

**THE CLITOPHO:**

AN

**EXHORTATORY DIALOGUE.**



# THE CLITOPHO

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THE PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES AND CLITOPHO.

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SOCRATES.

A CERTAIN person lately informed me that Clitopho, the son of Aristonymus, conversing with Lyfias, blamed the pursuits of Socrates, but praised immoderately the conversation of Thrasymachus.

CL. Whoever he was, Socrates, he has not accurately related to you my discourse with Lyfias about you. For in some things I did not praise you, but in others I did. But since you evidently blame me, though you pretend to care nothing about this report, I will most willingly relate to you my conversation with Lyfias, especially since we happen to be alone, that you may see I am not so ill disposed towards you as you might be induced to suppose. For now perhaps you have not rightly heard, and on that account are more exasperated with me than is proper. But if you will permit me to speak freely, I shall most cheerfully relate the affair to you.

Soc. But it would be shameful, when you are willing to benefit me, that I should not suffer you. For it is evident that when I know in what

<sup>1</sup> In this Dialogue, Clitopho, the son of Aristonymus, being asked by Socrates why he preferred Thrasymachus, answers, that though he had often heard excellent exhortations to virtue from Socrates, yet hitherto he had not been able to perceive in what virtue itself consisted, and in what manner he should happily proceed in the study it. Hence, he adds, if Socrates either is ignorant of this, or is unwilling to teach it him, he may with great propriety betake himself to Thrasymachus, or to any other, for the sake of obtaining this knowledge. As the answer of Socrates to this complaint is not added, there is every reason to believe that this Dialogue is imperfect.

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respect I am better and worse, I shall pursue some things, and avoid others, to the utmost of my power.

CL. Hear then. For when I am with you, Socrates, I am often astonished on hearing you discourse, and you appear to me, compared with other men, to speak most beautifully, when reproving men, you exclaim like a god from a tragic machine, "Whither are you borne along? Of this you are ignorant, and your conduct is in no respect becoming. For all your attention is employed in the acquisition of wealth; but you neglect the children to whom you are to leave it, and are not at all anxious that they may know how to use it justly; nor that they may acquire this knowledge, do you procure for them teachers of justice, if justice can be taught, and who may sufficiently exercise them in it, if it is to be obtained by meditation and exercise. Nor yet, prior to this, do you thus cultivate your own minds: but perceiving that you and your children have sufficiently learnt grammar, music, and gymnastic (which you consider as the perfect discipline of virtue), though afterwards you are no less depraved with respect to riches than before, yet you do not despise the present mode of education, nor inquire after those who might liberate you from this unskilful and inelegant condition of life. Though through this confusion and indolence, and not through the discordant motion of the foot to the lyre, brother rises against brother, and city against city, immoderately and unharmoniously; and warring on each other, both do and suffer all that is lawless and dire. But you say, that those who are unjust, are unjust voluntarily, and not through want of discipline, nor through ignorance; and again, you dare to assert that injustice is base, and odious to divinity. How then can any one voluntarily choose this which is so great an evil. It is chosen by him, you say, who is vanquished by pleasure. Is not this therefore involuntary, since to vanquish is voluntary?" So that reason perfectly convinces us, that to act unjustly is involuntary. Every man, therefore, privately, and all cities publicly, ought to pay more attention to justice than at present."

When therefore, Socrates, I hear you perpetually asserting these things, I am very much delighted, and praise you in a wonderful manner. This is likewise the case with me, when you say as follows: That those who cultivate their bodies, but neglect their soul, pay attention to that which is naturally in a state of subjection, but neglect that which governs. Likewise,

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when you assert that it is better for him who does not know how to use a thing to dismiss the consideration of its utility. And that for him who does not know how to use his eyes, ears, and his whole body, it is better neither to hear, nor see, nor to use his body in any respect, than to use it. In a similar manner too, with respect to art. For it is evident, as you say, that he who does not know how to use his own lyre, will not know how to use that of his neighbour. Nor will he who is ignorant of the use of any other instrument or possession belonging to another, know how to use that which belongs to himself. And, in the last place, you beautifully add, that for him who does not know how to use his soul, it is better to be at rest with respect to his soul, and not to live, than to live and act from himself. But if there is any necessity for such a one to live, that it is better for him to lead the life of a slave, than of one free born. This however is to deliver the helm of the dianoëtic part as of a ship to another, who has learnt how to govern men; viz. who has learnt what you, Socrates, have often called the political science; and which is likewise judicial and justice. To these, and many other all-beautiful sentences, in which you assert that virtue<sup>1</sup> can be taught, and that a man ought above all things to pay attention to himself, I have never at any time been adverse, nor do I think that I ever shall be. For I think that these assertions are most exhortatory and useful, and vehemently excite us, as if we were asleep. I have attended, therefore, as one who is to hear what follows, and I have asked, not you, in the first place, Socrates, but your equals in age, those who have the same desires with you, or your companions, or in whatever manner it may be proper to call those that are thus disposed towards you. For among these I have first of all asked those that are most esteemed by you, what will be the discourse after this, and proposing to them to dispute after your manner, I have said to them, O best of men, how are we to receive the present exhortation of Socrates to virtue? Are we to receive it as nothing more than an exhortation, and not apply it to practice? But this will be our employment through the whole of life, to exhort those who are not yet incited. Or is it requisite, after this, that we should ask Socrates and each other, since we confess this conduct should be adopted, what is next to be done? How ought we to

See the *Meno*, for the manner in which this is to be understood.

begin respecting the discipline of justice? For just as if some one should exhort us to pay attention to the body, who like boys do not in any respect perceive that the care of the body is gymnastic and medicinal, and should afterwards reproach us by saying, that we paid every attention to wheat and barley, and such other things as we labour to obtain for the sake of the body, but that we search after no art nor device, by which the body may be rendered in the best condition, though there is such an art,—should any one thus reproach us, might not we ask him, Do you say there are such arts as these? perhaps he would say that there are, and that these are the gymnastic and medicinal arts. After the same manner, let some one now inform us what that art is which we consider as conversant with the virtue of the soul. But he who appears to be most robust in answering such questions as these, will say, This art which you have heard Socrates mention, is no other than justice. To this I reply, You should not only tell me the name of the art, but thus explain the art itself. Medicine is said to be a certain art. But by this, two things are effected: for physicians are always formed by physicians; and health is produced by medicine. But one of these is no longer art, but the work of the medical art teaching and acquired; and this work we denominate health. After a similar manner, two things are effected by the tectonic art, viz. an edifice, and the tectonic art, one of which is a work, and the other a document. Thus too, with respect to justice, one of its effects is to make men just, in the same manner as each of the above-mentioned arts makes artists; but what shall we say the other is, which a just man is able to accomplish for us? One person will, I think, answer us, that it is the profitable; another, that it is the becoming; another, that it is the useful; and another, that it is the convenient. But I in answering to this have objected, that these very names are to be found in each of the arts, viz. to act rightly, conveniently, profitably, and the like. But that to which all these tend, is the peculiarity of each art. Thus, in the tectonic art, the right, the beautiful, and the becoming, tend to this, that wooden furniture may be aptly made, which is not art, but the work of art. In like manner, let some one answer me, respecting the work of justice. Lastly, one of your associates, Socrates, who appeared to speak most elegantly, answered me that the peculiar work of justice is this, which is not effected by any other science, viz. to produce  
friendship

friendship in cities. But he being again interrogated, replied, that friendship was a thing good, and by no means evil: and being asked respecting the friendships of boys and wild beasts, as we denominate the attachments of these, he would not admit that such attachments should be called friendships, because they more frequently happen to be noxious than good. He likewise said, that they were falsely called friendships, but that real and true friendship was most clearly concord. But being asked whether he called concord agreement in opinion, or science, he despised the former, because there is a necessity that there should be many and noxious agreements in opinion among men; but he had granted that friendship was a thing perfectly good, and the work of justice. So that he said, concord was the same with science, and not with opinion. But when we were at this part of our discourse, those who were present, doubting the truth of these assertions, called to him, and said, that the discourse revolved to what was at first advanced. They likewise affirmed that the medicinal art is a certain concord; that this is the case with all the other arts; and that they are able to declare what the subject is with which they are conversant. But with respect to that which is called by you justice, or concord, we know not whither it tends, and it is not manifest what is its work.

Concerning these things, Socrates, I have at length asked you; and you tell me that the work of justice is to injure our enemies, and benefit our friends. But afterwards it appeared to you, that the just man will never injure any one, but will act to the advantage of every one in all things. These things have been the subject of discussion, not once, nor twice only; but having assiduously attended you, Socrates, for a long time, I became at length weary; thinking, indeed, that you, in the most excellent manner of all men, exhorted to the study of virtue, but that one of these two things must take place, either that you are able to effect thus much alone, but nothing further, which may happen to be the case respecting any other art; as for instance, he who is not a pilot may endeavour to praise the pilot's art, as a thing most worthy the attention of mankind; and in a similar manner with respect to the other arts. This may perhaps apply to you concerning justice, viz. that you have not a greater knowledge than others of its nature, because you praise it in a beautiful manner. However, I do not think that this is the case. But as I said, one of these two things must take place, either that you

do not know what justice is, or that you are unwilling to impart this knowledge to me. On this account, I think I shall betake myself to Thrasymachus, and wherever else I am able, in order that I may be liberated from my doubts. Not indeed, that I should apply to any one else, if you were willing to finish your exhortatory discourses to me. I mean, if, as you have exhorted me to that care of the body which belongs to gymnastic, and which it is not proper to neglect, you would unfold to me, after an exhortation of this kind, what the nature is of my body, and what the attention which it requires. Let this be done at present. Take it for granted, that Clitopho acknowledges it to be ridiculous, to pay attention to other things, and in the mean time neglect the soul, for the sake of which we labour in other things; and suppose me to admit every thing else which is consequent to this, and which we have now discussed. I request you not to act in any respect otherwise, that I may not be obliged hereafter, as at present, partly to praise and partly to blame you before Lysias and others. For I say, Socrates, that you are inestimably valuable to the man who is not yet exhorted; but that to him who has been exhorted, you are nearly an impediment; since you prevent him from becoming happy, by arriving at the end of virtue.

THE END OF THE CLITOPHO.

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