

Lovers

Plato

Greek original

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εἰς Διονυσίου τοῦ γραμματιστοῦ εἰσῆλθον, καὶ εἶδον αὐτόθι τῶν τε νέων τοὺς ἐπιεικεστάτους δοκοῦντας εἶναι τὴν ιδέαν καὶ πατέρων εὐδοκίμων, καὶ τούτων ἐραστάς. ἐτυγχανέτην οὖν δύο τῶν μειρακίων ἐρίζοντε, περὶ ὅτου δέ, οὐ σφόδρα κατήκουον. ἐφαινέσθην μέντοι ἢ περὶ Ἀναξαγόρου

[132b] ἢ περὶ Οἰνοπίδου ἐρίζειν· κύκλους γοῦν γράφειν ἐφαινέσθην καὶ ἐγκλίσεις τινὰς ἐμιμοῦντο τοῖν χεροῖν ἐπικλίνοντε καὶ μάλ' ἐσπουδακότε. καὶ γὰρ—καθήμην γὰρ παρὰ τὸν ἐραστὴν τοῦ ἐτέρου αὐτοῖν—κινήσας οὖν αὐτὸν τῷ ἀγκῶνι ἠρόμην ὅτι ποτὲ οὕτως ἐσπουδακότε τῷ μειρακίῳ εἴτην, καὶ εἶπον· ἢ που μέγα τι καὶ καλὸν ἐστὶ περὶ ὃ τοσαύτην σπουδὴν πεποιημένῳ ἐστόν;

ὁ δ' εἶπε, ποῖον, ἔφη, μέγα καὶ καλόν; ἀδολεσχοῦσι μὲν οὖν οὕτοί γε περὶ τῶν μετεώρων καὶ φλυαροῦσι φιλοσοφοῦντες.

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καὶ ἐγὼ θαυμάσας αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν εἶπον· ὦ νεανία, αἰσχρὸν δοκεῖ σοι εἶναι τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν; ἢ τί οὕτως χαλεπῶς λέγεις;

καὶ ὁ ἕτερος—πλησίον γὰρ καθήμενος ἐτύγχανεν αὐτοῦ, ἀντεραστής ὢν—ἀκούσας ἐμοῦ τε ἐρομένου κακείνου ἀποκρινομένου, οὐ πρὸς σοῦ γε, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, ποιεῖς τὸ καὶ ἀνερέσθαι τοῦτον εἰ αἰσχρὸν ἡγεῖται φιλοσοφίαν εἶναι. ἢ οὐκ οἶσθα τοῦτον ὅτι τραχηλιζόμενος καὶ ἐμπιμπλάμενος καὶ καθεύδων πάντα τὸν βίον διατετέλεκεν; ὥστε σὺ τί αὐτὸν ᾧ ἀποκρινεῖσθαι ἀλλ' ἢ ὅτι αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶ φιλοσοφία;

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ἦν δὲ οὗτος μὲν τοῖν ἐρασταῖν περὶ μουσικὴν διατετριφώς, ὁ δ' ἕτερος, ὃν ἐλοιδόρει, περὶ γυμναστικὴν. καὶ μοι ἔδοξε χρῆναι τὸν μὲν ἕτερον ἀφιέναι, τὸν ἐρωτώμενον, ὅτι οὐδ' αὐτὸς προσεποιεῖτο περὶ λόγων ἔμπειρος εἶναι ἀλλὰ περὶ ἔργων, τὸν δὲ σοφώτερον προσποιούμενον εἶναι διερωτῆσαι, ἵνα καὶ εἴ τι δυναίμην παρ' αὐτοῦ ὠφεληθείην. εἶπον οὖν ὅτι εἰς κοινὸν μὲν τὸ ἐρώτημα ἠρόμην· εἰ δὲ σὺ οἶε τοῦδε κάλλιον ἂν ἀποκρίνασθαι, σὲ ἐρωτῶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὅπερ καὶ τοῦτον, εἰ δοκεῖ σοι τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν καλὸν εἶναι ἢ οὐ.

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σχεδὸν οὖν ταῦτα λεγόντων ἡμῶν ἐπακούσαντε τῷ μειρακίῳ ἐσιγησάτην, καὶ αὐτῷ παυσαμένῳ τῆς ἔριδος ἡμῶν ἀκροαταὶ ἐγενέσθην. καὶ ὅτι μὲν οἱ ἐρασταὶ ἔπαθον οὐκ οἶδα, αὐτὸς δ' οὖν ἐξεπλάγην· αἰεὶ γάρ ποτε ὑπὸ τῶν νέων τε καὶ καλῶν ἐκπλήττομαι. ἐδόκει μέντοι μοι καὶ ὁ ἕτερος οὐχ ἥττον ἐμοῦ ἀγωνιᾶν· οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' ἀπεκρίνατό γέ μοι καὶ μάλα φιλοτίμως. ὁπότε γάρ τοι, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες,

[133b] τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν αἰσχρὸν ἡγησαίμην εἶναι, οὐδ' ἂν ἄνθρωπον νομίσαιμι ἐμαυτὸν εἶναι, οὐδ' ἄλλον τὸν οὕτω διακείμενον, ἐνδεικνύμενος εἰς τὸν ἀντεραστήν, καὶ λέγων μεγάλη τῇ φωνῇ, ἵν' αὐτοῦ κατακούοι τὰ παιδικά.

καὶ ἐγὼ εἶπον, καλὸν ἄρα δοκεῖ σοι τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν;

πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη.

τί οὖν, ἐγὼ ἔφη· ἢ δοκεῖ σοι οἷόν τ' εἶναι εἰδέναι πρᾶγμα ὅτιοῦν εἴτε καλὸν εἴτε αἰσχρὸν ἐστίν, ὃ

μὴ εἰδείη τις τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι ἔστιν;

οὐκ ἔφη.

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οἷσθ' ἄρα, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὅτι ἔστιν τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν;

πάνυ γε, ἔφη.

τί οὖν ἔστιν; ἔφην ἐγώ.

τί δ' ἄλλο γε ἢ κατὰ τὸ Σόλωνος; Σόλων γάρ που εἶπε—

γηράσκω δ' αἰεὶ πολλὰ διδασκόμενος·

καὶ ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ οὕτως αἰεὶ χρῆναι ἓν γέ τι μανθάνειν τὸν μέλλοντα φιλοσοφήσειν, καὶ νεώτερον ὄντα καὶ πρεσβύτερον, ἵν' ὥς πλεῖστα ἐν τῷ βίῳ μάθῃ. καὶ μοι τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἔδοξε τὶ εἰπεῖν, ἔπειτά πως ἐννοήσας ἡρόμην αὐτὸν εἰ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν πολυμαθίαν ἡγοῖτο.

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κακέϊνος, πάνυ, ἔφη.

ἡγῇ δὲ δὴ καλὸν εἶναι μόνον τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἢ καὶ ἀγαθόν; ἦν δ' ἐγώ.

καὶ ἀγαθόν, ἔφη, πάνυ.

πότερον οὖν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ τι τοῦτο ἴδιον ἐνορᾷς, ἢ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις οὕτω σοι δοκεῖ ἔχειν; οἷον φιλογυμνασίαν οὐ μόνον ἡγῇ καλὸν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀγαθόν; ἢ οὐ;

ὁ δὲ καὶ μάλα εἰρωνικῶς εἶπε δύο· πρὸς μὲν τόνδε μοι εἰρήσθω ὅτι οὐδέτερα· πρὸς μέντοι σέ, ὦ Σώκρατες,

[133e] ὁμολογῶ καὶ καλὸν εἶναι καὶ ἀγαθόν· ἡγοῦμαι γὰρ ὀρθῶς.

ἡρώτησα οὖν ἐγώ, ἄρ' οὖν καὶ ἐν τοῖς γυμνασίοις τὴν πολυποντίαν φιλογυμνασίαν ἡγῇ εἶναι;

κακέϊνος ἔφη, πάνυ γε, ὥσπερ γε καὶ ἐν τῷ φιλοσοφεῖν τὴν πολυμαθίαν φιλοσοφίαν ἡγοῦμαι εἶναι.

καγὼ εἶπον, ἡγῇ δὲ δὴ τοὺς φιλογυμναστοῦντας ἄλλου τοῦ ἐπιθυμεῖν ἢ τούτου, ὅτι ποιήσει αὐτοὺς εὖ ἔχειν τὸ σῶμα;

τούτου, ἔφη.

ἦ οὖν οἱ πολλοὶ πόνοι τὸ σῶμα, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ποιοῦσιν εὖ ἔχειν;

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πῶς γὰρ ἂν, ἔφη, ἀπὸ γε ὀλίγων πόνων τὸ σῶμά τις εὖ ἔχοι;

καὶ μοι ἔδοξεν ἤδη ἐνταῦθα κινητέος εἶναι ὁ φιλογυμναστής, ἵνα μοι βοηθήσῃ διὰ τὴν ἐμπειρίαν τῆς γυμναστικῆς· κάπειτα ἡρόμην αὐτόν, σὺ δὲ δὴ τί σιγᾶς ἡμῖν, ὦ λῶστε, τούτου ταῦτα λέγοντος; ἢ καὶ σοὶ δοκοῦσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εὖ τὰ σώματα ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν πολλῶν πόνων, ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων;

ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἔφη, ὥμην τὸ λεγόμενον δὴ τοῦτο κἂν ὕν γινῶναι ὅτι οἱ μέτριοι πόνοι εὖ ποιοῦσιν ἔχειν τὰ

[134b] σώματα, πόθεν δὲ οὐχὶ ἄνδρα γε ἄγρυπνόν τε καὶ ἄσιτον καὶ ἀτριβῇ τὸν τράχηλον ἔχοντα καὶ λεπτόν ὑπὸ μεριμνῶν; καὶ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα εἰπόντος ἦσθη τὰ μειράκια καὶ ἐπεγέλασεν, ὁ

δ' ἕτερος ἡρυθρίασε.

καὶ ἐγὼ εἶπον, τί οὖν; σὺ ἤδη συγχωρεῖς μήτε πολλοὺς μήτε ὀλίγους πόνους εὖ ποιεῖν ἔχειν τὰ σώματα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἀλλὰ τοὺς μετρίους; ἢ διαμάχη δυοῖν ὄντοιν νῶν περὶ τοῦ λόγου;

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κἀκεῖνος, πρὸς μὲν τοῦτον, ἔφη, κἂν πάνυ ἡδέως διαγωνισαίμην, καὶ εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι ἱκανὸς ἂν γενοίμην βοηθῆσαι τῇ ὑποθέσει ἣν ὑπεθέμην, καὶ εἰ ταύτης ἔτι φαυλοτέραν ὑπεθέμην—οὐδὲν γάρ ἐστι—πρὸς μέντοι σὲ οὐδὲν δέομαι παρὰ δόξαν φιλονικεῖν, ἀλλ' ὁμολογῶ μὴ τὰ πολλὰ ἀλλὰ τὰ μέτρια γυμνάσια τὴν εὐεξίαν ἐμποιεῖν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

τί δὲ τὰ σιτία; τὰ μέτρια ἢ τὰ πολλὰ; ἔφην ἐγώ.

καὶ τὰ σιτία ὠμολόγει.

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ἔτι δὲ κἀγὼ προσηνάγκαζον αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖν καὶ ἄλλα πάντα τὰ περὶ τὸ σῶμα ὠφελιμώτατα εἶναι τὰ μέτρια ἀλλὰ μὴ τὰ πολλὰ μηδὲ τὰ ὀλίγα· καὶ μοι ὠμολόγει τὰ μέτρια.

τί δ', ἔφην, τὰ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν; τὰ μέτρια ὠφελεῖ ἢ τὰ ἄμετρα τῶν προσφερομένων;

τὰ μέτρια, ἔφη.

οὐκοῦν ἐν τῶν προσφερομένων ψυχῇ ἐστι καὶ τὰ μαθήματα;

ὠμολόγει.

καὶ τούτων ἄρα τὰ μέτρια ὠφελεῖ ἀλλ' οὐ τὰ πολλὰ;

συνέφη.

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τίνα οὖν ἐρόμενοι ἂν δικαίως ἐροίμεθα ὅποιοι μέτριοι πόννοι καὶ σιτία πρὸς τὸ σῶμά ἐστιν;

ὠμολογοῦμεν μὲν τρεῖς ὄντες, ὅτι ἱατρὸν ἢ παιδοτρίβην.

τίνα δ' ἂν περὶ σπερμάτων σπορᾶς ὁπόσον μέτριον;

καὶ τούτου τὸν γεωργὸν ὠμολογοῦμεν.

τίνα δὲ περὶ μαθημάτων εἰς ψυχὴν φυτεύσεώς τε καὶ σπορᾶς ἐρωτῶντες δικαίως ἂν ἐροίμεθα ὅποσα καὶ ὅποια μέτρια;

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τοῦντεῦθεν ἤδη ἀπορίας μεστοὶ ἤμεν ἅπαντες· κἀγὼ προσπαίζων αὐτοὺς ἡρόμην, βούλεσθε, ἔφην, ἐπειδὴ ἡμεῖς ἐν ἀπορίᾳ ἐσμέν, ἐρώμεθα ταῦτ' ἐν ταῖς μειράκιας; ἢ ἴσως αἰσχυρόμεθα, ὥσπερ ἔφη τοὺς μνηστῆρας Ὅμηρος, μὴ ἀξιούντων εἶναι τίνα ἄλλον ὅστις ἐντενεῖ τὸ τόξον;

ἐπειδὴ οὖν μοι ἐδόκουν ἀθυμεῖν πρὸς τὸν λόγον, ἄλλῃ ἐπειρώμην σκοπεῖν, καὶ εἶπον, ποῖα δὲ μάλιστα ἅττα τοπάζομεν εἶναι τῶν μαθημάτων ἃ δεῖ τὸν φιλοσοφοῦντα μανθάνειν, ἐπειδὴ οὐχὶ πάντα οὐδὲ πολλὰ;

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ὑπολαβὼν οὖν ὁ σοφώτερος εἶπεν ὅτι κάλλιστα ταῦτ' εἶη τῶν μαθημάτων καὶ προσήκοντα ἀφ' ὧν ἂν πλείστην δόξαν ἔχοι τις εἰς φιλοσοφίαν· πλείστην δ' ἂν ἔχοι δόξαν, εἰ δοκοίη τῶν τεχνῶν ἔμπειρος εἶναι πασῶν, εἰ δὲ μή, ὥς πλείστων γε καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἀξιολόγων, μαθὼν αὐτῶν ταῦτα

ἂ προσήκει τοῖς ἐλευθέροις μαθεῖν, ὅσα συνέσεως ἔχεται, μὴ ὅσα χειρουργίας.

ἄρ' οὖν οὕτω λέγεις, ἔφην ἐγώ, ὥσπερ ἐν τῇ τεκτονικῇ;

[135c] καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ τέκτονα μὲν ἂν πρίαίῃο πέντε ἢ ἕξ μιν, ἄκρον ἀρχιτέκτονα δὲ οὐδ' ἂν μυρίων δραχμῶν· ὀλίγοι γε μὴν καὶ ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς Ἑλλήσι γίνονται. ἄρα μὴ τι τοιοῦτον λέγεις; καὶ ὅς ἀκούσας μου συνεχώρει καὶ αὐτὸς λέγειν τοιοῦτον.

ἡρόμην δ' αὐτὸν εἰ οὐκ ἀδύνατον εἶη δύο μόνας τέχνας οὕτω μαθεῖν τὸν αὐτόν, μὴ ὅτι πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας· ὁ δὲ, μὴ οὕτως μου, ἔφη, ὑπολάβης, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὡς λέγοντος ὅτι δεῖ ἐκάστην τῶν τεχνῶν τὸν φιλοσοφοῦντα ἐπίστασθαι

[135d] ἀκριβῶς ὥσπερ αὐτὸν τὸν τὴν τέχνην ἔχοντα, ἀλλ' ὡς εἰκὸς ἄνδρα ἐλεύθερόν τε καὶ πεπαιδευμένον, ἐπακολουθησαί τε τοῖς λεγομένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ οἷόν τ' εἶναι διαφερόντως τῶν παρόντων, καὶ αὐτὸν ξυμβάλλεσθαι γνώμην, ὥστε δοκεῖν χαριέστατον εἶναι καὶ σοφώτατον τῶν ἀεὶ παρόντων ἐν τοῖς λεγομένοις τε καὶ πραττομένοις περὶ τὰς τέχνας.

καγώ, ἔτι γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἡμφεγνόουν τὸν λόγον ὅτι ἐβούλετο,

[135e] ἄρ' ἐννοῶ, ἔφην, οἷον λέγεις τὸν φιλόσοφον ἄνδρα; δοκεῖς γάρ μοι λέγειν οἷοι ἐν τῇ ἀγωνίᾳ εἰσὶν οἱ πένταθλοι πρὸς τοὺς δρομέας ἢ τοὺς παλαιστάς. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι τούτων μὲν λείπονται κατὰ τὰ τούτων ἄθλα καὶ δεύτεροί εἰσι πρὸς τούτους, τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἀθλητῶν πρῶτοι καὶ νικῶσιν αὐτούς.

τάχ' ἂν ἴσως τοιοῦτόν τι λέγοις καὶ τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν ἀπεργάζεσθαι τοὺς ἐπιτηδεύοντας τοῦτο τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα· τῶν μὲν

[136a] πρώτων εἰς σύνεσιν περὶ τὰς τέχνας ἐλλείπεσθαι, τὰ δευτερεῖα δ' ἔχοντας τῶν ἄλλων περιεῖναι, καὶ οὕτως γίνεσθαι περὶ πάντα ὑπακρόν τινα ἄνδρα τὸν πεφιλοσοφηκότα· τοιοῦτόν τινα μοι δοκεῖς ἐνδείκνυσθαι.

καλῶς γέ μοι, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, φαίνει ὑπολαμβάνειν τὰ περὶ τοῦ φιλοσόφου, ἀπεικάσας αὐτὸν τῷ πεντάθλῳ. ἔστιν γὰρ ἀτεχνῶς τοιοῦτος οἷος μὴ δουλεύειν μηδενὶ πράγματι, μηδ' εἰς τὴν ἀκρίβειαν μηδὲν διαπεπονηκέναι, ὥστε διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἐνὸς τούτου ἐπιμέλειαν τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων [136b] ἀπολελεῖσθαι, ὥσπερ οἱ δημιουργοί, ἀλλὰ πάντων μετρίως ἐφῆσθαι.

μετὰ ταύτην δὴ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν ἐγὼ προθυμούμενος σαφῶς εἰδέναι ὅτι λέγοι, ἐπυνθανόμην αὐτοῦ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς πότερον χρησίμους ἢ ἀχρήστους εἶναι ὑπολαμβάνει.

χρησίμους δήπου, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἔφη.

ἄρ' οὖν, εἶπερ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ χρήσιμοι, οἱ πονηροὶ ἀχρηστοί;

ὡμολόγει.

τί δέ; τοὺς φιλοσόφους ἄνδρας χρησίμους ἡγήῃ ἢ οὐ;

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ὁ δὲ ὡμολόγει χρησίμους, καὶ πρὸς γε ἔφη χρησιμωτάτους εἶναι ἡγεῖσθαι.

φέρε δὴ γινώμεν, εἰ σὺ ἀληθῆ λέγεις, ποῦ καὶ χρήσιμοι ἡμῖν εἰσιν οἱ ὑπακροὶ οὗτοι; δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι ἐκάστου γε τῶν τὰς τέχνας ἐχόντων φαυλότερός ἐστιν ὁ φιλόσοφος.

ὡμολόγει.

φέρε δὴ σὺ, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, εἰ τύχοις ἢ αὐτὸς ἀσθενήσας ἢ τῶν φίλων τις τῶν σῶν περὶ ὧν σὺ σπουδὴν μεγάλην ἔχεις, πότερον ὑγίαν βουλόμενος κτήσασθαι τὸν ὑπακρόν ἐκείνον τὸν φιλόσοφον εἰσάγοις ἢ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν ἢ τὸν ἱατρὸν λάβοις;

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ἀμφοτέρους ἔγων' ἄν, ἔφη.

μή μοι, εἶπον ἐγώ, ἀμφοτέρους λέγε, ἀλλ' ὁπότερον μᾶλλον τε καὶ πρότερον.

οὐδεις ἄν, ἔφη, τοῦτο γε ἀμφισβητήσειεν, ὥς οὐχὶ τὸν ἱατρὸν καὶ μᾶλλον καὶ πρότερον.

τί δ'; ἐν νηὶ χειμαζομένη ποτέρῳ ἄν μᾶλλον ἐπιτρέποις σαυτόν τε καὶ τὰ σεαυτοῦ, τῷ κυβερνήτῃ ἢ τῷ φιλοσόφῳ;

τῷ κυβερνήτῃ ἔγωγε.

οὐκοῦν καὶ τᾶλλα πάνθ' οὕτως, ἕως ἄν τις δημιουργὸς ᾗ, οὐ χρησίμος ἐστὶν ὁ φιλόσοφος;

φαίνεται, ἔφη.

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οὐκοῦν νῦν ἄχρηστος τις ἡμῖν ἐστὶν ὁ φιλόσοφος; εἰσὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν αἰεὶ που δημιουργοί· ὠμολογήσαμεν δὲ τοὺς μὲν ἀγαθοὺς χρησίμους εἶναι, τοὺς δὲ μοχθηροὺς ἀχρήστους.

ἠναγκάζεται ὁμολογεῖν.

τί οὖν μετὰ τοῦτο; ἔρωμαί σε ἢ ἀγροικότερόν ἐστιν ἐρέσθαι—

ἐροῦ ὅτι βούλει.

οὐδὲν δὴ, ἔφην ἐγώ, ζητῶ ἄλλο ἢ ἀνομολογήσασθαι τὰ

[137a] εἰρημένα. ἔχει δέ πως ὥδι. ὠμολογήσαμεν καλὸν εἶναι τὴν φιλοσοφίαν καὶ αὐτοὶ φιλόσοφοι εἶναι, τοὺς δὲ φιλοσόφους ἀγαθοὺς, τοὺς δὲ ἀγαθοὺς χρησίμους, τοὺς δὲ πονηροὺς ἀχρήστους· αὖθις δ' αὖ τοὺς φιλοσόφους ὠμολογήσαμεν, ἕως ἄν οἱ δημιουργοὶ ᾧσιν, ἀχρήστους εἶναι, δημιουργοὺς δὲ αἰεὶ εἶναι. οὐ γὰρ ταῦτα ὠμολόγηται;

πάνυ γε, ἦ δ' ὅς.

ὠμολογοῦμεν ἄρα, ὥς ἔοικε, κατὰ γε τὸν σὸν λόγον, εἴπερ τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν ἐστὶ περὶ τὰς τέχνας ἐπιστήμονας εἶναι ὃν σὺ λέγεις τὸν τρόπον, πονηροὺς αὐτοὺς εἶναι καὶ

[137b] ἀχρήστους, ἕως ἄν ἐν ἀνθρώποις τέχναι ᾧσιν. ἀλλὰ μὴ οὐχ οὕτως, ᾧ φίλε, ἔχωσι, μὴδ' ἢ τοῦτο φιλοσοφεῖν, περὶ τὰς τέχνας ἐσπουδακέναι, οὐδὲ πολυπραγμονοῦντα κυπτάζοντα ζῆν οὐδὲ πολυμαθοῦντα, ἀλλ' ἄλλο τι, ἐπεὶ ἐγὼ ᾧμην καὶ ὄνειδος εἶναι τοῦτο καὶ βαναύσους καλεῖσθαι τοὺς περὶ τὰς τέχνας ἐσπουδακότας. ᾧδε δὲ σαφέστερον εἰσόμεθα εἰ ἄρα ἀληθῆ λέγω, ἐὰν τοῦτο ἀποκρίνη· τίνες ἵππους ἐπίστανται

[137c] κολάζειν ὀρθῶς; πότερον οἵπερ βελτίστους ποιοῦσιν ἢ ἄλλοι;

οἵπερ βελτίστους.

τί δέ; κύνας οὐχ οἱ βελτίστους ἐπίστανται ποιεῖν, οὗτοι καὶ κολάζειν ὀρθῶς ἐπίστανται;

ναί.

ἡ αὕτη ἄρα τέχνη βελτίστους τε ποιεῖ καὶ κολάζει ὀρθῶς;

φαίνεται μοι, ἦ δ' ὅς.

τί δέ; πότερον ἢπερ βελτίστους τε ποιεῖ καὶ κολάζει ὀρθῶς, ἡ αὕτη δὲ καὶ γινώσκει τοὺς χρηστοὺς καὶ τοὺς μοχθηροὺς, ἢ ἐτέρα τις;

ἡ αὕτη, ἔφη.

ἐθελήσεις οὖν καὶ κατ' ἀνθρώπους τοῦτο ὁμολογεῖν,

[137d] ἤπερ βελτίστους ἀνθρώπους ποιεῖ, ταύτην εἶναι καὶ τὴν κολάζουσιν ὀρθῶς καὶ διαγιγνώσκουσιν τοὺς χρηστοὺς τε καὶ μοχθηροὺς;

πάνυ γ', ἔφη.

οὐκοῦν καὶ ἦτις ἓνα, καὶ πολλοὺς, καὶ ἦτις πολλοὺς, καὶ ἓνα;

ναί.

καὶ καθ' ἵππων δὴ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων οὕτως;

φημί.

τίς οὖν ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπιστήμη, ἥτις τοὺς ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἀκολασταίνοντας καὶ παρανομοῦντας ὀρθῶς κολάζει; οὐχ ἡ δικαστική;

ναί.

ἢ ἄλλην οὖν τινα καλεῖς καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἢ ταύτην;

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ ταύτην.

[137e]

οὐκοῦν ἤπερ κολάζουσιν ὀρθῶς, ταύτη καὶ γινώσκουσι τοὺς χρηστοὺς καὶ μοχθηροὺς;

ταύτη.

ὅστις δὲ ἓνα γινώσκει, καὶ πολλοὺς γινώσεται;

ναί.

καὶ ὅστις γε πολλοὺς ἀγνοεῖ, καὶ ἓνα;

φημί.

εἰ ἄρα ἵππος ὢν ἀγνοοῖ τοὺς χρηστοὺς καὶ πονηροὺς ἵππους, κἂν ἑαυτὸν ἀγνοοῖ ποῖός τις ἐστίν;

φημί.

καὶ εἰ βοῦς ὢν ἀγνοοῖ τοὺς πονηροὺς καὶ χρηστοὺς βοῦς, κἂν αὐτὸν ἀγνοοῖ ποῖός τις ἐστίν;

ναί, ἔφη.

οὕτω δὴ καὶ εἰ κύων;

ὡμολόγει.

[138a]

τί δ'; ἐπειδὴν ἀνθρωπός τις ὢν ἀγνοῇ τοὺς χρηστοὺς καὶ μοχθηροὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἄρ' οὐχ αὐτὸν ἀγνοεῖ πότερον χρηστός ἐστὶν ἢ πονηρός, ἐπειδὴ καὶ αὐτὸς ἀνθρωπός ἐστιν;

συνεχώρει.

τὸ δὲ αὐτὸν ἀγνοεῖν σωφρονεῖν ἐστὶν ἢ μὴ σωφρονεῖν;

μὴ σωφρονεῖν.

τὸ ἑαυτὸν ἄρα γινώσκειν ἐστὶ σωφρονεῖν;

φημί, ἔφη.

τοῦτ' ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικε, τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς γράμμα παρακελεύεται, σωφροσύνην ἀσκεῖν καὶ δικαιοσύνην.

ἔοικεν.

τῇ αὐτῇ δὲ ταύτῃ καὶ κολάζειν ὀρθῶς ἐπιστάμεθα;

ναί.

[138b]

οὐκοῦν ἥ μὲν κολάζειν ὀρθῶς ἐπιστάμεθα, δικαιοσύνη αὕτη ἐστίν, ἥ δὲ διαγιγνώσκειν καὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἄλλους, σωφροσύνη;

ἔοικεν, ἔφη.

ταυτόν ἄρα ἐστὶ καὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ σωφροσύνη;

φαίνεται.

καὶ μὴν οὕτω γε καὶ αἱ πόλεις εὖ οἰκοῦνται, ὅταν οἱ ἀδικοῦντες δίκην διδῶσιν.

ἀληθῆ λέγεις, ἔφη.

καὶ πολιτικὴ ἄρα αὕτη ἐστίν.

συνεδόκει.

τί δὲ ὅταν εἷς ἀνὴρ ὀρθῶς πόλιν διοικῇ, ὄνομά γε τούτῳ οὐ τύραννός τε καὶ βασιλεύς;

φημί.

οὐκοῦν βασιλικῇ τε καὶ τυραννικῇ τέχνῃ διοικεῖ;

οὕτως.

καὶ αὗται ἄρ' αἱ αὐταὶ τέχναι εἰσὶν ἐκείναις;

φαίνονται.

[138c]

τί δ' ὅταν εἷς ὢν ἀνὴρ οἰκίαν διοικῇ ὀρθῶς, τί ὄνομα τούτῳ ἐστίν; οὐκ οἰκονόμος τε καὶ δεσπότης;

ναί.

πότερον οὖν καὶ οὗτος δικαιοσύνη εὖ ἂν τὴν οἰκίαν διοικοῖ ἢ κάλλη τινὶ τέχνῃ;

δικαιοσύνη.

ἔστιν ἄρα ταυτόν, ὡς ἔοικε, βασιλεύς, τύραννος, πολιτικός, οἰκονόμος, δεσπότης, σώφρων, δίκαιος. καὶ μία τέχνη ἐστὶν βασιλική, τυραννική, πολιτική, δεσποτική, οἰκονομική, δικαιοσύνη, σωφροσύνη.

φαίνεται, ἔφη, οὕτως.

[138d]

πότερον οὖν τῷ φιλοσόφῳ, ὅταν μὲν ἰατρὸς περὶ τῶν καμνόντων τι λέγη, αἰσχρὸν μήθ' ἔπεσθαι τοῖς λεγομένοις δύνασθαι μήτε συμβάλλεσθαι μηδὲν περὶ τῶν λεγομένων ἢ πραττομένων, καὶ ὁπόταν ἄλλος τις τῶν δημιουργῶν, ὡσαύτως· ὅταν δὲ δικαστὴς ἢ βασιλεὺς ἢ ἄλλος τις ὢν νυνδὴ διεληλύθαμεν, οὐκ αἰσχρὸν περὶ τούτων μήτε ἔπεσθαι δύνασθαι μήτε συμβάλλεσθαι περὶ αὐτῶν;

πῶς δ' οὐκ αἰσχρὸν, ὦ Σώκρατες, περὶ γε τοσούτων πραγμάτων μηδὲν ἔχειν συμβάλλεσθαι;

[138e]

πότερον οὖν καὶ περὶ ταῦτα λέγωμεν, ἔφην, πένταθλον αὐτὸν δεῖν εἶναι καὶ ὑπακρον, καὶ ταύτης μὲν τὰ δευτερεῖα ἔχοντα πάντων τὸν φιλόσοφον, καὶ ἀχρεῖον εἶναι ἕως ἂν τούτων τις ᾗ, ἢ πρῶτον μὲν τὴν αὐτοῦ οἰκίαν οὐκ ἄλλω ἐπιτρεπτέον οὐδὲ τὰ δευτερεῖα ἐν τούτῳ ἐκτέον, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν κολαστέον δικάζοντα ὀρθῶς, εἰ μέλλει εὖ οἰκεῖσθαι αὐτοῦ ἢ οἰκία;

συνεχώρει δὴ μοι.

ἔπειτά γε δήπου ἔαντε οἱ φίλοι αὐτῷ διαίτας ἐπιτρέπωσιν, ἔαντε ἢ πόλις τι προστάτῃ διακρίνειν ἢ δικάζειν, [139a] αἰσχροὺς ἐν τούτοις, ὧς ἑταῖρε, δεύτερον φαίνεσθαι ἢ τρίτον καὶ μὴ οὐχ ἡγεῖσθαι;

δοκεῖ μοι.

πολλοῦ ἄρα δεῖ ἡμῖν, ὧς βέλτιστε, τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν πολυμαθία τε εἶναι καὶ ἢ περὶ τὰς τέχνας πραγματεία.

εἰπόντος δ' ἐμοῦ ταῦτα ὁ μὲν σοφὸς αἰσχυνομένης τοῖς προειρημένοις ἐσίγησεν, ὁ δὲ ἀμαθὴς ἔφη ἐκείνως εἶναι· καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ἐπήνεσαν τὰ εἰρημένα.

English translation

[132a]

I entered the grammar school of the teacher Dionysius, and saw there the young men who are accounted the most comely in form and of distinguished family, and their lovers. Now it chanced that two of the young people were disputing, but about what, I did not clearly overhear: it appeared, however, that they were disputing either about Anaxagoras or about Oenopides; at any rate, they appeared to be drawing circles,

[132b] and they were imitating certain inclinations with their arms, bending to it and taking it most earnestly. Then I—for I was sitting beside the lover of one of the pair—nudged him with my elbow and asked him what on earth the two youngsters were so earnest about, and I said: Is it then something great and fine, in which they are so earnestly immersed?

Great and fine, indeed! he replied: why, these fellows are prating about the heavenly bodies, and babbling philosophy. [132c] Then I, surprised at his answer, said: Young man, do you consider philosophizing to be shameful? Else, why do you speak so sharply?

Then the other youth—for he chanced to be sitting near him, as his rival in love—when he heard my question and his rival's answer, said: You do yourself no good, Socrates, by pressing this fellow with a further question, as to whether he considers philosophizing to be shameful. Do you not know that he has spent the whole of his life in practising the neckhold, and stuffing himself, and sleeping? So why did you suppose he would make any other reply than that philosophy is shameful? [132d] Now this one of the two lovers had spent his time on humane studies, whereas the other, whom he was abusing, had spent his on athletics. So I decided that I had best relinquish the other, whom I had been questioning, since he did not even himself set up to be experienced in words, but only in deeds; and that I should interrogate the one who set up to be wiser, in order that so far as I was able I might get some benefit from him. I said therefore: I addressed my question to both in common; but if you think you could answer more creditably than he, I put the same question to you as I did to him: do you consider philosophizing to be honorable or not?

[133a]

Then the two striplings, overhearing us speak somewhat like this, were silent, and ceasing from their own contention they became listeners to ours. What their lovers' sensations were, I do not know, but I myself, at any rate, was staggered; for every time I am staggered by handsome young people. It seemed to me, however, that my young friend too was in as great a flutter as myself; but nevertheless he answered me in a most ambitious spirit: Why, of course, Socrates, he said, if I should ever consider philosophizing to be shameful, I should not account myself so much as a man,

[133b] nor anyone else either who was disposed to think so. Here he pointed to his rival lover, and spoke with a loud voice, in order that his favorite might hear every word.

Then I remarked: So philosophizing seems to you to be honorable?

Quite so, he said.

Well now, I said; does it seem to you possible to know whether anything is honorable or shameful without knowing what it is fundamentally?

No, he said.

[133c] Then do you know, I went on, what philosophizing is?

Certainly I do, said he.

Then what is it? I asked.

Why, just what Solon called it; you know it was Solon who said:

And ever, as I older grow, I learn yet more and more;

—and I agree with him that a man who intends to philosophize should in this way be ever learning something or other, whether he be younger or older, in order that he may learn as many things as possible in his life. Now at first I felt there was something in his reply, but then, on second thoughts, I asked him whether he considered philosophy to be much learning.

[133d] To which he answered: Certainly.

And do you consider philosophy to be merely honorable, I asked, or good as well?

Good as well, he said: very much so.

Then do you observe this as peculiar to philosophy, or do you find it similarly in everything else? For example, do you consider the love of athletics to be not merely honorable, but good as well, or do you not?

Whereupon he, most slyly, gave a double answer: To him my statement must be neither; but to you, Socrates, I acknowledge it to be both honorable and good:

[133e] for I consider this the right view.

Then I asked him: Well now, in athletics, do you consider that much exercise is love of athletics?

To which he replied: Certainly, just as in philosophizing I consider much learning to be philosophy.

Then I said: And do you then consider that the lovers of athletics desire anything else than that which will cause them to be in good bodily condition?

Only that, he replied.

And does much exercise, I asked, cause them to be in good bodily condition?

[134a]

Yes, for how, he replied, could one be in good bodily condition through little exercise?

Here I felt it was time to stir up the lover of athletics, in order that he might give me the support of his athletic experience; so I proceeded to ask him: And you then, pray, why are you silent, excellent sir, while your friend here is speaking thus? Do you agree that men are in good bodily condition through much exercise, or is it rather through moderate exercise?

For my part, Socrates, he said, I thought even a pig—

[134b] as the saying is—would have known that moderate exercise causes them to be in good bodily condition, so why should not a fellow who is sleepless and unfed, with unchafed neck and slender, care-worn frame! And when he had said this the boys were delighted and laughed their approval, while the other lover blushed.

Then I said to him: Well, do you now concede that it is neither much, nor little, but moderate exercise that causes men to be in good bodily condition? Or do you bid defiance to the two of us

on this point? [134c] To which he answered: Against him I should be only too glad to fight it out, and I am certain I should prove able to support the theory I have put forward, even had I put forward a weaker one; for he is naught. But with you I do not aim at winning an unscrupulous success; and so I admit that not a great but a moderate amount of athletics causes good condition in men.

And what of food? Moderate or much? I asked.

The same applied to food, he admitted. [134d] Then I went on and tried to compel him also to admit that everything else connected with the body when most beneficial, was the moderate thing, not the much or the little; and he admitted that it was the moderate thing.

And now, I said, as regards the soul; are moderate or immoderate things beneficial, as adjuncts of it?

Moderate things, he replied.

And are studies among the adjuncts of the soul?

He admitted they were.

So among these also it is the moderate that are beneficial, and not the much?

He agreed.

Then whom should we be justified in asking what sort of exercise or food is moderate for the body?

The three of us agreed that it must be a doctor or a trainer. [134e] And whom should we ask about the moderate measure in the sowing of seed?

In that matter, we agreed, it must be a farmer.

And whom should we be justified in asking as to the moderate degree and kind, in regard to the sowing and planting of studies in the soul?

At this point we all began to be full of perplexity;

[135a] then I, mocking at them, asked: Do you mind, since we are in perplexity, if we ask these boys here? or perhaps we are ashamed, as Homer said the suitors were, and do not think it fit there should be someone else who will string the bow?

Then, as it seemed to me that they were losing their zeal for the argument, I tried to pursue the inquiry in another way, and said: But what, as nearly as we can guess, are the kinds of learning which the philosopher should learn, since he is not to learn all things or many things? [135b] At this the wiser one interjected: The finest and most suitable kinds of learning are those which will bring him the most reputation for philosophy; and he will get most reputation if he appears well versed in all the arts, or if not in all, in as many of them, and those the most considerable, as he can, by learning so much of them as befits a free man to learn, that is, what belongs to the understanding rather than the handiwork of each.

Well now, do you mean, I asked, in the same way as in carpentry? For there, you know, you can buy a carpenter for five [135c] or six minae, but a first-rate architect cannot be got for even ten thousand drachmae; few such, indeed, could be found throughout the whole of Greece. Is it something of this sort that you mean? When he heard me say this, he admitted that something like this was what he himself meant.

I next asked him if it was not impossible for the same person to learn in this way merely two of the arts, not to speak of many or the principal ones; to which he replied: Do not conceive me, Socrates, [135d] to be stating that the philosopher must have accurate knowledge of each of the arts, like the actual adept in any of them; I mean only so far as may be expected of a free and educated man: that is, he should be able to follow the explanations of the craftsman more readily than the rest of the company, and to contribute an opinion of his own which will make him appear the cleverest and most accomplished of the company who may at any time be present at some verbal or practical exposition of the arts.

Then, as I was still unsettled in my mind as to the drift of his words, I asked him: Do I quite grasp the sort of man whom you mean by the philosopher? [135e] For you seem to me to mean someone like the all-round athletes in contest with the runners or the wrestlers: the former yield, you know, to the latter in their particular exercises, and are their inferiors in these, but are superior to the usual sort of athletes and beat them.

I daresay it may be something of this sort that you would suggest as the effect produced by philosophy on those who make it their pursuit: they yield to those who are first-rate [136a] in an understanding of the arts, but in taking the second place they surpass the rest; and in this way the man who has studied philosophy comes just next to the top in everything. That is the kind of person whom you appear to me to indicate.

You are quite right, it seems to me, Socrates, he said, in your conception of the philosopher's position, with your comparison of him to the all-round athlete. For it is precisely his nature not to be enslaved to any business, or to work out anything exactly, so as to let his application to that one matter make him deficient in the rest, [136b] as the craftsmen do, but to have a moderate contact with all of them.

Well, after this answer I was eager to know clearly what he meant, so I inquired of him whether he conceived of good men as useful or useless.

Useful, I should say, Socrates, he replied.

Then if good men are useful, are wicked men useless?

He agreed that they were.

Again, do you consider that philosophers are useful persons or not? [136c] He agreed that they were useful; nay, more, that he considered they were most useful of all.

Come now, let us make out, if what you say is true, where these second-best men are also useful to us: for clearly the philosopher is inferior to any particular adept in the arts.

He agreed.

Well now, I went on, if you yourself, or one of your friends for whom you feel great concern, should have fallen sick, would you fetch that second-best man into the house with a view to obtaining health, or would you summon a doctor? [136d] For my part, I should have both, he replied.

Please do not say both, I said, but which of the two you would prefer and also summon first.

No one, he replied, would make any question but that the doctor should be preferred and also summoned first.

And again, if you were in a ship that was making rough weather, to which would you rather entrust yourself and yours, the pilot or the philosopher?

I should choose the pilot.

And so it will be in everything else: so long as there is some craftsman, the philosopher will not be useful?

Apparently, he replied. [136e] So now we find that the philosopher is a useless person? For I suppose we always have craftsmen; and we have agreed that good men are useful, and bad ones useless.

He was obliged to agree to this.

Then what follows? Am I to ask you, or will it be too ill-mannered?

Ask whatever you please.

Well, my aim, I said, is merely to recall our agreements upon [137a] what has been stated. The matter stands somewhat like this. We agreed that philosophy is an honorable thing, and that philosophers are good; and that good men are useful, and wicked men useless: but then again we agreed that philosophers, so long as we have craftsmen, are useless, and that we always do have craftsmen. Has not all this been agreed?

Yes, to be sure, he replied.

Then we agreed, it seems, by your account—if philosophizing means having knowledge of the arts in the way you describe—that philosophers are wicked and useless so long as there are arts [137b] among mankind. But I expect they are not so really, my friend, and that philosophizing is not just having a concernment in the arts or spending one's life in meddlesome stooping and prying and accumulation of learning, but something else; because I imagined that this life was actually a disgrace, and that people who concerned themselves with the arts were called sordid. But we shall know more definitely whether this statement of mine is true, if you will answer me this: What men know how to punish horses rightly?

[137c] Is it those who make them into the best horses, or some other men?

Those who make them into the best horses.

Or again, is it not the men who know how to make dogs into the best dogs that know also how to punish them rightly?

Yes.

Then it is the same art that makes them into the best dogs and punishes them rightly?

It appears so to me, he replied.

Again, is the art that makes them into the best ones and punishes them rightly the same as that which knows the good and the bad ones, or is it some other?

The same, he said.

Then in the case of men also will you be prepared to agree that the art [137d] which makes them into the best men is that which punishes them rightly and distinguishes the good and the bad ones?

Certainly, he said.

And that which does this to one, does it also to many, and that which does it to many, does it also to one?

Yes.

And so it is also with horses and everything else?

I agree.

Then what is the knowledge which rightly punishes the licentious and law-breaking people in our cities? Is it not judicature?

Yes.

And is it any other art than this that you call justice?

No, only this. [137e] And that whereby they punish rightly is that whereby they know the good and bad people?

It is.

And whoever knows one will know many also?

Yes.

And whoever does not know many will not know one?

I agree.

Then if one were a horse, and did not know the good and wicked horses, would one not know which sort one was oneself?

I think not.

And if one were an ox and did not know the wicked and good oxen, would one not know which sort one was oneself?

That is so, he said.

And so it would be, if one were a dog?

He agreed.

[138a]

Well now, when one is a man, and does not know the good and bad men, one surely cannot know whether one is good or wicked oneself, since one is a man also oneself?

He granted this.

And is not knowing oneself being temperate, or not being temperate?

Not being temperate.

So knowing oneself is being temperate?

I agree, he said.

So this is the message, it seems, of the Delphic inscription—that one is to practise temperance and justice.

It seems so.

And it is by this same art that we know also how to punish rightly?

Yes.

Then that whereby we know how to punish rightly

[138b] is justice, and that whereby we know how to distinguish our own and others' quality is temperance?

It seems so, he said.

Then justice and temperance are the same thing?

Apparently.

And further, it is thus, you know, that cities are well ordered—when the wrongdoers pay the penalty.

That is true, he said.

Hence this is also statecraft.

He concurred.

Again, when one man governs a city rightly, is he not called a despot and king?

I agree.

And he governs by a kingly and despotic art?

That is so.

And these arts are the same as the former?

Apparently. [138c] Again, when a man singly governs a house aright, what is he called? Is he not a house-manager and master?

Yes.

Then would he also govern his house well by justice, or by some other art?

By justice.

Hence they are all the same, it seems,—king, despot, statesman, house-manager, master, and the temperate man and the just man; and it is all one art,—the kingly, the despotic, the statesman's, the master's, the house-manager's, and justice and temperance.

It is so, apparently, he said. [138d] Then, if it is disgraceful in the philosopher to be unable, when a doctor speaks about the sick, either to follow his remarks or to contribute anything of his own to what is being said or done, and to be in the same case when any other of the craftsmen speaks, is it not disgraceful that he should be unable, when it is a judge or a king or some other of the persons whom we have just instanced, either to follow their words or contribute anything to their business?

It must indeed be disgraceful, Socrates, to have nothing to contribute to subjects of such great importance! [138e] Are we then to say, I asked, that in these matters also he is to be an all-round athlete, a second-rate man, taking the second place in all the subjects of this art—he, the philosopher—and is to be useless so long as there is one of these persons; or that, first of all, he is to entrust his own house to nobody else and is not to take the second place in it, but is himself to judge and punish rightly, if his house is to be well managed?

He granted me that it must be so.

Secondly, I presume, whether his friends entrust him with an arbitration, or the state charges him to determine [139a] or judge any matter, it is disgraceful for him, my good friend, in such cases, to be found in the second or third place, and not to lead?

I agree.

Hence we see, my excellent sir, that philosophizing is very far from being much learning and that affair of busying oneself with the arts.

On my saying this the cultivated youth was silent, feeling ashamed for what he had said before, while the unlearned one said it was as I stated; and the rest of the company praised the argument.