

Oration II.

To the Emperor Constantius. The Ruler is Most of All a Philosopher; or a Thankoffering.

(28) 24 A

Explanatory Preface

He gives thanks for the discourse sent by the Emperor, which the latter wrote to the Senate concerning him. He establishes the primarily philosophical character of his encomia, showing that the Emperor himself possesses the qualities of a philosopher, which he praises. He omits none of the subjects which contribute to the praise of the Emperor, but relates them all to the chief topic which he proposes. In some passages he treats the subject as a whole; he also goes over most of the arguments belonging to the proposition under consideration, trying everywhere to maintain the place of honor which is due to philosophy. Almost all the purpose of the treatise is devoted to this.

24 D

25 A

(29)

Should I, O my friends, seem to you to lay a just claim to philosophy if I failed to repay a loan? In Athens the law is that those who owe a debt to the public treasury may not take part in public life until they pay what is owing. I too owe a debt, and my name is posted for it, not, by Zeus, in your treasury, but by the man because of whom your body of citizens is happy and prosperous. If what I mean is not yet clear to you, you are sorry witnesses of debts, and you do not recall that on a former occasion you met in the Senate-house to bear witness to the same loan. There presided over the loan a noble man, full of

frankness, who, if I attempt to deny the debt, will not allow this or remit the obligation. Thus my debt is famous, and there is no device by which, if I tried, I could fail to repay it or escape unpunished. But you, the witnesses, well know that thus far you have been silent, waiting for me ^{because} ~~because~~ you know that I shall certainly not go past the day of payment. If however you perceived that I might give up through negligence, you would fall upon me and convict me and drag me to the court of judgment, calling out the manner in which I might be challenged. If the contract were concerned with gold or silver, you would perhaps not be so completely angered, if I were unable to make repayment. Unless you misjudge me, I am sure that you know that I am not at all skilful and experienced in guarding money, nor, if I lose it, am I very skilled in collecting and recovering it. The art which I happily pursue does not allow me to be wise in this kind of wisdom. But it is in no way astonishing, nor is it a sign of depravity on my part if, having once borrowed from a rich man, I find it difficult to meet my obligations within the agreed time. As I said, if the loan were of this kind, I should not be very uneasy as to your evidence, for if I were in need of money I am sure that the Emperor would burden me with more of it than Croesus once did Alcmaeon the Athenian, presenting him with as much gold dust as he could carry off on his person.* He has already, so far as it is in his power,

* Herodotus, VI, 125.

secretly introduced certain streams of enjoyment and well-being into
26 A my house, which I have hardly been able to wall off and stop up, and
I have not allowed them to flood my dwelling with more happiness than
is suitable to philosophy, knowing as I do that it is fated that
virtue must quit the place in which this stream, unperceived, flows
automatically and without effort.

But Constantius, it is true, is ^{more philosophical} ~~wiser~~ in dealing with a man
devoted to philosophy than was Alexander the son of Philip. He,
when he could not corrupt or alter the Chalcedonian Xenocrates, who
26 B nobly declined the offer of money, at once gave up the effort and
stayed his hands and did not resort to any stronger persuasion.*

W. B. E. Jones
* This story of Alexander the Great's attempt to make a munificent
present to the philosopher Xenocrates is told by Diogenes Laertius,
IV, 8.

Our great ruler, however, took thought and discovered the thing to
which alone I might render obedience and to which I might submit,
not my hands, but my hearing. For while praise is in other respects
sweet, it is a gift ^{bribe} against which it is difficult to fight, from
whatever person it may come. The Sirens, singing praises on their
rocks, almost brought to destruction and got into their power the
wily Odysseus.* While the effort of his will alone was sufficient

* Odyssey, XII, 39 ff., 165 ff.

26 C to bring him to safety, or rather to complete happiness, when this
ruler of ours writes a long treatise full of praise,* what man who

* The demegoria printed above.

was not stronger than iron and adamant would he not soften and make captive?

(31) But when I think ^o if the audience which hears this, and of you with whom this praise is shared, and of the man who proclaims and expounds the writing, in what fair fashion he stood propounding the composition more clearly and distinctly than Bakis and Amphilytus,*

* Famous soothsayers.

26 D and when I think of you, how you have put on your festal togas and changed your sandals, and sit together on your curule chairs, continually shouting your approval of the words and exchanging a thousand exclamations as you admire me for the praise which comes to me--can I, when I consider all these things, bear to continue my resistance?

in other respects Zeno, however, the leader of the Stoa, even though he was ~~grave and lofty~~ grave and lofty, was happy and prided himself because the Athenians, although he was a foreigner and a Phoenician, made him a citizen because of his learning; and am I so ignoble and so ignorant of Aristotle, whose way of life and wisdom I have set before myself, 27 A that I shall consider every honor, from whomever it comes and for whatever purpose it is given, to be unworthy of a serious man and something of no value? Ought I not to recall the words ~~in~~ in which he distinguishes vanity from greatness of soul?* He makes

* Eth. Nicom., II, 7, 7. 1107 b 23

the distinction between them in the following way, saying, when he writes about great honors, as well as about the other blessings,

one
 that there is [^] zeal which in manking is immoderate, and one
 which is moderate and in proper proportion. The man who is
 puffed up by the clamor and applause of the common people, and
 arches
 raises his eyebrows in pride because he pours out much money
 to them in the theatres and the hippodromes, he says is vain and
 (32) is caught by the vice to which he applies this name of vanity;
 27 B while the man who despises these noises and considers that they
 differ very little from the sound of waves as they reach the
 shore, but sets the greatest store on the approval--which cannot
 be won by flattery--which good men give to his virtue, this man,
 he says, is the really great/ⁱⁿsoul and great in mind. Socrates
 the son of Sophroniscus paid no attention whatever to the anger
 and the praise of the multitude, but he gloried and trusted in
 the testimony of the god who declared that he surpassed the men
 27 C of his day in wisdom, and he considered that he ought to give
 thanks to Apollo for his response and to Chairephon for his
 question; and there still exists the hymn of Socrates to the god,
 written in hexameter verse.*

* This is no longer extant; see Christ-Schmid-Stählin, Gesch.
d. griech. Lit., III, 1 (Munich, ~~1924~~ 1940), p. 262.

If now any one should say that it is flattery to compare
 our ruler to the Pythian god, Chrysippus will not forgive you,
 nor Cleanthes, nor the whole race of philosophers, nor the band
 of the Poecile Stoa,* who declare that the virtue and truth of

* The great "Painted Hall" in Athens, in which Zeno opened his
 school.

A. Phaed. 60d

27 D man and of god are the same. As for me, let me keep a religious
silence concerning gods, as the son of Lyxus^z* says.** I know

* Herodotus.

*The 'son of Lyxus' is 1941. This
passage is at 2.171.*

** II, 171.

that Xenophon, the pupil of Socrates, did not hesitate to praise
Agesilaus the king of Sparta and to give him thanks in a great book,*

* The Agesilaus.

when the king arranged to have him acquire a property between Elis
and Arcadia, not far from Scillus, in his exile.* In addition to

* Cf. Xenophon, Anabasis, V, 3, 7.

*Pl. Resp.
550*

28 A this I am sure that although this Spartan was in some respects eager
to win honor, and lofty-minded, he was as far inferior to the true
king in love of mankind and gentleness as he was in the nature of
his rule, if you remember how Lysander was appointed carver of meats.*

* When Agesilaus, on the expedition to Asia, found that Lysander was
better known than himself and enjoyed more prestige, he would not
give him a command, but instead, in an effort to humiliate him, made
him ~~the~~ carver of his meats; see Xenophon, Hellenica, III, 4, 7-9;
Plutarch, Lysander, XXIII; Agesilaus, VII-VIII.

But the enjoyment of a farm in Arcadia as a free gift, and the
receiving of an ageless and deathless penggyric are not equal
causes for gratitude. Probably the son of Archidamus himself*

* Agesilaus.

28 B

would agree that the thank-offering of Xenophon was more of an honor than his own present. The one was a discourse composed by a philosopher, while the other, if we are to believe him who received it, consisted of wheat and barley and fine fruits and the hunting and slaying of roe and boar.*

* The last phrase is a reminiscence of Xenophon's description (Anabasis, V, 3, 7-13) of the plot of ground which he bought near Olympia (while he was living at nearby Scillus) and made a precinct of Artemis.

28 C

Thus the repayment of the debt is much more difficult and impracticable for me than it was for Xenophon. In former times men considered that riches and high offices and governorships were the gifts of good rulers, while books and literary compositions and treatises were the labor and the offerings of philosophy. But now the only thank-offering which learning had in its power the ruler has taken ~~over~~ and has used for his own gift. Nay, it is not possible for me to give myself airs and to pretend*, like Isocrates the son of Theodorus,** that my presents

? * Is this a quotation from Eupolis in Kock CAF no. 358?

** Isocrates' vanity and self-esteem are conspicuous in his works.

are more noble and more important and that they will neither grow old with the passage of time nor be confined to one place.

Whatever great and superlative thing I ^{can could} say concerning learning, occurs in the gift which the ruler gives.*

* Scil. to me.

What remains for me now, it would seem, is to procure horses ~~follow~~ and garments and butlers and acres of land, both bare and cultivated, and to offer these to the Emperor in return for his discourse, if it is indeed necessary for the two of us to exchange our functions. No, of course not; but I ought to attempt everything in my power. My
28 D property, indeed, is ridiculous, is really deep poverty, and less than
(34) a drop in the ocean, not only what I now possess, but what my father
once had, and my mother, and in fact all the people of Paphlagonia. Comparing discourse with discourse, I have some hope--if it be not too much to say so--that I shall not be left too far behind, and I do not
29 A refer to thoughts and words, for the Emperor is more brilliant in these than in his crown and his purple robe. Shall I tell you in what point I may prove to be superior in this comparison? I think that my discourse may prove to be more truthful than that of the Emperor. For him, it is necessary to run past the man who is being praised, and to mount above him, because of his insignificance and nothingness, while for me the effort to achieve the truth is itself a sufficient struggle.

And yet, as I am about to touch and lay hold of the imperial seat I suffer a really strange and incredible sensation. My breast and my
29 B heart are opened and my soul becomes more radiant and the eyes of my mind sharper. Indeed I see, my friends, things which formerly I was unable to see. I fear to speak and describe what I see, lest, like men caught by the nymphs, I be completely beguiled. Nevertheless, the phantom is not annihilated, but remains, and the more earnestly I
p. Phaeon
235^d fix my eyes upon it, the more clearly does it take shape and shine forth. Thus I am anxious to share this experience with you and to prove it, if I can. Do you, therefore, follow with me. It seems to me that my name is falsely prefixed to the discourse which the Emperor

lately sent, on the subject of myself, to the imperial Senate, and that in this hymn of praise the writer himself has slipped into the subject, just as they say of Parrhasius, that when he undertook to paint Hermes he put his own form in the picture, so that the title of the likeness deceives people. They think indeed that Parrhasius both honored himself and gave honor to the god with this offering; but they miss the cunning of the painter, who, in order to avoid being reproached for want of taste and for self-esteem, put another name on the painting.*

29 D

* I.e. the painting was actually intended to represent the artist, but he called it a picture of Hermes.

Do not, then, be deceived; nor, when you see from a distance, and hear, the praise of philosopher and ruler, should you suppose that the philosopher is any other than the ruler.** It is as

* ~~Apparently~~ Themistius means the praise of the philosopher ^(Themistius) written by the ruler, ^(Constantine) which shows that the ruler is himself a philosopher.

30 A though a man who himself was ^S able to run with the greatest possible speed, far better than other mortals, made a long panegyric of speed, proving and describing how many benefits swiftness of foot contributes to human life, and how it enables one to flee from whatever one avoids, and to gain whatever one desires, to finish a journey as quickly as possible, and to hunt without the help of horses; if he said all this with reference to some other person, who was hardly able to get about with the help of a staff, it would be clear, I am sure, that this man was praising his own swiftness of foot under the disguise of ~~another~~

of another person. Thus when our own ruler, who is such in reality, and goes by no false name, desires to exhibit his own soul, he gives the ostensible subject of the discourse as philosophy.

30 B

Do you perhaps suppose that if a man argues back and forth concerning syllogisms, and is capable of uncovering the veiled ones and the positive and the negative ones, like Philo or Diodorus, whose shining offerings are The Master Syllogism and The Horned One*--

* On the dialecticians Philo and Diodorus see Diogenes Laertius, VII, 16, 25, 111-112. Syllogisms and dialectical arguments were given names such as those which Themistius mentions, and the invention of different forms was attributed to various masters of the art.

difficult and mischievous sophisms, hard to understand and useless to know, like the knot of the yoke of Midas' wagon**--do you suppose

** I.e. the Gordian knot; see the story of it told by Arrian, II, 3. Some ancient sources speak of the wagon as belonging to Gordius, while others (like Themistius) associate it with Gordius' son Midas; see Kroll, "Midas," No. 2, R.E., XV, 1536-1537.

(35) that this man, and his kind, really engage in philosophy? Or do you suppose that he is more of a philosopher who constantly discourses to three or four youths* on virtue and confidence and bravery, as

* A reminiscence of Plato's description (Gorgias, 485 D) of the old philosopher who has become unmanly through ~~losing~~ losing his contact with real life.

30 C he sits on a stool, even though he is unable from weakness to peep out of his chamber? Or indeed the man who discourses on government and laws, when his own field is not well managed? And the man who speaks of magnificence and lavish expenditure when he never handles money or wealth himself? And the man who teaches how to restrain anger, ^{whom} ~~when~~ no one fears when he is angry himself? And the man who teaches how to be superior to desire, ^{through} he gets nothing for himself when he succumbs to desire? Or the man who, when he has it in his power to commit injustice, is more just than Anaxagoras, or, when it is safe for him to indulge in licentiousness, is more self-controlled than

P. Gomp. 526
Plato. 528

30 D Xenocrates, or, when he is able to live more luxuriously than Sardanapalus, endures hunger and thirst more easily than Diogenes of Sinope? Or the man who, when it is possible for him to do anything when angry, surpasses in mildness the son of Ariston?*

* Plato.

31 A Or the man who does not enjoin bravery, but practices it, and does not ^{teach} teach patience, but labors at it himself, who does not discourse on the nature of love of mankind, but makes it possible to enjoy it--if we say that this man is the true philosopher, shall we be flattering the man with a false name which does not fit him? And yet we do not proceed thus in the case of other men, but we give the builder his name from his craft and the cobbler his from his shoes, and we call a man a physician if he cures diseases.

Why, then, do I draw out examples, instead of ^{saying what the} ~~making a~~
^{twice in} ~~theatrical coup~~, or rather why do I not imitate the pleaders on
 their platforms? You know, I suppose, that these pleaders, as
 long as they offer instances and probabilities, and try their
 hands at them, are often disbelieved by the judges, and give the
 (37) appearance of displaying their art, but not of proving the truth;
 31 B but when they adduce the law of Dracon or of Solon or of Cleis-
 thenes, the judge who is sitting ⁱⁿ on the case gets his vote ready.
 And I too have a great number of laws on the basis of which I
 speak, which were compiled by the revered lawgivers of philosophy,
 men far better than Zalm^eucus ~~the~~ the Locrian and Charondas of
 Thurium, namely the great Plato and Aristotle the son of Nico-
 machus. And I shall select and take from their tablets the
 writings of these man, and shall read them to you.

The second lawgiver,* in the passage in which he speaks of
 31 C moral virtue, writes as follows, that the end of this virtue is not
 knowledge, but action.** And again he says that we do not seek to

* Aristotle, the second of the lawgivers just mentioned.

** Eth. Nic., VI, 2, 3-6. 1095 a4, 1139 a 27

know what virtue is, but how we may become good through our
 actions. And in another place he writes that in respect to other
 arts, knowledge has the greatest power, but that in respect to the
 virtues, knowledge has no power, or only a little, while actions
 are not of small account, but are everything. If anyone can show
 that the virtue of Chrysippus or of Antipater, who spent all their
 lives with pen and ink demonstrating courage and justice and
 31 D patience, is more effective than that of our ruler, I might seem

Eth Nic
 1103 & 27
 1105 & 1

to be flattering and fawning. If, however, their nobility exists only so far as the school is concerned, while the Emperor's efforts are made out in the open, why, by Zeus, do we feel no hesitation in calling these men philosophers, while we do feel embarrassment in applying this term to the Emperor?

To prove that the practice of philosophy is nothing else than the exercise of virtue, listen to another saying, which is not a Scythian answer,* but belongs to the man of Stageira**;

* A proverbial expression, originating in Herodotus' report (IV, 127) of the reply of the Scythian king Idanthyrsus to Darius. The expression came to be used to describe loud lamentation; see Diogenianus, Prov., Cent. V, 11, in Corpus paroemiograph. graec., edd. E. L. von Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin (Göttingen, 1839-51), I, pp. 250-251, and Plutarch, Prov., Cent. I, 62, ibid., p. 331. The phrase is also used by Plutarch, Lives of the Ten Orators: Demosthenes, 847 F, and by Leo Diaconus, p. 45, 12 Bonn ed.

** Aristotle.

(38) and if it is a little long, listen nevertheless. If, then, he says that from performing just deeds a man becomes just, and from performing temperate acts a man becomes temperate, from the non-performance of these things no one will ever become a good man, but most people, not doing these things, take refuge in the word and think that they practice philosophy, acting a little like sick people who listen to the physicians carefully, but carry out none of their orders, so that neither do these men, when thus caring for themselves, enjoy good health, nor do the former,

32 A

Ar. Eth. Nic.
1105^a 4-15

32 B when they practice philosophy in this manner, achieve health for their souls. If, then, those who seek refuge in the word alone are not philosophers, but are falsely so named, it is plain that those who exhibit deeds instead of words are truly and justly to be thought worthy of the title.

Listen also to the Attic laws--not those of Solon, but those of the descendants of Solon.* And yet almost the whole writing

* According to Diogenes Laertius (III, 1), Plato was a direct descendant of Solon; Plato himself, however, is more vague, saying that he was descended from a relative of Solon (Timaeus, 20 E).

? of the divine Plato is closely woven together and it is not possible to choose a few of his sayings and repeat them to you, as
Pl. Resp. 364^e a secretary would do, but the whole throng of the books, drawn up

32 C in array one upon the other, firmly maintains that the ruler is primarily a philosopher, both the famous Republic and the divine Laws and the whole of the labor which was carried on about that thick and lofty plane-tree. That happy and blessed choral dance, which he himself says he dances with Zeus, and others dance with other gods,* and those men who measure the man whom they see, to determine whether he is both a philosopher and fit to command by nature,** and a thousand other things belong, in no

* Phaedrus, 250 B, cf. Laws, 655 D, 672 E.

** Phaedrus, 252 E.

obscure fashion, to him who speaks that which I say, and does not speak only to those who listen rather keenly.*

* I.e. the quest for the ideal ruler, which Themistius describes, is Plato's originally; and Plato, speaking through Themistius, speaks so that all, and not merely the attentive, can hear.

(39) But let it be enough for me to call upon that crowning
52 D argument to which he ties and fastens all the links of that golden and unbreakable chain, stretching and drawing from earth to the summit of heaven.¹ For the main part² and the end and

1. In Theaetetus, 153 C-D, Plato cites the passage on the "golden chain" in the Iliad (VIII, 18 ff.), using the allusion in a manner different from that in which Themistius here employs it.

2. Plato, Timaeus, 17 C.

the pinnacle of all his writings is this, that philosophy is nothing else than to become like God so far as this is possible for man.*

* Plato, Theaetetus, 176 B.

Next ^{we} you must consider and inquire into what it is that God does which makes him a god, namely whether he lays down rules
33 A concerning propositions and concerning inconclusive and conclusive arguments,* or whether the man who is going to form himself on His

* These types of tropoi are defined by Diogenes Laertius, VII, 77-78.

model, on a small scale, must aim at something else. It is, however, perhaps unnecessary for us to busy ourselves inquiring and searching,* for Plato himself proclaims the work of God in

* A reminiscence of Plato, Theaetetus, 174 B; cf. Apology, 23 B.

that clear strong voice of his. God, he says, desired that so far as possible all things should be good, and nothing evil; wherefore, when He took over all that was visible to us, seeing that it was not a state of rest but in a state of discordant and disorderly motion, He brought it into order out of disorder, deeming that the former state is in all ways better than the latter.*

33 B

* Themistius quotes Timaeus, 30 A, almost verbatim. The translation given here is based on that in R. G. Bury's version of the Timaeus in the Loeb Classical Library.

By Zeus, I am unable to contain myself or to wait for the remainder of this statement, but as I recite Plato's saying, something troubles and pricks my mind,* and will not suffer it to

* A reminiscence of Plato, Phaedrus, 242 C; Phaedo, 86 E; Theaetetus, 187 C; Parmenides, 130 D.

rest, but causes it to leap forward and burst out ahead of what follows in proper order. Give me leave, then, and suffer me to bring it to light before its time rather than to suffer a miscarriage, and I shall return you, in a short time, to the part of the discourse which continues and follows this. If indeed I took

(40)

33 C two or three words from Plato's writings, and adjusted them, and
Themist. 1462 used them to make rude sport of you, as the younger devotees of
Plato are often wont to do, telling you that all this was
written by the philosopher, who predicted and prophesied nothing
further concerning this ruler of ours, I am sure you would be
angry with me, if I thus resorted to cunning devices concerning
his diction. Watch, then, and observe carefully; for behold, I
say that the ruler of the earth desired that so far as possible
all things should be good, and nothing evil; wherefore, when he
33 D took over the Empire, which was not in a state of rest but in a
state of discordant and disorderly motion, he brought it into
order out of disorder.* Are you able then to say, with any
ease, in what respect these words are changed?*

* A paraphrase, substituting the Emperor for God and the Empire
for the world, of the quotation from Plato used above, 33 A.

** The meaning is that God and the Emperor are so much alike that
it is difficult to discover the changes which Themistius has made
in the quotation.

Therefore let us add this also--for it is no less suitable
to say this--that an evil-doing and capricious soul was the cause
of this disorder, when it sought to rule over men who had no real
34 A connection with it, and thrusting to one side the intelligent
element, and the men who were of ruling stock, it threw every-
thing into disorder, after the fashion of Typhon, who, as the
Egyptian tales have it, cut down Osiris and seized power which
in no wise belonged to him; and for this Zeus destroyed him with

(41)
34 B thunder and fire and rescued the Egyptians from this monstrous and barbaric rule. If, I am sure, some one transferred these things straightway, freed from rustic philosophy, and adapted them to our Emperor, he would not miss making a true, clear picture, save that he did not overpower Typhon alone, but many of the same sort who rose up on every side, some greater, some less important; some were older, some were in their prime, some young, and he destroyed some with his eloquence, some with the sword, and others, indeed, did not even know what was heppening to them.

But we must, I believe, return to the same road from which we made the digression to this subject, for we were showing, if I remember correctly,* that in practically all of his works the most wise Plato considers that the true ruler and the philosopher run their course paired.** Each of them strives

* The phraseology is a reminiscence of Plato, Rep., VIII, 543 C.

** Plato, Polit., 266 C, 259 B; Rep., 473 C-D, 501 E.

34 C and hastens toward the same example, but the one does so with respect to eloquence and learning, the other with respect to action and accomplishment. The one¹ understands that such a man² is the only ruler of all things, while the other³ imitates him;⁴ for that which is created is always more truly the same than that which created it.⁵ And that great leader in heaven, driving a

- pl. Phaedr. 246e
1. The philosopher.
 2. The ideal ruler.
 3. The ruler who is a philosopher.
 4. The philosopher.
 5. I.e., when an imitation is made, it is apt to be more faithful to the ideal than the agent which created it.

winged chariot and arranging all things and caring for all things after whom ~~we~~ follow, as he goes on ahead, an army of gods and spirits*--him does this man** sing as he reclines by the Ilissus,

Phaedr. 229a

* Paraphrased from Plato, Paedr., 246 E-247A. It may be significant of Themistius' effort to show the pagan foundation of Christian doctrine that he omits the word "Zeus" which in Plato's statement follows "that great leader in heaven."

** Plato.

listening to the Attic youth, while that other* is capable of imitating him in his accomplishment, that other "to whom peoples are entrusted and so many cares belong,"** after whom there

* The ruler.

** Iliad, II, 25, 62.

34 D follows, instead of the divine army, the human one, drawn up in its legions, who with his nod is able like Zeus to govern and conduct human affairs. ~~It is~~ not without reason, then, ~~that~~ the chorus of Calliope, ^{which} ~~unceasingly~~ calls kings God-nourished and God-begotten and "equal to God in wisdom."*

* Iliad, II, 169, 407, 636; X, 137.

(42) And since I have cited the laws to the court, in ^{what} ~~which~~ follows

35 A I must imitate the advocates, and ^{teach} ~~show~~ that the laws are fair and true and serviceable. Actually, there are almost as many forms of states as there are of the human soul. States in fact are not put together of oak and rock, but take shape because the traces and the seeds of all of them are inherent in the human soul. The human soul, like the city, is a various and manifold thing, and while there is in it a certain royal element, there is also in it a

*A. Resp. 445c
544d*

*A. Resp.
338d 555c
Phaedr.
277c*

Recp. 566d
457c

passionate and contentious element; likewise there resides in it
35 B a large populace, partly industrious, partly lazy and pleasure-

loving. In the case of the rest of mankind, ^{the soul} ~~the soul~~ is constitut-
ed ^e ~~with~~er like a democracy or like an oligarchy or like a

Pl. Recp. 550c
581a

tyrrany. Either pleasure takes over the power, doing away with
the other kinds of freedom, or the same is done by love of gain
and love of money, as in the oligarchies which are ruled accord-
ing to the wealth of the magistrates, or the contentious and
passionate element takes over, as once in Crete and Lacedaemon;
or all the elements together are chosen by lot, in great disord-

35 C

er, and divide up the government among themselves. The soul,
however, is ruled in imperial fashion only by the philosophic
element; intelligence exercises the power externally, courage
bears its arms whither the intelligence leads, and the remaind-
er of the multitude sits doing the work of the intelligence and
does not dispute the government.

Pl. Recp. 556c

Pl. Recp. 550c
581a

It is for these reasons most of all, my friends, that the
two titles, those of emperor and of tyrant, are completely
at war and opposed to each other, and that they cannot bear
either to come together in anyway or to assist each other,

35 D

just as intelligence and sensuousness cannot unite, being
foreign to one another, for if ~~the~~ one flourishes, the other
wastes away and decays. In what respect, then, are they
opposite and different? Both of them, in fact, are forms of
the government of men--of men, yes, ~~not~~ not of horses--but the
one functions through virtue, for the good of the ruler, while
the other functions through evil, for the sake of its own
enjoyment alone; and for this reason men consider the one
divine and blessed, while they fear and curse the other.

(43)

Resp. 544^b

36 A

But again our discourse, twisting about like a wrestler, offers the same grip and shows that the ruler is above all a philosopher because he entrusts his affairs above all to the leadership of reason, a man whom his subjects do not fear, though they are anxious on his behalf. Men do not choose him in a banquet, out of drunkenness and satiety, just as though a ruler were a kind of dessert, to be regretted, not much later, after the headache has started, as in the Saturnalia. On the contrary, born spontaneously and reared, as in a beehive, through his own nature from the hour of his birth is the self-taught king, about whom the swarm buzzes and flies willingly and with joy, not because he rises above them in stature and is greater in his person, a man nine fathoms tall and nine cubits broad, like the Aloadae whom the poets sing,* whose strange

Resp. 520^b

Resp. 201^c

36 B

* Odyssey, XI, 310-311.

bodies led them to absurd and unnatural thoughts, piling mountains one upon another, to make stairs to heaven. It is thus indeed that the Ethiopians were wont to choose their king, measuring excellence by breadth and size. But the king by nature is not one created by a horse giving a sign or by a bronze helmet used as a drinking cup or by a Lydian woman, angry because she had been seen naked against her will; he is the one whom philosophy has especially pointed out as being better than his subjects. For it is this* through which alone

Herod. III 20

Herod. III 86

36 C

Herod. I 11
Resp. 557^c

* Philosophy.

(44)

Resp. 557^c

a man becomes better than another man. The tiara does not make him better, or the royal tunic or the wooden cloak or the short golden sword or the collars and armlets or the wand-bearers and

the spear-bearers and the body-guard with ~~the~~ their spears tipped with apples* and an unending number of dying soldiers.

* The insignia listed are those of the Persian monarch.

All these things, I am sure, belonged to the mad Cambyses and the boastful Xerxes, who was unable either to sail or to walk in the manner of other men, but transformed and changed his
36 D manner of journeying. And because of this he was put to flight and pursued from Greece by poor men, who did their own work, with prudence alone, and justice, namely Themistocles the son of Neocles and Aristides the son of Lysimachus. The man whom philosophy guards and tends is protected on the sea by the
? ships which sail, and on land by the soldiers who march.

Impassable mountains yield to him without being cut through and
37 A ^{are} smoother, as he walks over them, than the level ground of the low plains. The river does not fail, but with its floods it fights and struggles on behalf of the emperor against Xerxes' descendant. Reason often suffices him instead of weapons and soldiers; the infantry stand leaning on their shields, the cavalry hold their horses in check, the archers unstring their bows, the slingers loosen their slings, while the emperor, solitary and unarmed, without spear or sword, fights alone
37 B on the rostrum, and without even stretching forth his hands he strips off the purple robe and reveals a mere man talking nonsense about being a ruler. The tragedy tells you a wise thing on this point, ^{saying,} /in words worthy of Melpomene, that

"eloquence accomplishes many things
which the steel of foes can bring to pass."*

* Eurip., Phoen., 516-517. Themistius slightly alters the meaning of the passage, ~~which in the textus receptus of Euripides is:~~

~~πάν γὰρ ἐξαίρετ' λόγος
ὁ καὶ αἰθέρος πολέμιον ἔρδοσεν αὖ.~~

(45) Yet Pericles the son of Xanthippus, on whose lips Persuasion sat, often came down from the ~~rostrum~~ rostrum in Athens, ending up as he had not wished. But the man who, in the midst of so many thousands of men, who had been the first to do wrong, and were armed, who
37 ^C had neither the same race nor the same intelligence nor the same tongue, took his stand on high untroubled and fearless, and with his eloquence alone persuaded them against fighting--shall we, by Zeus the god of friendship, be cautious about calling this man the supreme philosopher? But while we number Orpheus among men of divine skill, if that story about Orpheus can be trusted, namely that he charmed birds and ^{as} beasts with the power of his music, shall we then in the ^C case of the man who softened and instructed and mollified men who were more savage than lions, hesitate to bestow such a title on the ground that we would be embellishing him with too august a name?

Aut. De fort.
Rom. 4

37 D The Spartans, indeed, celebrate a certain bloodless and tearless victory, through which they got control of the Arcadians after disaster at Leuctra. Shall we say that that victory is more holy and brighter than this triumph of our Emperor, a victory such as Plato did not enjoy over Dionysius,* nor Dion the son of

* Dionysius II, tyrant of Syracuse.

Hipparinus, the companion and pupil of Plato, who actually collected warships and soldiers from the Academy and only just succeeded in driving the tyrant from his fatherland,* so that it

* Dion was a relative and minister of Dionysius I of Syracuse.

was an incredible sight to the Greeks of that time to see

38 A Dionysius, after having been tyrant of Syracuse, walking about in the Cramion.* How much it means to be conquered by a true

* A grove and gymnasium at Corinth.

(46) philosopher was understood exactly by him who was at the time a soldier both in name and in soul,* for such men alone** win their

* The usurper Vetricio; Themistius makes a pun of his name with Lat. veteranus.

** Such, that is, as the Emperor Constantius.

victories for the benefit of those who are defeated. The Emperor ~~is~~ in fact after his victory made him longer-lived than Arganthonius,* the leader of a carefree and light-hearted

* King of Tartessus in Spain, who was reputed to have ruled for eighty years and to have ~~lived~~ lived for a hundred and twenty: Herodotus, I, 163; Anacreon, fr. 8.

enjoyment of pleasure, though he had for a long time been distracted by cares too burdensome for his age.

38 B And the divine guardian spirit of the Emperor has taken such precautions to keep his hands even more clean of just homicide than those of Pherecydes and Pythagoras that he forced and compelled the other tyrant,* whose death was necessary because of

* Magnentius.

his insane crimes, to become a self-tyrannicide.

But lest we in our haste, as the proverb has it, produce blind and unfinished things, let us stop for a little, if you please, and rest from our course, and investigate and inquire whether there is any other sign of the wisdom-loving man which he must give, and whether he is loved by God and whether his affairs are governed from on high. And if this seems true and meets with your approval, then we must again consider whether, in all the undertakings of the Emperor the manifestations of the watchful foresight of heaven are clearly manifest. Consider the question in this fashion.

Resp. 612e
38 C
Resp. 864e

There was a time when it was necessary, and the necessity was evident, for our Emperor either to be content with what he had, possessing a small part of his father's realm, or, if he aspired to the whole of it, to take up arms against his family and to commence a civil war. See, then, the wisdom of the divine spirit. Almost like the dramatic poet on his stage, who hangs a threat of some dire and frightful misfortune over the spectators and then contrary to expectation finds a solution ex machina for the difficulty of the plot, the power which composes real happenings, after it had surrounded the Emperor on either side with the necessity of either wrong-doing or cowardice, nevertheless brought forward devices by which he could escape both, or rather by which both necessities should be reversed. For he did not wrong his brothers, but on the contrary, sharing the suffering of one, and grieving exceedingly for the other, through his superior love for his brothers he became the sole master of his father's possessions. So much for this.

38 D

(47)

39 A

In the case also of the Persians, that abominable race, which when he^s is at leisure will not suffer him to rest, but when he took

* The Emperor.

action, nearly perished, is not the sign of that alliance* manifest?

* With the power of heaven.

For God appeared, as though in a long line of battle, moving against the numerous enemy beside the Emperor's wing which was in difficulty. ^{hard pressed.}

Free me, then, from my suit for the enforcement of my contract; or do I not yet seem to you to have discharged my obligation

39 B sufficiently? And yet, although I seem to have energetically and enthusiastically, with no refusal from yourselves, counted out my words, in no small number, like coins on a table, I also seem, from the way in which you have eagerly seized them, in a crowd, to be disbelieved, as though I had not paid all the debt. For example, I spoke about the matter of wisdom and fortitude with respect to the body, but I spoke briefly, in the form of a summary. If I wished to dwell on this topic, and to treat it at length, it would be clear that the little that I said is an important matter to you, and of great value,

39 C because the Emperor's body, under the weight of toil, is stronger than adamant, it is so easy and effortless for it to overcome want, to resist thirst, to insist upon life in the open air, to expose itself to the cold of winter, and to meet the heat of summer. The famous

(48) Alexander, though he conquered Darius, was vanquished by the cold clear streams of the Cydnus river, and he often suffered many grievous ills through his want of self-control in this respect, so that he had to carry snow about with him in the summer, and he came to

39 D adopt the Indian apparatus of ice and wine-coolers. Our Emperor, however, does not attempt to struggle against the seasons, but in

this respect as well he follows the leadership of God. And even the natural remedies against itself which the weather itself provides, all ready for use, he does not employ more than is fitting.

Pl. Soph. 217 d

40 A But if we once, my friends, permit this discourse to go into details and to lengthen itself, it will, as you well know, carry us far afield. We must set upon our words the seal which the Emperor himself, lately placed upon them,* all new and shining.

* In his discourse to the Senate on Themistius.

This noble man is in truth such a philosopher that he made a philosopher his colleague, not because he was connected with himself by birth, but because he was next of kin to himself in virtue. And so I have no more need to pray, like the most wise Plato, for the whole human race, that philosophy may walk with kingship and make its way with it, and never be separated or torn asunder from it;

40 B for now it is possible to enjoy this unlooked-for spectacle and to take one's fill of it.

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