'[1] He also makes good use of the criticism which one character passes upon another, for registering his own opinions of actions and speeches, as when he makes the gods say of the adultery of Ares, 'Ill deed, ill speed! The slow catcheth the swift.'[2] And notice the intimation in Hera's resentment of the disdain and arrogance of Hector, 'So spake he boastfully, and queen Hera had indignation,'[3] and observe the following in the light of Pandarus' shooting, 'So spake Athene, and persuaded his fool's heart.'[4] Now every attentive reader will notice such condemnations, which are expressed in the very words of the text.[5]

But other hints are embodied in the actions. Thus Euripides is said to have replied to those who found fault with his Ixion as an impious and dirty fellow, 'Nay, but I did not take him off the stage until I had fastened him to a torturing wheel.' This teaching by implication is also used by Homer, and offers helpful and subtle comment upon those very fables most often misconstrued. For some men distort these stories, and pervert them into allegories,[6] or what the men of old times called hidden meanings.[7] Thus they say that the real meaning of the adultery of Aphrodite and Ares, discovered by Helios,[8] is that when the star called Ares comes in conjunction with Aphrodite, bastardly births are produced, and that, since the sun rises and discovers them, they are not concealed. So will they have Hera's arraying herself for Zeus and the enchantment of the girdle[9] to mean the purification of the air in the vicinity of fire. As if the poet had not interpreted these episodes! For in the fable of Aphrodite, he teaches the attentive student that light

[1] *Il.* xxiii. 24. [2] *Odys.* viii. 329. [3] *Il.* viii. 198. [4] *Il.* iv. 104.

[5] See Schrader, *Porphyrio, Quaestt. Homer.* 313–315, for observations similar to these.

[6] See Saintsbury, *History of Crit.* i. 2. 10, and Schlemm, 32–36, for a discussion of the extent and character of early allegorical interpretation. Such interpretation is rejected by Plato; see *Rep.* ii, and *Phaedrus.*

[7] *ὑπονοίαι.* [8] See *Odys.* viii. 265–367. [9] *Il.* xiv. 152–352.

music, wanton songs, and obscene talk make for impure characters, unmanly lives, and natures given over to luxury and effeminacy, 'changes of raiment, and the warm bath, and love, and sleep.'[1] And therefore he brings in Odysseus bidding the bard, 'Come now, change thy strain, and sing of the fashioning of the horse of wood,'[2] thus teaching rightly that musicians and poets should take their themes from men of reason and understanding.[3] In the fable of Hera he teaches most effectively that intercourse and favors secured from men through drugs, sorcery, and cunning not only are short-lived, inconstant, and soon cloying, but are quickly turned to displeasure and loathing when once passion has spent itself. This is exemplified by the way Zeus threatens Hera, when he says to her 'that thou mayest know if it profit thee at all, the dalliance and the love wherein thou didst lie with me, when thou hadst come from among the gods and didst beguile me.'[4] For if the disgrace and harm to the doer is embodied in the representation and imitation of a base act, the reader is helped rather than hindered. At any rate, philosophers employ examples from history for our correction and instruction, and the poets only differ from them by inventing and presenting fictitious narratives. Be it in jest or earnest, Melanthius[5] was wont to say that the salvation of Athens depended upon the dissensions and quarrels among the orators; for thus not all the citizens took the same view, and in this diversity was a preventive of harm. Similarly the contradictions in the poets offset one another, so that the balance cannot incline unduly toward that which is hurtful. Therefore, when a comparison of one passage with another exposes a contradiction, we ought to adhere to the better sentiment, as in

[1] *Odys.* viii. 249. [2] *Odys.* viii. 492.

[3] See like comment in Schrader, 74–75.

[4] *Il.* xv. 32. See *Rep.* iii. 390, for Plato's comment on these episodes of Zeus and Hera and of Ares and Aphrodite.

[5] An Athenian tragic poet, of whom little is known beyond the attacks made on him by Aristophanes and the other comic poets. The most important passage respecting him is in the *Peace* of Aristophanes (796 ff.). Several specimens of his celebrated wit are preserved by Plutarch.

these instances: ' "Many times, my son, the gods ruin men;" " 'Tis easy to lay blame on the gods;" '[1] and again, ' "Much wealth is thine, but they are bankrupt;" "Accursed the rich fool;" '[2] ' "What then, must you kill yourself with sacrificing?" "Indeed it is no hardship to reverence the gods." '[3] Such contradictions need not trouble a young man, if, as I have said, we teach him to fix upon the better sentiment.

But when absurd sayings are not refuted in the context, they are to be canceled by contradictory sentiments occurring elsewhere in the same author, and we are not to be vexed with the poet because of such absurdities, nor to judge him harshly, but to accept them as playful masquerading. So, if he wishes, when he hears of the gods hurling one another from heaven, wounded by mortals, and quarreling and brawling,[4] he may say to Homer, ' "Yet thou hast it in thee to devise other sayings more excellent than this,"[5] and certainly you give utterance to far better thoughts elsewhere, as "The gods that live at ease;"[6] "Therein the blessed gods are glad for all their days;"[7] "This is the lot the gods have spun for miserable men, that they should live in pain; yet themselves are sorrowless." '[8] For these are sound and true opinions of the gods, but those above were only feigned to cause men fear. Again, when Euripides says, 'By many an artifice the gods, who are our betters, cause us to stumble,'[9] it is well to return a better answer in the words of Euripides himself, 'If the gods do anything base, they are no gods.'[10] And when in a very bitter and provoking way Pindar says, 'We must stop at nothing that will enfeeble our enemy, once our friend,'[11] we shall answer, 'But you yourself say that "Unrighteous pleasure awaits the bitterest end." '[12] So when Sophocles says, 'Sweet is the gain which falsehood brings,'[13] we shall rejoin, 'But we have heard you say that "False words produce no fruit." '[14]

[1] Nauck 345. [2] Ibid 542. [3] Nauck 694.
[4] See Plato, *Rep.* ii. 378; iii. 390; and pp. 104–105. [5] *Il.* vii. 358.
[6] *Il.* vi. 138. [7] *Odys.* vi. 46. [8] *Il.* xxii. 525. [9] Nauck 519.
[10] Ibid. 355. See Plutarch, *The Contradictions of the Stoics 33.*
[11] *Isthm.* iv. 48. [12] Ibid. vii. 47. [13] Nauck 246. [14] Ibid. 246.

Again, to what the same author says of riches, 'The inaccessible and the accessible alike open up to wealth, while nowhere may the man who earns his daily bread compass his heart's desire, even by entreaty; riches truly make the unshapely body fair to see, and cause the ineloquent man to speak with skilful tongue,'[1] may be opposed many of his own words, such as these: 'From honor, poverty doth not debar;'[2] 'Poverty is no reproach to him whose thoughts are noble;'[3] 'Wherein are a multitude of fine things a boon, if the fool's anxiety is the price paid for blessed wealth?'[4] Menander undoubtedly stirred up and inflamed the love of pleasure by the following amorous and burning lines, 'Everything that has life and with us beholds the common sun is the slave of pleasure;'[5] but at another time he pursues a different course and inclines us to virtue, checking the rage of lust, when he says, 'An infamous life is a reproach, however sweet it be.'[6] These lines are contrary to the former, and both better and more profitable. Accordingly, such comparison and critical examination of passages either inclines one to the better, or at least destroys one's confidence in the worse.

But if any of the poets do not themselves offer an escape from those things which they have said amiss, it is well to employ the contrary sentiments of other famous men, so that the better may outbalance the worse. Thus, when Alexis[7] tempts people with these words, 'The wise man must needs heap up pleasures, and three there are which have the power to make life fully and finally complete: to eat, to drink, to follow after wanton sports; and if other pleasures be added to these, they are to be counted over-measure,'[8] we must remember that Socrates, in far different strain, says that 'Bad men live that they may eat and drink, but good men eat and drink that they may live.' And to offset the

[1] Ibid. 118. [2] Ibid. 247. [3] Ibid. 247.

[4] Ibid. 207. [5] Meineke iv. 266. [6] Ibid. iv. 282.

[7] Comic poet; b. B.C. 392. 'One of the most important and prolific writers of the Middle Attic Comedy, yet living as he did to the age of 106, he reached far into the period of the New Attic Comedy. The part of the parasite was considered his special invention.'

[8] Meineke iii. 518.

sentiment of the man who wrote, 'Against the knave, knavery itself is no bad tool'—as it were commending us to become like the knave—we are to use the words of Diogenes,[1] who, being asked how a man might revenge himself upon an enemy, said, 'by being an honest and upright man himself.' Diogenes may also be cited against Sophocles, who caused utter despair to multitudes of men when he wrote thus about the mysteries: 'Thrice happy mortals they who behold these mysteries ere the journey to Hades; to them alone is it given there to enjoy life's vigor; on others all ills attend.' For when Diogenes heard some such thing, 'What then,' says he, 'shall Pataecion the thief enjoy a better lot than Epaminondas,[3] simply because he was initiated?' And when Timotheus[4] in the theatre was extolling Artemis, calling her 'mad, inspired, possessed, frenzied,'[5] Cinesias[6] straightway shouted back, 'May thy daughter be such a one.' Similarly, when Theognis[7] said, 'Naught may he say or do who bears the yoke of poverty; his tongue is bound,'[8] Bion[9] cleverly replied, 'How comes it then that thou thyself, being so poor, so copiously pratest and chatterest in this manner?'[10]

[1] See pp. 117. [2] Nauck 247.

[3] Statesman and general; b. at Thebes about 418 B.C. Epaminondas was the successful leader of the Thebans in their wars with the Spartans, showing remarkable military genius. 'He left a pure and exalted reputation as a patriot, a statesman, and a sage, and is universally admitted to have been one of the greatest captains of antiquity. Cicero expressed the opinion that Epaminondas was the greatest man that Greece had produced.'

[4] The most admired Greek musician of his day; flourished towards the close of the fourth century, B.C. His innovation consisted in the use of a chorus in rendering the so-called Nome, and in the employment of mimetic action to enliven the delivery. [5] Bergk 3. 620.

[6] Probably the dithyrambic poet ridiculed by Aristophanes.

[7] See p. 54. [8] 177. [9] A Cyreniac philosopher of the third century B.C., noted for his sharp sayings.

[10] Schlemm attributes the ridicule of allegory in this chapter, and the moral interpretation of Homer, to the influence of lost Peripatetic writings, the discussion of the contradictions in the poets to the Stoics, and the chronologically impossible anecdotes in the last paragraph to Plutarch's ingenious association of the famous words of poets and philosophers.

V

Nor is the context to be ignored as a factor in correct interpretation. Just as physicians believe that, although the cantharides is deadly, its feet and wings are efficacious in nullifying the effect of the poison,[1] so in poetry if any noun or verb in the context can make a better case out for a passage, it should be eagerly taken up with and noted. This method should be employed in the following verses, 'Lo this is now the only due we pay to miserable men, to cut the hair and let the tear fall from the cheek;'[2] 'This is the lot the gods have spun for miserable men, that they should live in pain.'[3] For Homer does not say that for absolutely every man the gods have woven a painful life, but for those who are foolish and unreasonable, whom, because wickedness has made them such, he is wont to call wretched and pitiable.[4]

VI

We shall be further helped in our efforts to put the best interpretation upon doubtful passages by observing whether or not a word is used in its ordinary sense;[5] in this a young man should be better trained than in the study of dialects. Thus it is a point in philology, and rather an interesting one too, that ῥιγεδανός (*making one shudder*) means an evil death, for the Macedonians use δάνος as a synonym for death. The Aeolians call victory won through endurance and persistency καμμονίη,[6] (*a staying behind*), and the Dryopians call divinities πόποι (*O strange ones!*).

Further, if we wish to be helped rather than hindered by the poets, it is both profitable and necessary to know how they use the names of gods, as also the terms for evil and

[1] See Dioscorides i. 66. [2] *Odys.* iv. 197. [3] *Il.* xxiv. 526.
[4] See Aristotle, *Poet.* xxv. 8–20, for similar suggestions.
[5] *Poet.* xxv. 8–20.
[6] Ep. for καταμονή, explained by Schol. ἡ ἐκ καταμονῆς νίκη.

good, what they mean by **Τύχη** and **Μοῖρα** (*Fortune* and *Fate*), and whether, as in the case of a number of other words, they use these in one or in many senses. For **οἶκος** (*house, abode*) sometimes means a *material house,* as, 'into his high-roofed home,'[1] and sometimes an *estate,* as, 'My property[2] is being devoured.'[3] Similarly, **βίοτος** (*life*) means *life,* as, 'But Poseidon of the dark locks made his shaft of no avail, grudging him the life.'[4] but also *wealth,* as, 'that others may consume his livelihood.'[5] Again **ἀλύειν** (*mental wandering*) is also used instead of the terms for *sore vexation* and *perplexity* respectively, as 'So spake he, and she departed in amaze and was sore troubled,'[6] and the same word also signifies *boasting* and *rejoicing,* as, 'Art thou beside thyself for joy, because thou hast beaten the beggar Irus?'[7] Likewise **θοάζειν** (*to move quickly*) means *to move,* as in Euripides, 'the whale rushing beyond the Atlantic deeps,'[8] and again, *to sit down* and *to remain seated,* as in Sophocles, 'Why sit ye here, your hands thus wreathed with the suppliant's boughs?'[9]

It is also in good taste, as the grammarians teach, to adapt words to the matter in hand, by construing them from their customary meanings, as in this passage, **νῆ' ὀλίγην αἰνεῖν, μεγάλῃ δ' ἐνὶ φορτία θέσθαι** (*a fresh pittance courteously to decline, but to store up goods in abundance*),[10] for here **αἰνεῖν** (*to tell* or *speak of*) has the meaning of **ἐπαινεῖν** (to *approve, praise,* in the sense of to *decline courteously*), and

[1] *Odys.* v. 42: *οἶκον ἐς ὑψόροφον.*
[2] *B. and L.* read *dwelling.*
[3] *Odys.* iv. 318: *ἐσθίεταί μοι οἶκος.*
[4] *Il.* xiii. 562:
ἀμενήνωσεν δέ οἱ αἰχμὴν
κυανοχαῖτα Ποσειδάων, βιότοιο μεγήρας.
[5] *Odys.* xiii. 419: *βίοτον δέ μοι ἄλλοι ἔδουσι.*
[6] *Il.* v. 352: *ὣς ἔφαθ', ἡ δ' ἀλύουσ' ἀπεβήσετο, τείρετο δ' αἰνῶς.*
[7] *Odys.* xviii. 332: *ἦ ἀλύεις ὅτι Ιρον ἐνίκησας τὸν ἀλήτην.*
[8] Nauck 523: *κῆτος θοάζον ἐξ 'Ατλαντικῆς ἁλός.*
[9] *Oed. Tyr.* 2:
τίνας πόθ' ἕδρας τάσδε μοι θοάζετε
ἱκτηρίοις κλάδοισιν ἐξεστεμμένοι.
Hermann interprets the word as meaning, *come in haste to* this suppliant posture, or *sit in earnest* supplication.
[10] Hesiod, *W. and D.* 641.

ἐπαινεῖν in turn is used instead of παραιτεῖσθαι (*to beg off*). Similarly, in familiar intercourse we say καλῶς ἔχειν (*to be well*), and we bid a thing χαίρειν (*farewell*), when we do not care for it nor wish to receive it. So in the expression ἐπαινὴ Περσεφόνεια (*dread Proserpine*), some say that the force of the adjective is that of παραιτητή (*to be deprecated*).

Now that they may discriminate with equal care in those words which have to do with the weighty and serious affairs of the gods, we should begin by teaching young men that the poets use the names of the gods sometimes to denote *the divine beings* themselves, and sometimes without change to designate *certain elements* which the gods have given and control.[1] Archilochus illustrates this well. When he prays, 'Hear my petition, King Hephaestus, and be gracious to thy suppliant and grant his desire,'[2] plainly he invokes the god himself; but when, in dirge-like measure, he bewails the drowning of his brother-in-law, because he perished without funeral rites, 'Had Hephaestus but proved a purifying garment for his dear head and limbs![3] he applies the name to the *fire* and not to the god. Again, when Euripides says with an oath, 'By star-encircled Zeus and bloody Mars,'[4] he means the gods, but when Sophocles says, 'For the blind unseeing Ares, O dames, with swine-like snout stirs up all ills,'[5] *war* is meant. By the same word we are also to understand *brazen arms* when Homer says, 'Keen Ares hath spilt their dusky blood about fair-flowing Skamandros.'[6]

Analogous to these examples, we must recognize that when the words God and Zeus are employed, the poets sometimes mean *the very God himself,* sometimes *Fortune,* and oftentimes *Fate.*[7] When they say, 'Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida,'[8] and, 'O Zeus, who claims to be more wise than thou?'[9] it is the god himself. But when they call Zeus the cause of all results, saying, 'And hurled down into Hades many strong souls of heroes, so the counsel of Zeus wrought

[1] Compare Schrader 42. 24. [2] Bergk. 2. 404. [3] Ibid. 2. 387.
[4] *Phoen.* 1013. [5] Nauck 247. [6] *Il.* vii. 329.
[7] Teaching of the Stoics; compare Gercke, *Chrysippus, Fragmenta* 32, 36, 99; Plutarch, *Contradictions of the Stoics* 34. [8] *Il.* iii. 276.
[9] Nauck 694.

out its accomplishment,'[1] they have Fate in mind. For the poet does not believe that the god devises ill against men, but he shows the inevitableness with which prosperity and victory wait upon cities, armies and leaders who practise self-control, and with which shame, disaster, and confusion result to those who, like men divided into wrangling factions, yield to passion and error.[2] Fate is also meant in the following: 'It is decreed that the evil plans of mortals shall bear them a full harvest of ills.'[3] But when Hesiod makes Prometheus advise Epimetheus, 'Never receive thou gifts from the Olympic Zeus, but cast them from thee,'[4] the name of the god is used to denote Fortune, for the goods of Fortune, such as riches, marriages, kingdoms, and in short every material thing, the possession of which is without profit to those who are unable to use it wisely, he calls the gifts of Zeus.[5] Therefore he believes that Epimetheus, who is a stupid dolt, must guard against prosperity and fear it, as that which would injure and destroy him. And in another instance he calls that which befalls men by Fortune, God's gift, when he says, 'See that thou never cast poverty in a man's teeth as a deadly ill, for 'tis ever the gift of the blessed gods.'[6] Consequently it is wrong to censure those whom Fortune has made poor, since poverty is alone a reproach, a shame, and a disgrace, when it is attendant upon sloth, impotence, and prodigality. For before men called it by the name of Fortune, they recognized that there was a powerful cause, irregular and uncertain in its movements, the inevitableness of which the human reason could not control, and to define this they used the names of the gods, just as we are wont to call deeds and characteristics, and also even maxims and men, divine and godlike. Thus we may rectify many seemingly absurd statements concerning Zeus, such as the following for example: 'For two urns stand upon the floor of Zeus

[1] *Il.* i. 5. [2] Compare Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* vii. 2. 14; Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* vi. 8. 2. [3] Nauck 695. [4] *W. and D.* 86.
[5] Compare Plutarch, *Of Fortune* 6; Schrader 276. 17.
[6] Ibid. 717.

filled with his evil gifts, and one with blessings;'[1] 'Our oaths of truce Kronos' son, enthroned on high, accomplished not; but evil is his intent and ordinance for both our hosts;'[2] 'For in those days the first wave of woe was rolling on Trojans and Danaans through the counsel of great Zeus'[3] These are spoken of Fortune or of Fate, the causes of which we cannot reason out, and which, in short, are not our concern. But when reasonable and probable sentiments, such as befit a god, are expressed, we are to suppose that the name of the god is used in its strict sense. Note the following instances of this: 'He ranged among the ranks of other men, but he avoided the battle of Ajax son of Telamon, for Zeus would have been wroth with him if he fought with a better man than himself;'[4] 'For Zeus busies himself with the great affairs of men, but passes by the small, and leaves them to the lesser gods.'[5]

It is also extremely important that we take note of other words to which, in many cases, the poets by metonymy give other than their ordinary meanings. Such a word is ἀρετή (*virtue*). For since virtue not only makes men discreet, just, and good, in both word and deed, but without doubt also secures them honor and power, poets see fit to call reputation and power, virtue, just as we indiscriminately call both the olive tree and its fruit ἐλαία (*olive*), and the oak and the acorn φηγός (*oak*). So when a young man reads such passages as these, 'Then the Danaans by their virtue brake the battalions;'[6] 'If death is the common lot of mankind let men die nobly, merging life in virtue;'[7] he should at once appreciate that the poet is speaking of that best and most divine state which we deem to be rightness of reason, excellence of the rational nature, and a normal condition of the soul.[8] But when he reads, 'But for virtue, Zeus increaseth it in men or minisheth it;'[9] and 'Virtue and

[1] *Il.* xxiv. 527. See p. 55, note. [2] *Il.* vii. 69.

[3] *Odys.* viii. 81. [4] *Il.* xi. 540. [5] Hesiod, *W. and D.* 289.

[6] *Il.* xi. 90. L. L. and M. read *valour*. [7] For similar definitions after Zeno, Chrysippus, and Cleanthes compare Diogenes Laertius vii. 89; Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* iv. 34; Stobaeus, *Anthologium* ii.

[8] Nauck 529. [9] *Il.* xx. 242. L. L. and M. read *valour*.

honour upon wealth attend;'[1] let him not sit down in gaping admiration of rich men, as if their silver straightway could purchase virtue, nor let him think that Fortune may increase or lessen his wisdom, but rather let him conceive that the poet used virtue as a synonym for *reputation, power, prosperity,* or some such word. Also, at one time the poet makes κακότης (*evil*) stand for a *wicked and vicious heart,* as in Hesiod, 'For evil is at hand in great abundance,'[2] and at another for some *misfortune* or *ill-luck,* as in Homer, 'For men quickly age in evil fortune.'[3] Then any one would be sadly deceived who thought that the poets, like philosophers, use the word εὐδαιμονία (*happiness*) to denote a perfect habitual enjoyment of all good things, or the completeness of life in accordance with nature, and that they do not frequently misuse the word by calling the rich man happy, and power and reputation happiness. Homer, indeed, uses these words correctly, 'Thus look you, I have no joy of my lordship among these my possessions,'[4] and Menander as well, 'For my much possessions I am called rich by all, but happy by none.'[5] But if, as said above, one does not attend to the metaphorical uses and misuses of the words, Euripides causes much misunderstanding and confusion when he writes, 'Let not a life of weal become a life of woe to me;'[6] or, 'Why honorest thou tyranny, injustice triumphant?'[7] But enough has been said upon this point.

VII

Another principle that must be reiterated in teaching young men is, that while poetry is based upon imitation, and employs embellishment and richness of diction suited to the actions and characters in hand,[8] it does not resign

[1] *W. and D.* 313. [2] *W. and D.* 287. [3] *Odys.* xix. 360. [4] *Odys.* iv. 93.
[5] Meineke iv. 266. [6] *Medea* 598. [7] *Phoeniss.* 549.
[8] *Poet.* vi. 2–3: 'Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play. . . . By "language embellished," I mean

the likeness of the truth, since the charm of imitation is probability.[1] Wherefore such imitation as does not wholly ignore the truth weaves a mixture of virtue and vice into the action. This is done in the poetry of Homer, which completely renounces the principles of the Stoics, who hold that nothing bad can be where virtue is, and nothing good where vice is, but that the ignorant man is ever in error, and the cultured man always right. Such stuff we hear in the schools. But in the life and affairs of the mass of mankind, according to the judgment of Euripides, 'Virtue and vice are never found alone, but blended, as it were.'

Now since poetry does not keep strictly to truth, it makes much use of variety and transitions.[2] For reversals of fortune furnish plots with emotional disturbance, with the unexpected and surprising, upon which deep emotion and delight best attend. But the uncomplicated is not fitted to stir emotion and serve as fiction. Wherefore the poets do not make their characters uniformly victorious, successful, or happy, nor when the gods engage in human affairs are they represented as free from passion and error, lest, through

language into which rhythm, "harmony," and song enter. By "the several kinds in separate parts," I mean that some parts are rendered through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song.'

[1] See p. 22, note 2.

[2] *Poet.* x–xiii: 'Plots are either Simple or Complicated. . . . An action which is one and continuous. . . I call Simple, when the turning point is reached without Reversal of Fortune, or Recognition; Complicated, when it is reached with Reversal of Fortune or Recognition, or both. . . . A Reversal of Fortune is, as we have said, a change by which a train of action produces the opposite of the effect intended; and that, according to our rule of probability or necessity. . . . A Recognition . . . is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune. . . . A perfect tragedy should be arranged, not on the simple, but on the complicated plan. . . . It follows plainly, in the first place, that the change of fortune presented must not be the spectacle of a perfectly good man brought from prosperity to adversity: for this moves neither pity nor fear; it simply shocks us. Nor, again, that of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity; . . . it neither satisfies the moral sense, nor calls forth pity or fear.'

absence of peril and conflict, the poem should fail to excite and astonish.[1]

VIII

Since this is true, we should so guide a youth in his early study of poetry that reverence for names may not lead him to esteem the fair and stalwart heroes as men of wisdom and justice, the perfection of princes, and the standard of all excellence and virtue. For he will suffer harm if he thinks all their acts astonishingly great, and is quite unwilling to disapprove of them himself, or to accept criticism from others, even if it be of those who act and speak as follows: 'For would, O father Zeus, and Athene, and Apollo, would that not one of all the Trojans might escape death, nor one of the Argives, but that we twain might avoid destruction, that alone we might undo the sacred coronal of Troy;'[2] and, 'Most pitiful of all that I heard was the voice of the daughter of Priam, of Cassandra, whom hard by me the crafty Clytemnestra slew;'[3] and, 'So she besought me continually by my knees to go in first unto the concubine, that the old man might be hateful to her;'[4] and, 'Father Zeus, surely none of the gods is crueler than thou.'[5] A young man should not get into the way of praising any such sentiment, nor of showing his clever powers of persuasion in finding excuses and inventing plausible misinterpretations for bad passages; rather let him keep in mind that poetry is an imitation of character and life, and of men who are not wholly perfect, pure, and blameless, but in some degree subject to passion, error, and ignorance, who, how-

[1] See Plutarch's essay *Concerning Music* 16: 'The mixed Lydian moves the affections, and is fit for tragedies. This mood, as Aristoxenus alleges, was invented by Sappho, from whom the tragedians learned it and joined it with the Doric. The one becomes a majestic, lofty style, the other mollifies and stirs to pity, both which are the properties of tragedy.'

[2] *Il.* xvi. 97.

[3] *Odys.* xi. 421.

[4] *Il.* ix. 452.

[5] *Il.* iii. 365.

ever, through strength of character are often changed for the better.[1] For if his mind is thus prepared, a young man will receive no harm from his reading, for while he will be delighted and inspired by wise words and acts, he will not entertain, but dislike, those which are bad. On the other hand, the man who admires indiscriminately and accepts everything, whose judgment is enslaved by his esteem for the names of heroes, like those who affect Plato's humpback and the lisping of Aristotle, will take up with much that is bad before he realizes it.[2]

So a youth must not be timid, nor, like superstitious people in a temple, prostrate himself in holy awe of everything, but must form the habit of pronouncing his judgment with confidence, as, 'This was right and proper;' 'That was not well.' For example, chafing at the delays in the campaign, because he was extremely desirous of winning distinction in arms, Achilles called together an assembly of the soldiers while they were suffering from an epidemic. But being a physician, and noting that the decisive ninth day of the malady was passed, he perceived that the sickness was not an ordinary one nor produced by usual causes, and hence, on rising to speak, he did not harangue the crowd, but counseled the King, 'Son of Atreus, now deem I that we shall return wandering home again;'[3] and he spake well and with due moderation. But when the soothsayer professed fear of the anger of the chief of the Greeks, observing neither wisdom nor moderation, Achilles swore that while he himself were alive no one should lay hands on the old man, 'not even if thou mean Agamemnon.'[4] Here he showed contempt and disdain for his commander. And when he was provoked still more, he unsheathed his sword, thinking to kill the king, which was neither right nor expedient. But straightway he repented and 'thrust the great sword back into the sheath, and was not disobedient to the saying of Athene.'[5] And this last act was right and noble, for

[1] See Butcher, c. viii, on *The Ideal Tragic Hero.*

[2] The attitude taken is Peripatetic; see Ps.-Plutarch, *Of the Life ana Poetry of Homer* 135. [3] *Il.* i. 59. [4] *Il.* i. 90. [5] *Il.* i. 220.

although he was not able wholly to quiet his anger, he yet made it obey the restraints of reason before it was too late. Again, Agamemnon made a fool of himself by his actions and words in the assembly, but in the Chryseis affair acted more as a dignified prince should; for though Achilles 'wept anon, and sat him down apart,'[1] when Briseis was taken away from him, Agamemnon put on board ship, gave to the care of others, and sent away the woman, who, a little before, he declared was dearer to him than his lawful wife. Similarly, when Phoenix was cursed by his father because of the concubine, he said, 'Then took I counsel to slay him with the keen sword; but some immortal stayed mine anger, bringing to my mind the people's voice and all the reproaches of men, lest I should be called a father-slayer amid the Achaians.'[2] Aristarchus[3] was fearful of the effect of this passage, and omitted it; but it served a legitimate purpose, for Phoenix was trying to show Achilles what a thing is wrath, and what men do in anger, heeding neither reason nor advice. The poet also introduces Meleager at first highly wroth with the citizens, and later pacified.[4] Thus by rightly disparaging, he encourages one not to yield to anger, and by praising repentance as right and expedient, encourages one to battle against passion and hold sway over it. But where it is no easy matter to pass judgment, we are to help the young man to distinguish as follows: If when Nausicaa beheld the strange Odysseus she felt the passion of Calypso for him, and because she was passionate and ripe for marriage made such light talk as this to her maidens, 'Would that such an one might be called my husband, dwelling here, and that it

[1] *Il.* i. 349. [2] *Il.* ix. 458.

[3] Grammarian and critic; 222–150 B.C. 'His special excellence lay in textual criticism, in which he showed great acumen, rare powers of divination, and soundness of method. His leading principle of exegesis was the explanation of the author out of himself. He published a large number of corrected texts, with critical signs. The Homeric scholia derive much of their value from the preservation of the criticisms of Aristarchus.'

[4] See *Il.* ix. 527–605.

might please him here to abide,'[1] then her boldness and incontinence were blameworthy. But if, because she recognized his breeding by his language and was charmed by his intelligent address, she wished to marry him in preference to a dancing fop or seaman of her own people, she was to be commended.[2] Again, Odysseus was pleased that Penelope conversed in a free and easy way with the suitors, and that they presented to her robes and other ornaments; now if his pleasure sprang from covetousness and greed, 'because she drew from them gifts, and beguiled their souls with soothing words,'[3] he was a worse panderer than Poliager, the character in the comedy, 'Happy Poliager, who has as paramour a gold-bringing capricorn.'[4] On the contrary, if he thought that the hopes which Penelope held forth, by making the suitors over-confident and blinded to the real issue, would put them more within his power, his pleasure and good spirits were quite proper. Again, after the Phaeacians had set him ashore with his treasure and departed, if by counting it over in such a lonely place, where he was ignorant of the inhabitants, he showed anxiety for his goods, 'lest the men be gone, and have taken back of their gifts upon their hollow ship,'[5] his covetousness deserves to be pitied, or rather, I should say, to be abhorred. But if, as some think, he was doubtful whether or not the land were Ithaca, and thought that to find his goods intact would be proof of the sincerity of the Phaeacians—for, if dishonest, they would not set him down on a strange shore free of charge and leave him there with his possessions untouched—then he used a lawful test, and deserves to be commended for his good sense. Others find fault with his being put ashore while asleep, if indeed the incident really happened, and say that the Tuscans preserve a tradition that he was naturally a sleepy-head, and not liked on that account. But if the sleep was not genuine, but was feigned to relieve him

[1] *Odys.* vi. 254.

[2] See p. 107, for St. Basil's comment on this episode.

[3] *Odys.* xviii. 282. [4] Meineke iv. 667. [5] *Odys.* xiii. 216.

from embarrassment—for he was ashamed to dismiss the Phaeacians without gifts and feasting, yet knew that such festivity would discover him to his enemies—they approve of the episode.[1]

If then we explain this principle of judgment to young men, and without hesitation censure some things and praise others, we shall preserve their characters from corruption, and arouse their emulation of what is good. And especially should we do this in the case of all those tragedies in which actions ignoble and wicked are accompanied by persuasive and subtle words. For there is not much truth in the saying of Sophocles, 'From acts not good, good words may ne'er proceed.'[2] Indeed he himself was wont to connect pleasing speeches and philanthropic motives with base characters and irrational actions. And in a fellow-author you may see Phaedra laying on Theseus the blame of her intercourse with Hippolytus, on the ground of his maltreatment of her.[3] Also in *The Trojan Dames* he allows Helen the same license of speech against Hecuba, who, as Helen thinks, ought to be punished more than herself, because she gave birth to her seducer.[4] Now the young man should not get into the way of thinking anything of this sort clever and shrewd, nor of approving such sophistry, but he should dislike such words more than the licentious deeds they excuse.

IX

Above all it will be of advantage to inquire the reason why each idea is expressed. For while Cato was yet a mere child, though he always minded his tutor, he yet asked the cause and reason of the commands. To be sure, the poets are not to be obeyed as tutors and lawgivers, unless their thought is based on reason. But it will be so based if it is morally good, and, if bad, its utter emptiness will be apparent. Now the average man questions sharply the

[1] Porphyrio offers similar interpretations; see Schrader 117–118; Schlemm proposes a common Peripatetic source.

[2] Nauck 247. [3] Nauck, *Eurip. Fr.* 430[b]. 113. [4] 919.

reasonableness of such words as the following: 'Never at drinking-bouts should we place the ladle upon the mixing-bowl;'[1] and, 'Whensoever a warrior from the place of his own car can come at a chariot of the foe, let him thrust forth with his spear;'[2] while he accepts without question even worse sentiments, such, for example, as the following: 'The consciousness of a father's or a mother's wrong-doing makes a slave of any man, be he ever so daring;'[3] and, 'He whom fortune has opposed must needs think meanly of himself.'[4] And yet these last sentiments affect character and injure a man by debasing his judgment and begetting sordid ideas, unless he is accustomed to ask in reply, 'Why now must he needs think meanly of himself whom fortune has opposed? Why not rather resist it and rise unhumbled? And why, if I am a good and wise son of a parent who is foolish and bad, should I not rather respect myself for my virtue than be dejected and cast down because of his stupidity?'[5] He who can thus stand firm against all such sayings, and not, as it were, surrender himself to every wind of doctrine, and who can recognize the truth of the proverb, 'The dolt loves to feel a thrill at every speech,'[6] will reject such judgments as neither truthful nor profitable. These suggestions will render harmless the study of poetry.[7]

[1] Hesiod, *W. and D.* 744.

[2] *Il.* iv. 306.

[3] Euripides, *Hippol.* 424.

[4] Nauck 695.

[5] See *Of the Training of Children* ii, where Plutarch reasons very differently from this same passage of Euripides: 'For the spirits of men who are alloyed and counterfeit in their birth are naturally enfeebled and debased; as rightly said the poet again,—

A bold and daring spirit is often daunted,
When with the guilt of parents' crimes 'tis haunted.'

[This translation is from the Goodwin edition.]

[6] Mullach 1. 326.

[7] This style of criticism follows Bion, who attacks this same line from Euripides; see Diogenes Laertius iv. 51, and Schlemm's comment, 65.

X

As on a vine the leaves and branches frequently cover up and conceal the ripe fruit, so the diction of poetry and its profusion of fictitious narrative conceal many useful and helpful things from the attention of a young man. Now he ought not to be thus led astray, but rather to give himself wholly to those things which make for virtue and exert a powerful influence upon character. I shall therefore develop this thought, though briefly and only in outline, leaving it to more ostentatious writers to verify and illustrate my ideas. First then, let the youth, knowing well the good and bad respectively in manners and men, turn his attention to the words and deeds which the poet attributes to his several characters. Though he is speaking in anger, Achilles says to Agamemnon, 'Never win I meed like unto thine, when the Achaians sack any populous citadel of Trojan men,'[1] but Thersites addresses him abusively, 'Surely thy huts are full of bronze and many women are in thy huts, the chosen spoils that we Achaians give thee first of all, whene'er we take a town.'[2] Again, Achilles says, 'If ever Zeus grant us to sack some well-walled town of Troy-land,'[3] but Thersites, 'whom I perchance or some other Achaian have led captive.'[4] At another time, when Agamemnon, inspecting the army, speaks abusively to Diomedes, the latter makes no reply, 'but had respect to the chiding of the king revered,'[5] but Sthenelus, a fellow of no account, says, 'Atreides, utter not falsehood, seeing thou knowest how to speak truly. We avow ourselves to be better men by far than our fathers were.'[6] If such differences are not overlooked they will teach a youth to regard modesty and moderation as the marks of gentility, but to shun boasting and bragging as vulgar. It is worth while, in this connection to notice the conduct of Agamemnon; for he passes Sthenelus by without

[1] *Il.* i. 163. [2] *Il.* ii. 226. [3] *Il.* i. 128.
[4] *Il.* ii. 231. [5] *Il.* iv. 402. [6] *Il.* iv. 404.

noticing him, yet he does not neglect Odysseus, but answers him, 'seeing how he was wroth, and took back his saying.'[1] Had he apologized to all, he would have appeared undignified and servile, and had he disdained all, arrogant and unreasonable. Best of all is the conduct of Diomedes, for during the battle he bears in silence the king's abuse, but after the battle deals plainly with him, saying, 'My valour didst thou blame in chief amid the Danaans.'[2]

It is also a good idea to take notice of the difference between the ways in which a discreet man and a pompous soothsayer addresses a crowd. Thus Calchas, since he lacks a sense of the fitness of things, scruples not to denounce the King in public as accountable for the plague. But when Nestor would conciliate Achilles, in order that before the multitude he may not seem to accuse the king of erroneous passion, he advises, 'Spread thou a feast for the councilors; that is thy place, and seemly for thee. . . . In the gathering of many shalt thou listen to him that deviseth the most excellent counsel;'[3] accordingly, after the meal he sends out the elders. This last course tends to correct the mistake, but the other was an insulting accusation.

One should notice as well the differences in racial characteristics. For example, the Trojans rush ferociously to battle with savage cries, but the Greeks 'in silence feared their captains;'[4] for to fear officers in the presence of the enemy is the mark of heroism and obedience. Wherefore Plato was wont to fear reproach and shame more than pains and perils, and Cato said that he liked men who blush better than those who blanch. Then too, a promise has its own

[1] *Il.* iv. 357. [2] *Il.* ix. 34. Compare comments of Porphyrio, Schrader 75. 4; Ps.-Plutarch 168. [3] *Il.* ix. 70.

[4] *Il.* iv. 431. See *Rep.* iii. 389: 'Then would you praise or blame the injunction of Diomedes in Homer—

"Friends, sit still and obey my word (*Il.* iv. 412),"

and the verses which follow—

"The Greeks marched breathing prowess (*Il.* iii. 8.),"

"In silent awe of their leaders (*Il.* iv. 431),"

and other sentiments of the same kind?

They are good.'

peculiar worth; Dolon promises, 'I will go straight to the camp, until I may come to the ship of Agamemnon,'[1] but Diomedes makes no promise, and only says that he will fear the less if a companion be sent with him. Hence foresight is Grecian and civil; rashness, barbaric and rude; the one to be emulated, the other to be avoided.[2]

It is also not unprofitable to notice the state of mind of the Trojans and of Hector, when he and Ajax are about to engage in single combat. When a great cry went up because one of the boxers in the Isthmian games received a blow in the face, Aeschylus said, 'See what training does for one; the spectators cry out, but the man who was struck says not a word!' Likewise, when the poet says that the Greeks rejoiced when they saw Ajax approaching resplendent with armor, but that 'sore trembling came upon the Trojans, on the limbs of every man, and Hector's own heart beat within his breast,'[3] who does not wonder at the difference? The heart of him who risks himself only beats inwardly, as of one engaging in a wrestling-match, or rather in running a race, while the bodies of the spectators tremble and shake in apprehension for the safety of their beloved prince.[4] In the same poet one may observe the difference between a very brave man and the worst of knaves, for Thersites 'was hateful to Achilles above all and to Odysseus,'[5] but Ajax, ever friendly to Achilles, says of him to Hector, 'Now verily shalt thou well know, man to man, what manner of princes the Danaans likewise have among them, even after Achilles, render of men, the lion-hearted.'[6] This is a veritable panegyric of Achilles, and is followed by hearty commendation of the soldiers in general, 'Yet are we such as to face thee, yea, and many of us;'[7] here Ajax does not say that he is the best and only champion, but one of many able to do battle.[8]

[1] *Il.* x. 325. [2] Almost the same words occur in Ps.-Plutarch 149. [3] *Il.* vii. 215. [4] Compare Ps.-Plutarch 135. [5] *Il.* ii. 220. [6] *Il.* vii. 226. [7] *Il.* vii. 231. [8] This sentence closely resembles he scholium of Aristarchus.

Enough now as to this matter of contrasts, unless we wish to add that many a Trojan was taken alive, but not a single Greek, and that some of the Trojans begged for mercy, as, for example, Adrastus, the sons of Antimachus, and Lycaon, and that even Hector besought Achilles for burial, but that no one of the Greeks did such a thing; showing that it is characteristic of barbarians to bow the suppliant knee on the field, but of Greeks to conquer or die.

XI

As in pastures the bee seeks the flower, the goat seeks the bud, the hog the root, and other creatures the fruit and seed, so in reading poetry one man culls the flowers of history, another dwells upon the beauty and the arrangement of words, as Aristophanes, who says of Euripides, 'I delight in his imposing rhetoric,'[1] and still others—and to this class I am now addressing myself—are concerned with those ideas which strengthen character. Such must be made to see how deplorable it is that the lover of fiction should allow nothing of novelty and extravagance in narrative to escape him, and the philologist notice the rhetorical purity of every sentence, but the devotee of honor and virtue, who studies poetry for instruction rather than for pleasure, read with careless indifference writings which commend manliness, temperance, and justice. Take for example the following: 'Tydeus' son, what ails us that we forget our impetuous valor? Nay, come hither, friend, and take thy stand by me, for verily it will be shame if Hector of the gleaming helm take the ships.'[2] For to see a man of preëminent wisdom in danger of utter defeat and death, with all his companions yet fearing the disgrace and dishonor, but not death, will arouse a young man to passionate devotion to duty. The following passage, 'And Athene rejoiced in the wisdom and judgment of the man,'[3] shows the author's sentiment, as he does not make the goddess delight in a man of wealth, or of bodily beauty or strength, but in one who is wise and just. And when elsewhere she says that she does

[1] *Frag.* 397. [2] *Il.* xi. 313. [3] *Odys.* iii. 352.

not disregard nor desert Odysseus, 'So wary art thou, so ready of wit and so prudent,'[1] we are told that of all things pertaining to us virtue alone is dear to the gods and divine, for like attracts like.[2]

To master one's anger not only appears to be a great achievement, but is so in reality, yet it is a far greater by forethought to guard against anger, lest one be betrayed into it or be overpowered by it; therefore it should be pointed out to readers in no uncertain way that Achilles, a man who is neither patient nor mild, exhorts Priam to keep quiet and not provoke him; 'No longer chafe me, old sire; of myself am I minded to give Hector back to thee, for there came to me a messenger from Zeus. . . . Lest I leave not even thee in peace, old sire, within my hut, albeit thou art my suppliant, and lest I transgress the commandment of Zeus.'[3] So he himself washes the body of Hector, and, covering it, places it upon the car before the father is allowed to see it, so mutilated is it, 'lest he should not refrain the wrath at his sorrowing heart when he should look upon his son, and lest Achilles' heart be vexed thereat, and he slay him and transgress the commandment of Zeus.'[4]

It is indeed admirable forethought for the man who is prone to anger, and of a harsh and hasty disposition, not to be unmindful of his weakness, but carefully to guard against the causes of anger, vigilantly anticipating them by the use of reason, in order not to be betrayed unexpectedly. Likewise, the man who is fond of wine must guard against drunkenness, and the passionate man against lust, as Agesilaus[5] did, who would not suffer himself to be caressed by a beautiful person who approached him, and as Cyrus, who dared not look upon Panthea.[6] On the other hand, those who do not know themselves gather fuel for their passions, and are especially hurried on to those

[1] *Odys.* xiii. 332. [2] Eustathius, *Comment. ad Odyss.* 1456. 59, expresses the same thought. [3] *Il.* xxiv. 560. [4] *Il.* xxiv. 584.

[5] Spartan general and king, who began to reign in 398 B.C. Agesilaus made a successful invasion of Asia Minor, and was leader in the wars between Sparta and Thebes, when he fought against Epaminondas.

[6] Xenophon, *Cyropaedia.* See p. 111.

which are evil and destructive. Now Odysseus not only restrains his own wrath, but, seeing from the conversation that Telemachus is dangerously wroth with the knaves, allays the anger of his son, and manages to quiet and pacify him, urging, 'And if they shall evilly entreat me in the house, let thy heart harden itself to endure while I am shamefully handled, yea even if they drag me by the feet through the house to the doors, or cast at me and smite me, still do thou bear the sight.'[1] Just as horses are not bridled during the race, but before it, so those who are very hot-tempered and lack self-control should anticipate their temptations, and so prepare themselves by reason to meet them.[2]

In interpretation, the etymologies of words are also to be noticed with some care, though one must refuse such childish fancies as Cleanthes[3] suggests, who, in such passages as **Ζεῦ πάτερ Ἰδηθεν μεδέων** (*Zeus ruling from Ida*),[4] and **Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε** (*Zeus, Dodonian King*),[5] fancifully explains that the latter should read, **ἀναδωδωναῖε**, from **ἀνάδοσις** (*upward giving*), referring to exhalation from the earth, which Zeus by metonymy sometimes denotes. Chrysippus[6] also quibbles a good deal, for his etymologies, while not altogether childish, are improbable, as when he construes **εὐρύοπα Κρονίδης** (*far-seeing son of Cronos*) to mean Zeus's power of persuasion and logic. But such discussions are better left to the grammarians, while we lay hold instead of those ideas which are both profitable and plausible, such as these, 'Moreover mine own soul forbiddeth me, seeing I have learnt ever to be valiant;'[7] and, 'for he would be gentle unto all.'[8]

[1] *Odys.* xvi. 274. [2] Self-control was a teaching of the Stoics; see Seneca, *De Ira* i. 8. 1; 9. 1; 12. 5.

[3] Stoic philosopher and disciple of Zeno, whom he succeeded as head of the Stoic school (260 B.C.). [4] *Il.* iii. 320. [5] *Il.* xvi. 233.

[6] Eminent Stoic philosopher; born 280 B.C. Chrysippus was a pupil of Cleanthes, and was distinguished for his skill in dialectics and his subtlety as a disputant. He once said to Cleanthes: 'Teach me only your doctrines, and I will find the arguments to defend them.' He was considered to be the greatest Stoic philosopher except Zeno.

[7] *Il.* vi. 444. Compare Ps.-Plutarch 144. [8] *Il.* xvii. 671.

For the poet demonstrates that a manly bearing may be acquired, and believes that the ability to converse kindly and graciously with men comes from experience and attentive observation; therefore, since awkwardness and timidity are expressive of boorishness and ignorance, he urges us not to be neglectful of ourselves, but to learn nobility from our teachers. And the following of Zeus and Poseidon is in strict accord with this thought: 'Verily both were of the same lineage and the same place of birth, but Zeus was the elder and the wiser;'[1] for Homer here argues that wisdom (φρόνησις) is the most divine and kingly quality, and that therein consists the supreme preëminence of Zeus, since it is the source of all the other virtues.

A young man should also become accustomed to give vigilant heed to such sentiments as these: 'And he will not lie to thee, for he is very wise;'[2] 'Antilochus, who once wert wise, what thing is this thou hast done? Thou hast shamed my skill and made my horses fail;'[3] 'Glaukos, wherefore hath such an one as thou spoken thus over measure? Out on it, I verily thought that thou in wisdom wert above all others.'[4] For a wise man does not lie, nor take an unfair advantage in athletic contests, nor bring false accusations against another man. And when the poet says that Pandarus was led by his folly to violate the truce, it is evident that he believes that a man of wisdom would not do an unjust act.

The like is also taught of self-control in such passages as the following, 'Now Proitos' wife, goodly Anteia, lusted after him, to have converse in secret love, but no whit prevailed she, for the uprightness of his heart, on wise Bellerophon;'[5] 'Verily at the first she would none of the foul deed, the fair Clytemnestra, for she had a good understanding;'[6] for in these the poet represents self-control as resulting from wisdom. And when in the instances of hortatory addresses during battles he says, 'Shame, ye Lykians,

[1] *Il.* xiii. 354. [2] *Odys.* iii. 20. [3] *Il.* xxiii. 570.
[4] *Il.* xvii. 170. [5] *Il.* vi. 160. [6] *Odys.* iii. 265.

whither do ye flee? Now be ye strong;'[1] and 'But let each man conceive shame in his heart, and indignation, for verily great is the strife that hath arisen;'[2] he declares that the man of self-control is the brave man, because he is ashamed to do a base act, and is able to ignore pleasure, and to encounter dangers. In line with this, in the *Persae* Timotheus spiritedly and well exhorts the Greeks, 'Respect honor as the soldier's ally.'[3] Aeschylus also, in writing of Amphiaraus, places it to one's credit not to be puffed up and arrogant, nor to lose one's head at the plaudits of the multitude, 'For his desire is not to seem the bravest, but to be, and he reaps in thought the deep furrow, whence grows the fruit of good counsel.'[4] For it is the part of a wise man to feel confidence in himself and in his own true worth. Since, then, all excellencies are reducible to wisdom, it follows that every kind of virtue is a product of reason and education.

XII

As the bee instinctively gathers the smoothest and sweetest honey from the most bitter blossoms and the sharpest thistles, so, if trained rightly in the poets, boys will learn in one way or another to gather something useful and profitable from suspiciously vulgar and irrational passages. For example, it certainly looks very much as if Agamemnon were bribed when he dismisses from the army the rich man who presented Aethe to him: 'Her unto Agamemnon did Anchises' son Echepolos give in fee, that he might escape from following him to windy Ilios and take his pleasure at home; for great wealth had Zeus given him.'[5] Yet, as Aristotle observes,[6] he did right in preferring a good mare to such a man, because a coward weakling, effeminate through wealth and luxury, is of less worth than

[1] *Il.* xvi. 422. [2] *Il.* xiii. 121. [3] Bergk 3. 622.
[4] *Sept.* 579. The translation is after Verrall.
[5] *Il.* xxiii. 297. [6] Probably in the *Homeric Questions.*

a dog, yea, or even an ass. Again it seems most shameful in Thetis to encourage her son in pleasure, and to remind him of the delights of love. But, on the other hand, it is well to compare the self-control of Achilles, for, though he loves Briseis, who has come back to him, yet because he knows that his days here are numbered, he does not hasten to the fruition of pleasure; further he does not mourn for his friend by inactivity and neglect of duty, as other men are wont, for though in his sorrow he refrains from pleasure, he yet busies himself with the affairs of the army. Again, Archilochus is not praised because he tries by drinking and carousing to dispel his grief for a brother-in-law who had been drowned in the sea; yet he offers a plausible excuse: 'My grief will cure no ill, nor will my pleasure and feasting make matters worse.'[1] Now if he thought he did no harm in following after pleasure and feasting, how shall we do worse if we study philosophy, or conduct public affairs, or visit the market, or descend to the Academy, or engage in husbandry? Wherefore the corrections of Cleanthes and Antisthenes[2] are not without value. For, seeing the Athenians in an uproar in the theatre because of these words, 'What is base save to those who take it so?'[3] Antisthenes straightway objected, 'The base is base, seem it so or not;' and Cleanthes, hearing this of wealth, 'To give to one's friends and to save one's body when diseased,'[4] altered it to read, 'To give to harlots and to inflame one's body when diseased.' Zeno also amended the following of Sophocles, 'Whoever journeys to a tyrant's house becomes his slave, e'en though he entered free,'[5] to 'Nay, not a slave, if really free on entering,' meaning by *free* independent, high-minded, and self-respecting.

[1] Bergk 2. 387.

[2] Eminent Cynic philosopher; pupil and friend of Socrates, and the teacher of Diogenes. 'Antisthenes was simple in life, despised riches and sensual pleasure, and emphasized practical morality.'

[3] Nauck 293; Eurip. *Frag.* 19.

[4] Eurip. *Electra* 428.

[5] Nauck 253.

Now what hinders us also from making similar emendations, in order to influence young men for the better? Thus, why not change such a passage as this, 'That man is to be envied, who so aims as to hit his wish,'[1] to read, 'who so aims as to hit his advantage?' for to get and have things wrongly desired merits pity, not envy. When we read this passage, 'Not to all good without a taste of ill did Atreus beget thee, Agamemnon; but thou art destined both to joy and to grieve,'[2] let us much rather say, 'It must be thine to rejoice, but not to grieve, if moderate thy means, *because,* "Not to all good, without a taste of ill, did Atreus beget thee."' The poet says, 'Alas! 'tis a curse sent by the gods on man, to behold the good but accept it not;'[3] rather, 'It is a brutal, unreasonable, and deplorable thing for one who appreciates the better part to be led away to the worse through incontinence and effeminacy.' Again, 'A speaker influences by character, not by speech;'[4] nay, 'by both character and speech,' or better, 'by character *through* speech,' as does a horseman by the bridle and a pilot by the rudder, since virtue has no other instrument so pleasing to people as speech nor so fitted by nature to influence mankind. This passage, '"Inclines he more to man or woman?" "To each alike, when beauty is present;"'[5] should be altered to read, 'To each alike, when good sense is present,' as indicating a finely-balanced nature; for the man so greatly influenced by pleasure and youthful beauty is weak and unstable. This sentiment, 'The gods cause men to fear,'[6] is by no means true, but rather, 'The gods give courage to men,' and fear only to those who are senseless, unreasonable, and ungrateful, who are suspicious lest that power which is the origin and first principle of every good be injurious. Such then is the character of emendation.

[1] Nauck 695. [2] Eurip. *Iph. Aul.* 29. [3] Nauck 449.
[4] Meineke iv. 209. [5] Nauck 288. [6] Ibid. 695.

XIII

A further use to which poetry may be put is well explained by Chrysippus, namely, classification or generalization. For, in saying, 'An ox would not be killed unless its neighbor were bad,'[1] Hesiod says the same of a dog, an ass, or any other animal liable to be lost in the same way. Also, the saying of Euripides, 'Who then is a slave if he be indifferent to death?'[2] may be applied to toil or to sickness. As when physicians discover the efficacy of a drug in curing a case, they assign the drug to all other cases of the same disease, so a universally applicable generalization is not to be confined to the one specific thing to which it was at first applied, but is to be transferred to all other members of the same category,[3] and young men should become accustomed to recognize the affinities between things, and to make such transfers of application with insight, exercising and training their perceptive powers by constant practice. Thus when Menander says 'Blessed is he who being and wisdom hath,'[4] they should recognize that the like may be said of reputation, of authority, and of eloquence. Also, it should be appreciated that the reproof which Odysseus administers to Achilles seated amidst the Scyrian maids, 'Dost thou destroy the splendor of thy birth by carding wool, thou, sprung from a father noblest of the Greeks?'[5] could be applied to the profligate man, the covetous, the heedless, or the ignorant; thus, 'Art thou drunken, thou, sprung from a father noblest of the Greeks?' or, 'Dost thou play at dice, or strike at quail, or drive a petty trade, or practise sordid usury, with no thought for those high things worthy

[1] *W. and D.* 348. [2] Nauck 523.

[3] Such illustrations were much employed by the Stoics; see Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* iv. 10. 23: 'Hoc loco nimium operae consumitur a Stoicis, maxime a Chrysippo, dum morbis corporum com paratur morborum animi similitudo.' See also Zeller, *Gesch. d. Gr. Ph.* ii. 1. 285.

[4] Meineke iv. 103. [5] Nauck 653.

of thy good birth?' When young men read these words: 'Talk not of wealth; I reverence not a god which even the worst of men easily obtains,'[1] they may infer that popular esteem is not to be praised, nor physical beauty, nor military cloaks, nor sacerdotal crowns, all of which we see to be the possessions of the worst of men. Thus when they read, 'Cowardice begets base children,'[2] they may say, 'Very true, but so does intemperance, superstition, envy, and every other disease.' When Homer, using the word *best* in two connections, says, 'Evil Paris, best in form,'[3] and, 'Hector, best in form,'[4] he is teaching that one who has in him nothing good save physical beauty is worthy of blame and reproach. This sentiment should be transferred to like faults, to restrain those who are boastful of fictitious excellencies, and to teach youth that such expressions as, 'O thou that excellest in wealth,' 'O thou that excellest in feasting,' 'O thou that excellest in servants and flocks,' and, yea, 'O thou that excellest'—in everything to the end of the list, imply censure and reproach; for one should seek preëminence in good deeds and words, to be first in those things which are first, and great in those things which are greatest, since reputation gained from things small and mean is inglorious and dishonorable.

Careful observation of instances of censure and praise, especially in the works of Homer, will impress this upon us, for he is at pains to show that he esteems lightly the advantages of form and fortune. First of all, in meetings and salutations, men do not accost one another as fair, or rich, or strong, but use such expressions of esteem as 'Heaven-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many devices;'[5] 'Hector son of Priam, peer of Zeus in counsel;'[6] 'O Achilles, Peleus' son, mightest of Achaians far;'[7] 'Noble son of

[1] Nauck 294; Eurip. *Aeolus. Frag.* 20. [2] Nauck 695.
[3] *Il.* iii. 39: this rendering and the following are not taken from L., L., and M. [4] *Il.* xvii. 142.
[5] *Il.* ii. 173. [6] *Il.* vii. 47. [7] *Il.* xix. 216.

Menoitios, dear to my heart.'[1] And when men censure one another, they do not call attention to physical defects, but direct their reproaches at errors, as, 'Thou heavy with wine, thou with face of dog and heart of deer;'[2] 'Ajax, master of railing, ill-counseled;'[3] 'Idomeneus, why art thou a braggart of old? . . . It beseemeth thee not to be a braggart;'[4] 'Ajax, thou blundering boaster;'[5] and, lastly, Thersites is not reviled by Odysseus for his lameness, nor baldness, nor hunched back, but for his reckless babble, while the indulgent mother of Hephaestus accosts her son by referring to his lameness, 'Rise, lame god, O my son.'[6] Thus Homer ridicules those who are ashamed of being lame or blind, maintaining that nothing is an object of reproach which is not in itself disgraceful, and that nothing is disgraceful which is not our own doing, but the gift of fortune. Hence two great benefits accrue to the careful student of poetry: the one, equanimity, that is, the power to keep from unreasonably and viciously casting a man's misfortunes in his teeth; the other, magnanimity, that is, the power to resist being cast down or disquieted when fortune deals harshly with us, but rather with meekness to endure suffering, reproach, and ridicule. This last it is very easy to do if one has in mind the saying of Philemon,[7] 'There is no surer proof of a gentle and harmonious spirit than the power to endure a railer.'[8] But if one appear to deserve rebuke, let him be attacked for his own errors and passions, as Adrastus, the tragic character, who, when accosted by Alcmaeon with, 'Thy sister killed her husband,' replied, 'Yes, and thou with thine own hand slew the mother who bore thee.'[9] For just as those who lash a man's garments do not touch his body, so those who abuse a man for his ill fortune or low birth, vainly and foolishly

[1] *Il.* xi. 608. [2] *Il.* i. 225. [3] *Il.* xxiii. 483.
[4] *Il.* xxiii. 474–479. [5] *Il.* xiii. 824. [6] *Il.* xxi. 331.
[7] Comic poet, born about 361 B.C. Philemon was a successful rival of Menander, and exerted much influence upon Latin comedy.
[8] Meineke iv. 9. [9] Nauck 695.

work themselves up over mere externalities, without touching the soul or those things which really need a sarcastic reproof.

XIV

Moreover, just as it is explained above that we should thwart and check confidence in coarse and hurtful poems by contrasting with them the maxims and sayings of men of esteem and of public service, so all refined and helpful sentiments we should nurture and strengthen by examples and testimony from philosophy, giving to it the credit of their origination.[1] This is right and profitable, for one's confidence in the poems and regard for them is strengthened when he discovers that the doctrines of Pythagoras and of Plato agree with the words spoken on the stage, or sung to the harp, or studied in school, and that the precepts of Chilo[2] and Bias[3] accord with the books which children read.

Wherefore it is of prime importance to teach young men that such thoughts as these, which are met with in the poets, 'Not unto thee, my child, are given the works of war, but follow thou after the loving tasks of wedlock;'[4] and, 'For Zeus would have been wroth with him, if he fought with a better man than himself;'[5] differ not from the precept, 'Know thyself,'[6] but express the same thought. And these again, 'Witless ones, not knowing how much the half is greater than the whole;'[7] and, 'Bad counsel is worst of all for him who gives it;'[8] accord with the maxims which Plato expresses in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic,* namely,

[1] See *Introd.* p. 30, on this section.

[2] A Spartan enumerated among the Seven Wise Men of Greece. He became one of the ephori of Sparta in 556 B.C. Among the maxims ascribed to him is, 'Know thyself.'

[3] Another of the Seven Wise Men, living about 560 B.C. He was distinguished for eloquence as well as wisdom. One of his witty sayings was, 'I carry all my goods (or riches) with me.'

[4] *Il.* v. 428. [5] *Il.* xi. 543. The same comparisons exist in the scholia of *Codex B* on these passages. [6] See note 2.

[7] *W. and D.* 40. See also *Rep.* v. 466; *Laws* 3. 690. [8] Ibid. 265.

that, 'To be unjust is worse than to suffer injustice;'[1] and, 'To harm is more harmful than to be harmed.'[2] One must admit also that the following words of Aeschylus, 'Be of good cheer, intense pain does not last,'[3] express but the famous and oft-quoted maxim of Epicurus, 'Pain if great is brief; if lasting, slight;' and that the one idea is stated explicitly by Aeschylus, while the other is only its corollary; for if great and intense pain does not last, the pain which does last is not great nor hard to bear. And wherein do these words of Thespis,[4] 'Thou seest that Zeus is supreme among the gods, because no falsehood, no boastful or idle jesting, comes from his lips, and he alone knows not pleasure,'[5] differ from the saying of Plato, 'The divine nature is seated far from both joy and grief.'[6] Again, this saying of Bacchylides,[7] 'Virtue keeps its lustre untarnished, but wealth associates with worthless men;'[8] and this of Euripides to the same effect, 'I deem nothing superior to self-control, since its abiding-place is ever with good men;'[9] and this, 'Should you strive for honor, and seek to acquire virtue through riches, among good men you would be rated as good for nothing;'[10] do they not confirm what the philosophers say of wealth and external goods, that, unless virtue is present, they are useless and unprofitable?

For thus to unite and wed poetry to the doctrines of philosophy relieves it of its fictitious and illusive quality,

[1] *Gorgias* 473. [2] See Wyttenbach, *Lexicon Plutarcheum.* [3] Nauck 83.

[4] 'Inventor of the Greek tragedy, since he introduced between the dithyrambic chorals at the festival of Dionysus an interlocutor, who now in monologues, now in dialogues with the leader of the chorus, narrated, or gave a mimetic representation of, the incidents to which the songs referred.' See Horace, *Art of Poetry* 276, for a curious picture of Thespis strolling from place to place and giving shows from his wagon.

[5] Nauck 647. [6] *Epist.* iii. 315.

[7] One of the nine canonical Greek lyric poets, about 470 B.C. Bacchylides was a graceful writer, and a rival of Pindar.

[8] Bergk 3. 580. [9] Nauck 523. [10] Ibid. 523.

and invests with seriousness its useful passages. Moreover, it prepares and predisposes the young man's mind to the teachings of philosophy, so that he comes to it not utterly without taste for it or without knowledge of its teachings, not full of the confused notions which he has been wont to receive from his mother and his nurse, yea, and likely enough from his father and his tutor as well,[1] esteeming the rich happy and worshipful, dreading death and suffering, and holding virtue without riches and fame to be unenviable and a mere nothing. For when young men brought up in this way hear from the philosophers sentiments contradictory to these, they are alarmed, confused, and bewildered, and they do not accept or test them, unless, like men accustoming themselves to see the sun on coming out of great darkness, they become accustomed, in an artificial light whose rays blend truth with fiction, to see such truths without dislike or repugnance. For having heard or read such things as this in poetry, 'Lament for him who is born to the ills of life, but him who has died and ended his pain count happy, sending him hence with congratulations;'[2] or this, 'What needs have mortals save two alone, the earth for grain, the spring for water?'[3] or this, 'O tyranny, dear to savage men;'[4] or this, 'The welfare of mortals consists in having the fewest possible causes of grief;'[5] I say, if such thoughts are known to them, they are less disturbed and annoyed when they hear from philosophers that, 'Death is nothing to us;' that, 'Nature's wealth is limited;' and that, 'Happiness and good fortune do not consist in the abundance of riches, in the pretentiousness of one's employment, in sovereignty and power, but in freedom from grief, in equanimity, and in a mind disposed to conform itself to nature.'

Wherefore, for these reasons, as well as for the others mentioned above, a young man needs to be carefully guided in his reading, in order that he may not beforehand be

[1] See *Rep.* ii. 381. [2] Nauck 395. [3] Ibid. 507.
[4] Ibid. 696. [5] Ibid. 696.

prejudiced against philosophy, but rather somewhat instructed in it, and so, by his study of poetry, may be advanced to the study of philosophy, in a gracious, friendly, and congenial spirit.

ADDRESS TO YOUNG MEN ON THE RIGHT USE OF GREEK LITERATURE

OUTLINE

I. Introduction: Out of the abundance of his experience the author will advise young men as to the pagan literature, showing them what to accept, and what to reject.

II. To the Christian the life eternal is the supreme goal, and the guide to this life is the Holy Scriptures; but since young men cannot appreciate the deep thoughts contained therein, they are to study the profane writings, in which truth appears as in a mirror.

III. Profane learning should ornament the mind, as foliage graces the fruit-bearing tree.

IV. In studying pagan lore one must discriminate between the helpful and the injurious, accepting the one, but closing one's ears to the siren song of the other.

V. Since the life to come is to be attained through virtue, chief attention must be paid to those passages in which virtue is praised; such may be found, for example, in Hesiod, Homer, Solon, Theognis, and Prodicus.

VI. Indeed, almost all eminent philosophers have extolled virtue. The words of such men should meet with more than mere theoretical acceptance, for one must try to realize them in his life, remembering that to seem to be good when one is not so is the height of injustice.

VII. But in the pagan literature virtue is lauded in deeds as well as in words, wherefore one should study those acts of noble men which coincide with the teachings of the Scriptures.

VIII. To return to the original thought, young men must distinguish between helpful and injurious knowledge, keeping clearly in mind the Christian's purpose in life. So, like the athlete or the musician, they must bend every energy to one task, the winning of the heavenly crown.

IX. This end is to be compassed by holding the body

under, by scorning riches and fame, and by subordinating all else to virtue.

X. While this ideal will be matured later by the study of the Scriptures, it is at present to be fostered by the study of the pagan writers; from them should be stored up knowledge for the future.

Conclusion: The above are some of the more important precepts; others the writer will continue to explain from time to time, trusting that no young man will make the fatal error of disregarding them.

ADDRESS TO YOUNG MEN ON THE RIGHT USE OF GREEK LITERATURE

I

Many considerations, young men, prompt me to recommend to you the principles which I deem most desirable, and which I believe will be of use to you if you will adopt them. For my time of life, my many-sided training, yea, my adequate experience in those vicissitudes of life which teach their lessons at every turn,[1] have so familiarized me with human affairs, that I am able to map out the safest course for those just starting upon their careers. By nature's common bond I stand in the same relationship to you as your parents, so that I am no whit behind them in my concern for you. Indeed, if I do not misinterpret your feelings, you no longer crave your parents when you come to me. Now if you should receive my words with gladness, you would be in the second class of those who, according to Hesiod, merit praise; if not, I should say nothing disparaging, but no doubt you yourselves would remember the passage in which that poet says: 'He is best who, of himself, recognizes what is his duty, and he also is good who follows the course marked out by others, but he who does neither of these things is of no use under the sun.'[2]

Do not be surprised if to you, who go to school every day, and who, through their writings, associate with the learned men of old,[3] I say that out of my own experience I have

[1] See Newman, *Historical Sketches*, vol. ii. chaps. i. and ii, for an account of the trials and labors of St. Basil. Also see Fialon, *Biographie de St. Basile*, and Wace and Schaff, *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. viii, Prolegomena.

[2] *W. and D.* 285 ff.

[3] See Introd. p. 28, on the education of Greek youth.

evolved something more useful. Now this is my counsel, that you should not unqualifiedly give over your minds to these men, as a ship is surrendered to the rudder, to follow whither they list, but that, while receiving whatever of value they have to offer, you yet recognize what it is wise to ignore. Accordingly, from this point on I shall take up and discuss the pagan writings, and how we are to discriminate among them.

II

We Christians, young men, hold that this human life is not a supremely precious thing, nor do we recognize anything as unconditionally a blessing which benefits us in this life only.[1] Neither pride of ancestry, nor bodily strength, nor beauty, nor greatness, nor the esteem of all men, nor kingly authority, nor, indeed, whatever of human affairs may be called great, do we consider worthy of desire, or the possessors of them as objects of envy; but we place our hopes upon the things which are beyond, and in preparation for the life eternal do all things that we do. Accordingly, whatever helps us towards this we say that we must love and follow after with all our might, but those things which have no bearing upon it should be held as naught. But to explain what this life is, and in what way and manner we shall live it, requires more time than is at our command, and more mature hearers than you.

And yet, in saying thus much, perhaps I have made it sufficiently clear to you that if one should estimate and gather together all earthly weal from the creation of the world, he would not find it comparable to the smallest part of the possessions of heaven; rather, that all the precious things in this life fall further short of the least good in the other than the shadow or the dream fails of the reality. Or rather, to avail myself of a still more natural comparison, by

[1] See Col. iii. 2: 'Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.'

as much as the soul is superior to the body in all things, by so much is one of these lives superior to the other.[1]

Into the life eternal the Holy Scriptures lead us, which teach us through divine words. But so long as our immaturity forbids our understanding their deep thought, we exercise our spiritual perceptions upon profane writings, which are not altogether different, and in which we perceive the truth as it were in shadows and in mirrors. Thus we imitate those who perform the exercises of military practice, for they acquire skill in gymnastics and in dancing, and then in battle reap the reward of their training. We must needs believe that the greatest of all battles lies before us, in preparation for which we must do and suffer all things to gain power. Consequently we must be conversant with poets, with historians, with orators, indeed with all men who may further our soul's salvation. Just as dyers prepare the cloth before they apply the dye, be it purple or any other color, so indeed must we also, if we would preserve indelible the idea of the true virtue, become first initiated in the pagan lore, then at length give special heed to the sacred and divine teachings, even as we first accustom ourselves to the sun's reflection in the water, and then become able to turn our eyes upon the very sun itself.[2]

III

If, then, there is any affinity between the two literatures, a knowledge of them should be useful to us in our search for truth; if not, the comparison, by emphasizing the contrast, will be of no small service in strengthening our regard for the better one. With what now may we compare these two kinds of education to obtain a simile? Just as it is the chief mission of the tree to bear its fruit in its season,

[1] See *Rep.* x. 614: 'And yet, I said, all these things are as nothing, either in number or greatness, in comparison with those other recompenses which await both just and unjust after death, which are more and greater far.'

[2] See p. 95.

though at the same time it puts forth for ornament the leaves which quiver on its boughs, even so the real fruit of the soul is truth, yet it is not without advantage for it to embrace the pagan wisdom, as also leaves offer shelter to the fruit, and an appearance not untimely. That Moses, whose name is a synonym for wisdom, severely trained his mind in the learning of the Egyptians,[1] and thus became able to appreciate their deity.[2] Similarly, in later days, the wise Daniel is said to have studied the lore of the Chaldaeans while in Babylon,[3] and after that to have taken up the sacred teachings.

IV

Perhaps it is sufficiently demonstrated that such heathen learning is not unprofitable for the soul; I shall then discuss next the extent to which one may pursue it. To begin with the poets, since their writings are of all degrees of excellence, you should not study all of their poems without omitting a single word. When they recount the words and deeds of good men, you should both love and imitate them, earnestly emulating such conduct. But when they portray base conduct, you must flee from them and stop up your ears, as Odysseus is said to have fled past the song of the sirens,[4] for familiarity with evil writings paves the way for evil deeds. Therefore the soul must be guarded with great care, lest through our love for letters it receive some contamination unawares, as men drink in poison with honey. We shall not praise the poets when they scoff and rail, when they represent fornicators and winebibbers, when they define blissfulness by groaning tables and wanton songs. Least of all shall we listen to them when they tell us of their gods, and especially when they represent them as being many, and not at one among themselves.[5] For, among these gods, at one time brother is at variance with brother, or the father with his children; at another,

[1] Acts vii. 22. [2] *οὕτω προσελθεῖν τῇ θεωρίᾳ τοῦ Ὄντος.*
[3] Daniel i. 3 ff. [4] See p. 51; Basil, *Epist.* 1. [5] See p. 64, and notes.

the children engage in truceless war against their parents. The adulteries of the gods and their amours, and especially those of the one whom they call Zeus, chief of all and most high, things of which one cannot speak, even in connection with brutes, without blushing, we shall leave to the stage.

I have the same words for the historians, and especially when they make up stories for the amusement of their hearers. And certainly we shall not follow the example of the rhetoricians in the art of lying. For neither in the courts of justice nor in other business affairs will falsehood be of any help to us Christians, who, having chosen the straight and true path of life, are forbidden by the gospel to go to law. But on the other hand we shall receive gladly those passages in which they praise virtue or condemn vice. For just as bees know how to extract honey from flowers, which to men are agreeable only for their fragrance and color, even so here also those who look for something more than pleasure and enjoyment in such writers may derive profit for their souls. Now, then, altogether after the manner of bees must we use these writings, for the bees do not visit all the flowers without discrimination, nor indeed do they seek to carry away entire those upon which they light, but rather, having taken so much as is adapted to their needs, they let the rest go. So we, if wise, shall take from heathen books whatever befits us and is allied to the truth, and shall pass over the rest. And just as in culling roses we avoid the thorns, from such writings as these we will gather everything useful, and guard against the noxious.[1] So, from the very beginning, we must examine each of their teachings, to harmonize it with our ultimate purpose, according to the Doric proverb, 'testing each stone by the measuring-line.'[2]

[1] The general attitude taken here toward selectiveness in reading is Platonic; see, for instance, frequent passages in the *Laws* ii, iii, and vii, and the *Republic* iii.

[2] *τὸν λίθον πὸτὶ τὰν σπάρτον ἀγοντας.* Maloney notes that St. Gregory Nazianzen cites this proverb in *Letter xxxviii*, and St. John Chrysostom in *Homily xxv.*

V

Since we must needs attain to the life to come through virtue, our attention is to be chiefly fastened upon those many passages from the poets, from the historians, and especially from the philosophers, in which virtue itself is praised. For it is of no small advantage that virtue become a habit with a youth,[1] for the lessons of youth make a deep impression, because the soul is then plastic, and therefore they are likely to be indelible. If not to incite youth to virtue, pray what meaning may we suppose that Hesiod had in those universally admired lines,[2] of which the sentiment is as follows: 'Rough is the start and hard, and the way steep, and full of labor and pain, that leads toward virtue. Wherefore, on account of the steepness, it is not granted to every man to set out, nor, to the one having set out, easily to reach the summit. But when he has reached the top, he sees that the way is smooth and fair, easy and light to the foot, and more pleasing than the other, which leads to wickedness,'—of which the same poet said that one may find it all around him in great abundance.[3] Now it seems to me that he had no other purpose in saying these things than so to exhort us to virtue, and so to incite us to bravery, that we may not weaken our efforts before we reach the goal. And certainly if any other man praises virtue in a like strain, we will receive his words with pleasure, since our aim is a common one.

Now as I have heard from one skilful in interpreting the mind of a poet,[4] all the poetry of Homer is a praise of

[1] Plato frequently touches upon the value of habit in the *Laws* vii, and the *Republic* ii.

[2] *W. and D.* 285 ff. Plato refers to this same passage in the *Republic* ii. 364.

[3] Ibid. 287.

[4] Libanius, b. at Antioch in 314; studied at Athens, but acquired his education principally by private study of the old Greek writers, whom he often imitated with success, and for whom he always showed great enthusiasm. During the first part of his career as a teacher at Constantinople, he was very popular, and St. Basil was then among his stu-

virtue, and with him all that is not merely accessory tends to this end. There is a notable instance of this where Homer first made the princess reverence the leader of the Cephallenians, though he appeared naked, shipwrecked, and alone, and then made Odysseus as completely lack embarrassment, though seen naked and alone, since virtue served him as a garment. And next he made Odysseus so much esteemed by the other Phaeacians that, abandoning the luxury in which they lived, all admired and emulated him, and there was not one of them who longed for anything else except to be Odysseus, even to the enduring of shipwreck.[1] The interpreter of the poetic mind argued that, in this episode, Homer very plainly says: 'Be virtue your concern, O men, which both swims to shore with the shipwrecked man, and makes him, when he comes naked to the strand, more honored than the prosperous Phaeacians.'

And, indeed, this is the truth, for other possessions belong to the owner no more than to another, and, as when men are dicing, fall now to this one, now to that. But virtue is the only possession that is sure, and that remains with us whether living or dead. Wherefore it seems to me that Solon[2] had the rich in mind when he said: 'We will not exchange our virtue for their gold, for virtue is an everlasting possession, while riches are ever changing owners.' Similarly Theognis[3] said that the god, whatever he might

dents. 'His idol was Greek style, and for his time he had rare success in mastering the secrets of Greek expression. A pagan born and bred, he was an ardent admirer of the Emperor Julian, but his devotion to the Apostate did not prevent him from associating on terms of affectionate intimacy with St. Chrysostom and St. Basil; for he was above all a rhetorician, and his tolerant attitude toward Christianity, so far as it did not interfere with the study of the Greek classics and the attainment of excellence in Greek composition, may be explained by his shallow cleverness as well as by his easy temper.' See p. 34.

[1] See *Odys.* vi. and vii., and also p. 76, for Plutarch's comment on this episode.

[2] The great Athenian law-giver. In the tract, *How One may Profit by One's Enemies*, Plutarch attributes these lines to Solon, but they occur among the *Gnomes* of Theognis, 316–318. See also Plutarch, *Life of Solon*.

[3] See p. 54.

mean by the god, inclines the balances for men, now this way, now that, giving to some riches, and to others poverty.[1] Also Prodicus, the sophist of Ceos,[2] whose opinion we must respect, for he is a man not to be slighted, somewhere in his writings expressed similar ideas about virtue and vice. I do not remember the exact words, but as far as I recollect the sentiment, in plain prose it ran somewhat as follows: While Hercules was yet a youth, being about your age, as he was debating which path he should choose, the one leading through toil to virtue, or its easier alternate, two women appeared before him, who proved to be Virtue and Vice. Though they said not a word, the difference between them was at once apparent from their mien. The one had arranged herself to please the eye, while she exhaled charms, and a multitude of delights swarmed in her train. With such a display, and promising still more, she sought to allure Hercules to her side. The other, wasted and squalid, looked fixedly at him, and bespoke quite another thing. For she promised nothing easy or engaging, but rather infinite toils and hardships, and perils in every land and on every sea. As a reward for these trials, he was to become a god, so our author has it. The latter, Hercules at length followed.[3]

VI

Almost all who have written upon the subject of wisdom have more or less, in proportion to their several abilities, extolled virtue in their writings. Such men must one obey, and must try to realize their words in his life. For he, who by his works exemplifies the wisdom which with others is

[1] *Gnomes* 157–158.

[2] 'A celebrated sophist of the fifth century, B.C. He was accustomed to travel through Greece, delivering lectures for money. He paid special attention to the correct use of words. Although severely criticised by the other sophists, he is mentioned with respect by Xenophon and Plato, the former of whom has preserved, in *The Choice of Hercules*, the story here used by St. Basil.'

[3] See Xenophon, *Memorab.* ii. 1. 22; Cicero, *De Off.* 1. 32; Chrysostom, *Regnum*; Lucian, *Somnium.*

a matter of theory alone, 'breathes; all others flutter about like shadows.'[1] I think it is as if a painter should represent some marvel of manly beauty, and the subject should actually be such a man as the artist pictures on the canvas. To praise virtue in public with brilliant words and with long drawn out speeches, while in private preferring pleasures to temperance, and self-interest to justice, finds an analogy on the stage, for the players frequently appear as kings and rulers, though they are neither, nor perhaps even genuinely free men. A musician would hardly put up with a lyre which was out of tune, nor a choregus with a chorus not singing in perfect harmony. But every man is divided against himself who does not make his life conform to his words, but who says with Euripides, 'The mouth indeed hath sworn, but the heart knows no oath.'[2] Such a man will seek the appearance of virtue rather than the reality. But to seem to be good when one is not so, is, if we are to respect the opinion of Plato[3] at all, the very height of injustice.

VII

After this wise, then, are we to receive those words from the pagan authors which contain suggestions of the virtues. But since also the renowned deeds of the men of old either are preserved for us by tradition, or are cherished in the pages of poet or historian, we must not fail to profit by them. A fellow of the street rabble once kept taunting Pericles, but he, meanwhile, gave no heed; and they held out all day, the fellow deluging him with reproaches, but he, for his part, not caring. Then when it was evening and dusk, and the fellow still clung to him, Pericles escorted him with a light, in order that he might not fail in the

[1] *Odys.* x. 495.

[2] *Hippolytus* 612; see Cicero, *De Off.* 3. 29. 108: 'Juravi lingua, mentem injuratam gero.'

[3] *Rep.* ii, 361; see Cicero, *De Off.* 1. 13. 41: 'Totius autem injustitiae nulla capitalior est quam eorum qui quum maxime fallunt, id agunt, ut viri boni esse videantur;' Plutarch, *Flatterer and Friend* 4.

practice of philosophy.[1] Again, a man in a passion threatened and vowed death to Euclid of Megara,[2] but he in turn vowed that the man should surely be appeased, and cease from his hostility to him.

How invaluable it is to have such examples in mind when a man is seized with anger! On the other hand, one must altogether ignore the tragedy which says in so many words: 'Anger arms the hand against the enemy;'[3] for it is much better not to give way to anger at all. But if such restraint is not easy, we shall at least curb our anger by reflection, so as not to give it too much rein.

But let us bring our discussion back again to the examples of noble deeds. A certain man once kept striking Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus, in the face, yet he did not resent it, but allowed full play to the ruffian's anger, so that his face was swollen and bruised from the blows. Then when he stopped striking him, Socrates did nothing more than write on his forehead, as an artisan on a statue, who did it, and thus took out his revenge. Since these examples almost coincide with our teachings, I hold that such men are worthy of emulation. For this conduct of Socrates is akin to the precept that to him who smites you upon the one cheek, you shall turn the other also[4]—thus much may you be avenged; the conduct of Pericles and of Euclid also conforms to the precept: 'Submit to those who persecute you, and endure their wrath with meekness;'[5] and to the other: 'Pray for your enemies and curse them not.'[6] One who has been instructed in the pagan examples will no longer hold the Christian precepts impracticable. But I will not overlook the conduct of Alexander, who, on taking captive the daughters of Darius, who were reputed to be of surpassing beauty, would not even look at them, for he deemed it unworthy of one who was a conqueror of men

[1] See Plutarch, *Life of Pericles* v, from which the story is taken.

[2] See Plutarch, *Concerning the Cure of Anger* 14.

[3] Sommer notes that St. Basil has not quoted Euripides correctly; St. Basil reads: Ἐπ' ἐχθροὺς θυμὸς ὁπλίζει χέρα; but Euripides: Ἀπλοῦς ἐπ ἐχθροῖς ὁπλίζειν χέρα. [4] Matt. v. 39. [5] Ibid. v. 44. [6] Ibid.

to be a slave to women.[1] This is of a piece with the statement that he who looks upon a woman to lust after her, even though he does not commit the act of adultery, is not free from its guilt, since he has entertained impure thoughts.[2] It is hard to believe that the action of Cleinias,[3] one of the disciples of Pythagoras, was in accidental conformity to our teachings, and not designed imitation of them. What, then, was this act of his? By taking an oath he could have avoided a fine of three talents, yet rather than do so he paid the fine, though he could have sworn truthfully. I am inclined to think that he had heard of the precept which forbids us to swear.[4]

VIII

But let us return to the same thought with which we started, namely, that we should not accept everything without discrimination, but only what is useful. For it would be shameful should we reject injurious foods, yet should take no thought about the studies which nourish our souls, but as a torrent should sweep along all that came near our path and appropriate it. If the helmsman does not blindly abandon his ship to the winds, but guides it toward the anchorage; if the archer shoots at his mark; if also the metal-worker or the carpenter seeks to produce the objects for which his craft exists, would there be rime or reason in our being outclassed by these men, mere artisans as they are, in quick appreciation of our interests? For is there not some end in the artisan's work, is there not a goal in human life, which the one who would not wholly resemble unreasoning animals must keep before him in all his words and deeds? If there were no intelligence sitting at the tiller of our souls, like boats without ballast we should be borne hither and thither through life, without plan or purpose.

An analogy may be found in the athletic contests, or, if

[1] See Plutarch, *Of the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander the Great* ii. 6 and 12; *Life of Alexander*; Arrian, *Exped. of Alex.* ii. 12. The same story is told of Cyrus in the *Cyropaedia*. See p. 84.

[2] Matt. v. 28.

[3] A contemporary and friend of Plato.

[4] Lev. xix. 12, or Deut. v. 11.

you will, in the musical contests; for the contestants prepare themselves by a preliminary training for those events in which wreaths of victory are offered, and no one by training for wrestling or for the pancratium would get ready to play the lyre or the flute. At least Polydamas[1] would not, for before the Olympic games he was wont to bring the rushing chariot to a halt, and thus hardened himself. Then Milo[2] could not be thrust from his smeared shield, but, shoved as he was, clung to it as firmly as statues soldered by lead. In a word, by their training they prepared themselves for the contests. If they had meddled with the airs of Marsyas or of Olympus, the Phrygians,[3] abandoning dust and exercise, would they have won ready laurels or crowns, or would they have escaped being laughed at for their bodily incapacity? On the other hand, certainly Timotheus the musician[4] did not spend his time in the schools for wrestling, for then it would not have been his to excel all in music, he who was so skilled in his art that at his pleasure he could arouse the passions of men by his harsh and vehement strains, and then by gentle ones, quiet and soothe them. By this art, when once he played Phrygian airs on the flute to Alexander, he is said to have incited the general to arms in the midst of feasting, and then, by milder music, to have restored him to his carousing friends.[5] Such power to compass one's end, either in music or in athletic contests, is developed by practice.

I have called to mind the wreaths and the fighters. These

[1] 'Of Scotussa, conquered in the Pancratium at the Olympic games in Ol. 93, B.C. 408. His size was immense, and the most marvelous stories are related of his strength, how he killed without arms a huge and fierce lion on Mount Olympus, etc.' See Pausanias vi. 5; Persius i. 4.

[2] Of Crotona. He was six times victor in wrestling at the Olympic games, and as often at the Pythian. He is said to have carried a four-year-old heifer on his shoulders through the stadium at Olympia, and then to have eaten the whole of it in a single day. See Pausanias vi. 14.

[3] Olympus was the pupil of Marsyas, *Schol. in Aristoph Eq.* 9; see also Plutarch, *Concerning Music* 11; Arist., *Pol.* viii. 5. 6.

[4] A celebrated flute-player of Thebes.

[5] See Plutarch, *Of the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander the Great* ii. 2; Cicero, *Legg.* 2. 12; Dryden, *Alexander's Feast.*

men endure hardships beyond number, they use every means to increase their strength, they sweat ceaselessly at their training, they accept many blows from the master, they adopt the mode of life which he prescribes, though it is most unpleasant, and, in a word, they so rule all their conduct that their whole life before the contest is preparatory to it. Then they strip themselves for the arena, and endure all and risk all, to receive the crown of olive, or of parsley, or some other branch, and to be announced by the herald as victor.[1]

Will it then be possible for us, to whom are held out rewards so wondrous in number and in splendor that tongue can not recount them, while we are fast asleep and leading care-free lives, to make these our own by half-hearted efforts? Surely, were an idle life a very commendable thing, Sardanapalus[2] would take the first prize, or Margites[3] if you will, whom Homer, if indeed the poem is by Homer, put down as neither a farmer, nor a vine-dresser, nor anything else that is useful. Is there not rather truth in the maxim of Pittacus[4] which says, 'It is hard to be good?'[5] For after we have

[1] See I Cor. ix. 24–27.

[2] 'According to an inaccurate classical tradition, the last king of Assyria. He was noted for effeminacy and voluptuousness, and in order to escape falling into the hands of the besiegers of Nineveh, ended his worthless life by burning himself in his palace. It seems certain that the original of Sardanapalus is Asshurbanipal, King of Assyria, 668–626 B.C.'

[3] The *Margites*, a poem which is lost, and which ridiculed a man who was said to know many things, and who knew all badly, was frequently ascribed by the ancients to Homer, but is of later date. According to St. Clement of Alexandria, these are the verses of which St. Basil speaks:

Τὸν δ' οὔτ ἀρ σκαπτῆρα θεοὶ θέσαν, οὔτ' ἀροτῆρα.
Οὔτ ἄλλως τι σοφόν · πάσης δ' ἡμάρτανε τέχνης.

'Whom the gods made neither a delver, nor a ploughman,
Nor any other useful thing, but deprived of every craft.'

[4] One of the Seven Wise Men of Greece; b. at Mytilene in Lesbos, 652 B.C. In 589 P. was chosen *aesymnetes* (ruler with absolute power), which office he filled for ten years. Of his acts as a ruler nothing is known; of his elegiac poems, a few lines are preserved.

[5] This maxim is preserved in the title of an ode of Simonides, see

actually endured many hardships, we shall scarcely gain those blessings to which, as said above, nothing in human experience is comparable. Therefore we must not be light-minded, nor exchange our immortal hopes for momentary idleness, lest reproaches come upon us, and judgment befall us, not forsooth here among men, although judgment here is no easy thing for the man of sense to bear, but at the bar of justice, be that under the earth, or wherever else it may happen to be. While he who unintentionally violates his obligations perchance receives some pardon from God, he who designedly chooses a life of wickedness doubtless has a far greater punishment to endure.

IX

'What then are we to do?' perchance some one may ask. What else than to care for the soul, never leaving an idle moment for other things? Accordingly, we ought not to serve the body any more than is absolutely necessary, but we ought to do our best for the soul, releasing it from the bondage of fellowship with the bodily appetites; at the same time we ought to make the body superior to passion. We must provide it with the necessary food, to be sure, but not with delicacies, as those do who seek everywhere for waiters and cooks, and scour both earth and sea, like those bringing tribute to some stern tyrant. This is a despicable business, in which are endured things as unbearable as the torments of hell, where wool is combed into the fire, or water is drawn in a sieve and poured into a perforated jar, and where work is never done.[1] Then to spend more time than is necessary on one's hair and clothes is, in the words of Diogenes, the part of the unfortunate or of the sinful. For what difference does it make to a sensible man whether he is clad in a robe of state or in an inexpensive garment,

Bergk 747, and Plato indulges in a sophistical discussion of the ode in *Protagoras* 338. See also Arist. *Pol.* iii. 14. 9; Diog. Laert i. 4.

[1] See p. 55.

so long as he is protected from heat and cold? Likewise in other matters we must be governed by necessity, and only give so much care to the body as is beneficial to the soul. For to one who is really a man it is no less a disgrace to be a fop or a pamperer of the body than to be the victim of any other base passion. Indeed, to be very zealous in making the body appear very beautiful is not the mark of a man who knows himself, or who feels the force of the wise maxim: 'Not that which is seen is the man,'[1] for it requires a higher faculty for any one of us, whoever he may be, to know himself. Now it is harder for the man who is not pure in heart to gain this knowledge than for a blear-eyed person to look upon the sun.

To speak generally and so far as your needs demand, purity of soul embraces these things: to scorn sensual pleasures, to refuse to feast the eyes on the senseless antics of buffoons, or on bodies which goad one to passion, and to close one's ears to songs which corrupt the mind. For passions which are the offspring of servility and baseness are produced by this kind of music.[2] On the other hand, we must employ that class of music which is better in itself and which leads to better things, which David, the sacred psalmist, is said to have used to assuage the madness of the king.[3] Also tradition has it that when Pythagoras happened upon some drunken revelers, he commanded the flute-player, who led the merry-making, to change the tune and to play a Doric air, and that the chant so sobered them that they threw down their wreaths, and shamefacedly returned home.[4] Others at the sound of the flute[5] rave like Corybantes and Bacchantes. Even so great a differ-

[1] Perhaps Ps.-Plato, *Axiochus* 365; cf. the Bohn tr. of Plato 6. 43; Cicero, *Somn. Scip.* 8; Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* ii. 3. 8.

[2] See Plato, *Rep.* iii, 398 ff., for a discussion of the moral effects of the different modes.

[3] I Sam. xvi. 14-23.

[4] Among the Pythagoreans great importance was attached to the influence of music in controlling the passions; see Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras* 30.

[5] In *Rep.* iii. 399, Plato puts flute-players out of his ideal society.

ence does it make whether one lends his ear to healthy or to vicious music. Therefore you ought to have still less to do with the music of such influence than with other infamous things. Then I am ashamed to forbid you to load the air with all kinds of sweet-smelling perfumes, or to smear yourselves with ointment. Again, what further argument is needed against seeking the gratification of one's appetite than that it compels those who pursue it, like animals, to make of their bellies a god?[1]

In a word, he who would not bury himself in the mire of sensuality must deem the whole body of little worth, or must, as Plato puts it, pay only so much heed to the body as is an aid to wisdom,[2] or as Paul admonishes somewhere in a similar passage: 'Let no one make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.'[3] Wherein is there any difference between those who take pains that the body shall be perfect, but ignore the soul, for the use of which it is designed, and those who are scrupulous about their tools, but neglectful of their trade? On the contrary, one ought to discipline the flesh and hold it under, as a fierce animal is controlled, and to quiet, by the lash of reason, the unrest which it engenders in the soul, and not, by giving full rein to pleasure, to disregard the mind, as a charioteer is run away with by unmanageable and frenzied horses. So let us bear in mind the remark of Pythagoras, who, upon learning that one of his followers was growing very fleshy from gymnastics and hearty eating, said to him, 'Will you not stop making your imprisonment harder for yourself?'[4] Then it is said that since Plato foresaw the dangerous influence of the body, he chose an unhealthy part of Athens for his Academy, in order to remove excessive bodily comfort, as one prunes the rank shoots of the vines. Indeed I have even heard physicians say that over-healthiness is

[1] See Phil. iii. 19. [2] See *Rep.* iii. 403–412. [3] Rom. xiii. 14.

[4] The plain living of the Pythagoreans is discussed and illustrated in Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras* 32, 34, and Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras* 96, 98.

dangerous. Since, then, this exaggerated care of the body is harmful to the body itself, and a hindrance to the soul, it is sheer madness to be a slave to the body, and serve it.

If we were minded to disregard attention to the body, we should be in little danger of prizing anything else unduly. For of what use, now, are riches, if one scorns the pleasures of the flesh? I certainly see none, unless, as in the case of the mythological dragons, there is some satisfaction in guarding hidden treasure. Of a truth, one who had learned to be independent of this sort of thing would be loath to attempt anything mean or low, either in word or deed. For superfluity, be it Lydian gold-dust,[1] or the work of the gold-gathering ants,[2] he would disdain in proportion to its needlessness, and of course he would make the necessities of life, not its pleasures, the measure of need. Forsooth, those who exceed the bounds of necessity, like men who are sliding down an inclined plane, can nowhere gain a footing to check their precipitous flight, for the more they can scrape together, so much or even more do they need for the gratification of their desires. As Solon,[3] the son of Execestides, puts it, 'No definite limit is set to a man's wealth.'[4] Also, one should hear Theognis,[5] the teacher, on this point: 'I do not long to be rich, nor do I pray for riches, but let it be given me to live with a little, suffering no ill.'[6]

I also admire the wholesale contempt of all human possessions which Diogenes expressed, who showed himself richer than the great Persian king, since he needed less for living. But we are wont to be satisfied with nothing save with the

[1] The golden sands of the Pactolus, a small river in Lydia, were proverbial, for this river was one of the sources of Lydia's wealth.

[2] Cf. Herod. iii. 102; Jacobs on Aelian, *Nat. Animal.* iv. 27.

[3] See p. 107.

[4] Bergk 327.

[5] See p. 54.

[6] Bergk ii. 218; compare Proverbs xxx. 8: 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.'

talents of the Mysian Pythius,[1] with limitless acres of land, and more herds of cattle than may be counted. Yet I believe that if riches fail us we should not mourn for them, and if we have them, we should not think more of possessing them than of using them rightly. For Socrates expressed an admirable thought when he said that a rich, purse-proud man was never an object of admiration with him until he learned that the man knew how to use his wealth. If Phidias and Polycletus[2] had been very proud of the gold and ivory with which the one constructed the statue of the Jupiter of Elis, the other the Juno of Argos, they would have been laughed at, because priding themselves in treasure produced by no merit of theirs, and overlooking their art, from which the gold gained greater beauty and worth. Then shall we think that we are open to less reproach if we hold that virtue is not, in and of itself, a sufficient ornament?

Again, shall we, while manifestly ignoring riches and scorning sensual pleasures, court adulation and fulsome praise, vying with the fox of Archilochus[3] in cunning and craft? Of a truth there is nothing which the wise man must more guard against than the temptation to live for praise, and to study what pleases the crowd. Rather truth should be made the guide of one's life, so that if one must needs speak against all men, and be in ill-favor and in danger for virtue's sake, he shall not swerve at all from that which he considers right; else how shall we say that he differs from the Egyptian sophist, who at pleasure turned himself into a tree,

[1] A Lydian of great wealth, which he derived from his gold mines in the neighborhood of Celaenae, in Phrygia. When Xerxes arrived at Celaenae, Pythius banqueted him and his whole army (Herod. vii. 27–29).

[2] A statuary of the fifth century, and a pupil of Phidias. His statue of the *Spear-bearer* was studied by other artists as containing the *canon* with respect to the proportions of the human body.

[3] Poet, ranked by ancients as second only to Homer, flourished 650 B.C. He was a master in odes, in elegies, and in fables, but his great and formidable gift lay in satire. See *Rep.* ii. 365 : 'Around and about me I will draw the simple garb of virtue, but behind I will trail the subtle and crafty fox, as Archilochus, first of sages, counsels.'

an animal, fire, water, or anything else?[1] Such a man now praises justice to those who esteem it, and now expresses opposite sentiments when he sees that wrong is in good repute; this is the fawner's trick. Just as the polypus is said to take the color of the ground upon which it lies, so he conforms his opinions to those of his associates.

X

To be sure, we shall become more intimately acquainted with these precepts in the sacred writings, but it is incumbent upon us, for the present, to trace, as it were, the silhouette of virtue in the pagan authors. For those who carefully gather the useful from each book are wont, like mighty rivers, to gain accessions on every hand. For the precept of the poet which bids us add little to little[2] must be taken as applying not so much to the accumulation of riches, as of the various branches of learning. In line with this Bias[3] said to his son, who, as he was about to set out for Egypt, was inquiring what course he could pursue to give his father the greatest satisfaction: 'Store up means for the journey of old age.'[4] By *means* he meant virtue, but he placed too great restrictions upon it, since he limited its usefulness to the earthly life. For if any one mentions the old age of Tithonus,[5] or of Arganthonius,[6] or of that Methuselah[7] who is said to have lacked but thirty years of being a millenarian, or even if he reckons the entire period since the creation, I will laugh as at the fancies of a child,

[1] Proteus; see *Odys.* iv. 455, and Vergil, *Georg.* iv. 386.

[2] Hesiod, *W. and D.* 359: 'If you are ever adding little to little, soon your store will be great.'

[3] See p. 93.

[4] See Diogenes Laërtius i. 82–88, for this and other of the sayings and doings of Bias.

[5] Tithonus obtained immortality from the gods, but not eternal youth, and so became a shrunken old man.

[6] King of Tartessus in Spain. According to Herodotus (vii. 21) he ascended the throne at the age of forty, and reigned eighty years.

[7] Gen. v. 27.

since I look forward to that long, undying age, of the extent of which there is no limit for the mind of man to grasp, any more than there is of the life immortal. For the journey of this life eternal I would advise you to husband resources, leaving no stone unturned,[1] as the proverb has it, whence you might derive any aid. From this task we shall not shrink because it is hard and laborious, but, remembering the precept that every man ought to choose the better life, and expecting that association will render it pleasant, we shall busy ourselves with those things that are best. For it is shameful to squander the present, and later to call back the past in anguish, when no more time is given.

In the above treatise I have explained to you some of the things which I deem the most to be desired; of others I shall continue to counsel you so long as life is allowed me. Now as the sick are of three classes, according to the degrees of their sickness, may you not seem to belong to the third, or incurable, class, nor show a spiritual malady like that of their bodies! For those who are slightly indisposed visit physicians in person, and those who are seized by violent sickness call physicians, but those who are suffering from a hopelessly incurable melancholy do not even admit the physicians if they come. May this now not be your plight, as would seem to be the case were you to shun these right counsels!

[1] Cf. Eur. *Heracl.* 1002, and Bartlett, *Fam. Quot.* (9th ed.), p. 809.

APPENDIX

For those readers who care to know the immediate antecedents of Plutarch's essay, the following pages offer a translation of the concluding paragraphs of Schlemm's dissertation *De Fontibus Plutarchi Commentationum de Audiendis Poetis*. Incidentally, the writer would say that he is of the opinion that Herr Schlemm has made too little allowance for the direct influence of Aristotle and Plato upon Plutarch. The numerals indicate the pages and lines of my translation.

Now that we have treated the chapters of this essay in detail, let us briefly survey it as a whole, in order that we may see what plan Plutarch followed in its composition. It is very evident that, although he frequently interpolated extraneous matter, he started out with a certain definite plan of treatment in mind.

The entire matter falls into two parts. The former explains what restrictions must be placed upon the student of the poets, lest his morals or his views on fundamentally important questions be corrupted, and extends to the end of chapter IX. The latter embraces the remaining chapters, and considers those methods which the reader should employ to turn the study of the poets to the greatest possible account.

In the former part of the treatise first place is given to those maxims which may be deduced from the nature of the art of poetry (chapters II–III). Chapter II is concerned with certain Peripatetic principles, and, as shown above, Plutarch had taken these from the writings of some Peripatetic, who, to counteract the influence of Plato's uncertainty on that point, maintained that the fictitious is a legitimate element in poetry. The illustrations show that he must have had the book before his eyes as he wrote, and his plan seems to have been to incorporate here and there in his text those things which he read in this book.

Similarly, in the first part of chapter III Plutarch used the book of another Peripatetic, who likewise had written on the nature of the arts, and Plutarch either had made excerpts from this book, or actually had it at hand at the time of writing. The latter part of this chapter is concerned with those false sentiments from the poets which may be corrected by mere observation. These passages fall into two classes: one embraces those verses in which the poets themselves offer the means for correcting unfortunately expressed sentiments; the other, those verses which, though no escape therefrom is offered by the author, may yet be amended by the sayings of other illustrious men.

In the first part of chapter IV, in addition to his own illustrations (for example, the one taken from Menander), he employed some commentary on Homer, and even went so far as to accept illustrations which

were foreign to his subject. The examples in the last part of the chapter he himself brought together. In the first part, he presented the discussion on *hints* (ἐμφασις) in Homer, in which he quoted Antisthenes' two interpretations of the fables of the gods in Homer, which were doubtless known to Plutarch through Homeric studies. In that which followed, on the contradictions in the poets, he seemed to pursue the plan of dividing into two groups those passages from the comic and tragic poets which he had borrowed from the writings of the Stoics—chiefly indeed from Chrysippus—and of adding independently several illustrations taken from Homer (64. 13–21).

The third method which Plutarch proposed for removing the stumbling-blocks in the poets is to be sure of the correct interpretation of every word. Of this he gave most numerous and diverse examples, some of which he collected himself (68. 3 ff.; 69. 15–28; 71. 16 ff.; 72. 25, where, perhaps from memory, he interwove Stoic fragments with his own), and some of which, drawn from the writings of others, of the Grammarians (68. 20–69. 8), of Zeno and Chrysippus, the Stoics (67. 1–15; 69. 29–71. 15), he explained and elaborated.

After he had explained and fully illustrated how one may be on his guard lest his morals be corrupted by reading poetry, suddenly he again began to analyze the nature of the art of poetry, and to consider what must be looked for in poetic undertakings, and as above, with here and there something of his own (74. 10–19; 75. 2–14), he cited and explained those ideas which, with ample illustrations (75. 14 ff.), he found in the book of some Peripatetic. To these he added other examples, in part taken from the Homeric studies of the Grammarians (76. 3–20), and in part from those of the Peripatetics (76. 23–78. 4), and also an original precept concerning the reading of tragedies (78. 8 ff.). In like manner he turned Bion's theory of the treatment of poets to his own use, by saying that the reason for every utterance of a poet should be ascertained.

In the latter half of the treatise, of all the theories which he advanced by which the reader may get the greatest good from the truthful utterances of the poets, the best are those drawn from the writings of the Stoics. From them he took the matter included between 84. 14 and 85. 12, with the exception of a very few lines from 84. 22–85. 1. All of this, and notably the illustrations—the application of which has been shown to agree with the teachings of the Stoics—undoubtedly is to be traced to the similar works of Zeno (*περὶ ποιητικῆς ἀκροάσεως—Concerning the Study of Poetry*), of Cleanthes (*περὶ τοῦ ποιητοῦ—Concerning the Poet*), and of Chrysippus (*περὶ τοῦ πῶς δεῖ τῶν ποιημάτων ἀκούειν—How One Should Study Poetry*).

The latter part of chapter XI (85. 24–87. 17) is based on Zeno's discussion of the relative place of wisdom (φρόνησις) among the virtues in

the Homeric writings. Plutarch was here either drawing upon Zeno's essay *Concerning the Study of Poetry*, or upon some other of his writings, and with the original he mingled certain ideas of his own (86. 14–23), and others drawn from still another source (87. 6–14).

In composing the first part of chapter XIII, Plutarch unquestionably had at hand the book of Chrysippus on *How One Should Study Poetry*, the title of which, we have good reason to believe, Plutarch imitated.

He quotes other passages which are not so arranged as to be able to be traced to such and such a work of such a Stoic, but must have been taken from his note-books compiled while reading the Stoics. Among these are those corrections of passages on page 88 (19–31), which he followed up with some similar suggestions of his own (88 entire), and also the instances of censure and praise in Homer (91. 25–92. 22), to which he likewise made not a few additions (92. 22–93. 3).

Besides these ideas borrowed from others, he also advanced certain of his own, and illustrated them by examples drawn in part from most diverse sources, and in part original with himself. To this division must be assigned, first of all, those reflections on the diversity of morals and habits among the different heroes and peoples in Homer, from which, as Plutarch thinks, may be determined what should be avoided and what emulated. One illustration only in this chapter is not Homeric (82. 6–13), and that is taken from the select works of the Alexandrian grammarians. Here also are to be assigned the two illustrations at the beginning of chapter XII, obtained from other sources (Il. xxiii. 297 from the Peripatetics), the illustration taken from Archilochus, and lastly the theory of the mission of poetry (ea poetarum pertractandorum ratio), for which he found some of his illustrations elsewhere (93. 18–22), and invented some himself.

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[c is the abbreviation for cited, q for quoted.]