

ters, as I go ahead to elaborate what is a very lengthy argument about the small activity of getting drunk. Because it would never be possible to regulate this according to nature without giving a clear and sufficient account of what is correct in music;⁵⁰ and it would never be possible to give an account of music without going into the whole subject matter of education. All this means very long speeches. So consider what we should do. How would it be if we leave off the discussion of these things for now and turn to a different discussion about laws?

642b Meg. Athenian stranger, you probably are not aware of the fact that our hearth happens to be the consulate⁵¹ for your city. And in all us children who hear that we are the "consuls" for some city there probably sinks in, from the time we are young, a friendly disposition towards that city, as if it were a second fatherland after one's own city. Now this is just what has happened to me. For whenever the Lacedaimonians were blaming or praising the Athenians for something, I would immediately hear the children crying, "That's your city, Megillus, that's dealing with us ignobly or nobly." Hearing these things, and always fighting over them on your behalf against those who blamed your city, I became entirely well disposed; even now your dialect is a friendly sound to me, and I believe that what is said by many is very true, namely, that those Athenians who are good are good in a different way. They alone are good by their own nature without compulsion, by a divine dispensation: they are truly, and not artificially, good. So with regard to me at any rate, you should take heart and talk as long as you like.

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642d
642e Kl. Once you've heard and accepted what I too have to say, stranger, you may surely take heart and talk as much as you wish. As you may have heard, Epimenides,⁵² that divine man, was born around here and is, as a matter of fact, related to my family. In obedience to a god's oracle he journeyed to you people ten years before the Persian Wars and made some sacrifices that had been demanded by the god. He told the Athenians, who were at that time living in dread of a Persian expedition, that "the Persians won't come for another ten years and when they do come, they'll go away having accomplished nothing of what they hoped, and having suffered more evil than they've inflicted." At that time, then, our an-

cestors formed a bond with yours, and from that day to this, I and my family have felt well disposed towards your people. 643a

Ath. It's likely, then, that you're ready to take your part and listen. I'm willing to take my part, but it's not a part that's very easy to carry out. Still, it must be tried. First, for the purposes of the argument, let's define education—saying what it is and what power it has. That's the way we assert the argument we have now taken in hand should go, until it arrives at the god.

Kl. By all means let's do just that, if it pleases you.

Ath. Now as I say what one ought to assert education is, you think over whether what is said is acceptable. 643b

Kl. Say on.

Ath. I will, and what I assert is this: whatever a man intends to become good at, this he must practice from childhood; whether he's playing or being serious, he should spend his time with each of the things that pertain to the activity. Thus, in the case of someone intending to become a good farmer or a good housebuilder of some sort, the housebuilder should play at games that educate in housebuilding, and the farmer similarly, and the person who raises each child should provide each with miniature tools that are imitations of the true ones. Moreover, the child should learn any knowledge that is a necessary preliminary: a carpenter, for example, should learn to measure and gauge things, and a soldier should play at horseback riding or some other such things. The attempt should be made to use the games to direct the pleasures and desires of children toward those activities in which they must become perfect. The core of education, we say, is a correct nurture, one which, as much as possible, draws the soul of the child at play toward an erotic attachment to what he must do when he becomes a man who is perfect as regards the virtue of his occupation. 643c

Now, as I said, see if what has been said up to this point is acceptable to us.

Kl. Why shouldn't it be?

Ath. Because what we mean by education is not yet defined! When we at present blame or praise the upbringing of different persons, we say that one of us is "educated" and another is "uneducated," sometimes applying the latter characterization to human beings who are very well educated in trade or merchant shipping or some other such things. So it's appropriate 643d

644a that in our present discussion we do not consider these sorts of training to be education; we mean rather the education from childhood in virtue, that makes one desire and love to become a perfect citizen who knows how to rule and be ruled with justice. It is this upbringing alone, it appears to me, that this discussion would wish to isolate and to proclaim as education. As for an upbringing that aims at money, or some sort of strength, or some other sort of wisdom without intelligence and justice, the argument proclaims it to be vulgar, illiberal, and wholly unworthy to be called education. But let's not get into a dispute with each other over the name. Let's simply hold fast to the argument now being agreed to by us, the argument that states: "Those who are correctly educated usually become good, and nowhere should education be dishonored, as it is first among the noblest things for the best men. If it ever goes astray, and if it is possible to set it right, everyone ought always to do so as much as he can, throughout the whole of life."

Kl. That is correct, and we agree with what you're saying.

Ath. Now long ago, at least, we agreed that the good are those able to rule themselves, and the bad are those who cannot.

Kl. What you say is very correct.

644c Ath. Let's consider again in a clearer way what we mean by that. Allow me to clarify it for you, if I can, by means of an image.

Kl. Just speak on.

Ath. May we then assume that each of us is one person?

Kl. Yes.

Ath. But possessing within himself two opposed and imprudent counselors, which we call pleasure and pain?

Kl. That is so.

Ath. Connected to these two there are opinions about the future, common to both of which there is the name "expectation," but each of which also has its own peculiar name: "fear" is the expectation of pain, and "boldness" the expectation of the opposite. Over all these there is calculation as to which of them is better and which worse—and when this calculation becomes the common opinion of the city, it is called law.

644d Kl. I follow this only with great difficulty; but say what comes next as if I were following.

Meg. I'm experiencing similar difficulties.

Ath. Let's think about these things in this way: let's consider each

of us living beings to be a divine puppet, put together either for their play or for some serious purpose—which, we don't know. What we do know is that these passions work within us like tendons or cords, drawing us and pulling against one another in opposite directions toward opposing deeds, struggling in the region where virtue and vice lie separated from one another. Now the argument⁵³ asserts that each person should always follow one of the cords, never letting go of it and pulling with it against the others; this cord is the golden and sacred pull of calculation, and is called the common law of the city; the other cords are hard and iron, while this one is soft, inasmuch as it is golden; the others resemble a multitude of different forms. It is necessary always to assist this most noble pull of law because calculation, while noble, is gentle rather than violent, and its pull is in need of helpers if the race of gold is to be victorious for us over the other races.

Thus, the myth of virtue, the myth about us being puppets, would be saved,⁵⁴ and what was intended by the notion of being superior to oneself or inferior would be somewhat clearer. Moreover, as regards a city and a private individual, it'll be clearer that the latter should acquire within himself true reasoning about these cords and live according to it, while a city should take over a reasoning either from one of the gods or from this knower of these things, and then set up the reasoning as the law for itself and for its relations with other cities. Thus, certainly, vice and virtue would be more clearly distinguished for us. With this distinction sharpened, education and other practices will perhaps be clarified, and the practice of spending time drinking together, which might be considered too trivial to be worth so many words, may well appear not unworthy of such lengthy speech.

Kl. You speak well; let's complete whatever may be demanded by our present pastime.

Ath. Then tell me: if we introduce drunkenness into this puppet what effect shall we produce? 645d

Kl. What do you have in view in asking this?

Ath. Nothing in particular as yet, but just what happens, in general, when the two come together. But I'll try to explain what I want more clearly. What I'm asking is this: doesn't the drinking of wine make pleasures, pains, the spirited emotions, and the erotic emotions, more intense?

Kl. Very much so.

645e Ath. What about sensations, memories, opinions, and prudent thoughts? Do they become more intense in the same way? Or don't they abandon anyone who becomes thoroughly soused?

Kl. Yes, they completely abandon him.

Ath. So he arrives at a disposition of the soul that is the same as the one he had when he was a young child?

Kl. But of course.

Ath. At such a time he would be least the master of himself.

646a Kl. Least.

Ath. Don't we assert that such a man is most wicked?

Kl. Very much so.

Ath. It's likely, then, that it's not only the old man who becomes a child for a second time, but also the man who is drunk.

Kl. Very well put, stranger.

Ath. Is there really any argument that will try to persuade us that we must taste such a practice and not flee from it with all the strength we have?

Kl. It's likely that there is. You, at any rate, assert that there is, and were ready just now to state it.

646b Ath. What you two remember is true. And I am indeed ready, now that you two have asserted that you would listen in a spirit of eagerness.

Kl. How could we not listen—if for no other reason than the wonder, the strangeness, of the notion that a human being should ever voluntarily cast himself into a state of complete degradation.

Ath. . . . of soul, you mean? Or don't you?

Kl. Yes.

Ath. Well, what about badness in the body, comrade: would we be amazed if someone ever voluntarily got into a state that was emaciated, ugly, and weak?

Kl. How could we not be?

Ath. Well, but what about those who go voluntarily to a dispensary to drink medicine: do we think they are ignorant of the fact that a little while later and for many days thereafter they may be in a bodily state such that if they had to live thus until the end of their lives they would refuse to go on living? And don't we know that those who go to gymnasiums for exercise become exhausted right afterwards?

Kl. We know all this.

Ath. And that it's for the subsequent benefit that they go voluntarily?

Kl. That's a very noble way of putting it.

646d

Ath. Shouldn't one think about other practices in the same way?

Kl. Certainly.

Ath. Then this is the way one should think about the pastime of drinking wine—if it can correctly be thought of as among these other practices.

Kl. Why not?

Ath. Now if it's evident that this practice procures for us a benefit no less than that which accrues to the body, it will gain the victory over the bodily practices at the outset, because they involve suffering while this doesn't.

Kl. What you say is correct, but I would be amazed if we were able to discover such a thing in it.

646e

Ath. Then it's likely that this is what we must now try to explain. Tell me this: can we distinguish in our minds two forms of fear that are nearly opposite?

Kl. Which?

Ath. These: on the one hand we presumably fear evils, when we expect them to come to pass.

Kl. Yes.

Ath. And on the other hand we often fear opinion, when we think we will be considered evil if we say or do something that is not noble. This is the sort of fear that we at least, and I believe everyone, calls "shame."

647a

Kl. What else?

Ath. These are the two fears I spoke of. The latter opposes sufferings and other fears, but also opposes the most frequent and greatest pleasures.

Kl. What you say is very correct.

Ath. Now won't the lawgiver, and indeed anyone worth much of anything, revere with the greatest honors this sort of fear, calling it "awe"⁵⁵ and the boldness opposed to it "lack of awe"? Won't he consider lack of awe to be the greatest evil for everyone both in private and in public life?

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Kl. You speak correctly.

Ath. Doesn't this fear save us from many great evils, and in particular doesn't it play a greater role than anything else in procuring for us victory and safety in war? For there are two things

that procure victory: boldness with enemies and with friends fear of shame on account of vileness.

Kl. That is so.

647c Ath. Each of us then must be at the same time fearless and fearful: in respect to what, in each case, we have just indicated.

Kl. Indeed.

Ath. Now, when we wish to make each man immune to many fears, we accomplish this by dragging him into the midst of fear in a manner that is consistent with the law.

Kl. It appears that we do.

647d Ath. What about when we try to make him fearful, in a manner that is consistent with justice? Shouldn't we throw him against shamelessness, and by thus giving him gymnastic training in combatting it, make him a victorious fighter against his own pleasures? A man becomes perfect in courage by fighting against and conquering the cowardice within him; surely no man who lacks experience and gymnastic training in these struggles would ever attain half his potential in virtue. Can a man then become perfect in moderation if he has not fought triumphantly against the many pleasures and desires that try to seduce him into shamelessness and injustice, using the help of speech, deed, and art, in games and in serious pursuits? Can he remain inexperienced in all such things?

Kl. That wouldn't make sense.

647e Ath. Well, now, is there a fear drug, handed down to human beings by some god, which has the effect that the more one is willing to drink, the more unfortunate one conceives oneself to be with each drink, fearing for oneself everything in the present and in the future, until finally the most courageous human being experiences total terror, and yet when he has slept it off and the drink has been sloughed off he becomes himself again each time?

Kl. What drink of this sort could we claim human beings possess, stranger?

648a Ath. There is none. But if one had appeared from somewhere, could the lawgiver have used it in any way to promote courage? We might well carry on a dialogue with him about it as follows: "Come, lawgiver—whether you are the lawgiver for the Cretans or whoever—would you like to be able, first, to test the citizens for courage and cowardice?"

648b Kl. Obviously, every one of them would say he would.

Ath. "Well then, would you prefer a test that was safe, without great risks, or the opposite?"

Kl. All would also agree on a test that was safe.

648c Ath. "And would you use it to drag them into fears and test them in their sufferings, so as to force them to become fearless—encouraging, exhorting, and honoring them, but dishonoring anyone who refused to obey you and become in every respect the type of person you ordered him to be? The man who had performed well and courageously in this gymnastic you would dismiss without penalty, wouldn't you? And the man who did badly you would penalize? Or would you refuse to use the drug at all, even though you had no other objection to it?"

Kl. But why wouldn't he use it, stranger?

648d Ath. At any rate, friend, compared to our present gymnastics this gymnastic would certainly be amazingly easy—for one person, for a few, or for as many as one might want to apply it to on each occasion. Then too, if someone went off alone to a deserted place, excusing himself out of a sense of shame at being seen before he was in what he considered good condition, and engaged in gymnastic exercise against fear by merely drinking, instead of performing tens of thousands of other activities, he would be acting in a correct manner. On the other hand, a man would act just as correctly if, trusting in himself on account of the fine preparation given by nature and by training, he did not hesitate to perform such gymnastic exercise in the company of many fellow drinkers, making a display of his capacity to outstrip and overcome the power of the necessary transformation effected by the drink. Thus would he show that because of his virtue he was not made to fall into a single major disgraceful act nor to act like a different person, but that he could go away before taking that last drink, because he was afraid of the weakness all human beings have in the face of the drink.

Kl. Yes. For he too would be moderate, stranger—the man who acted in this way.

649a Ath. Let's speak to the lawgiver again: "Well, lawgiver, it's likely that no god has bestowed such a fear drug on human beings, and we have not devised one for ourselves—I'm not including magicians in the banquet. But what about a drink that induces fearlessness, boldness that is too great, at the wrong time, and

tracts or to get together with it at the festival sights of Dionysus? Or take the example of a soul dominated by sexual desires: is it safer to test it by turning over one's own daughters, sons, and wives, and risk those who are dearest, in order to see the soul's disposition? One could give ten thousand such examples without ever showing fully how different the method is which observes people through play, and involves no other payoff or penalty. Indeed, in this respect we believe that neither the Cretans nor any other human beings would disagree that this is a decent way of testing one another—one which in cheapness, safety, and speed differs from the other tests.

Kl. That, at least, is true.

Ath. This then—the knowledge of the natures and the habits of souls—is one of the things that is of the greatest use for the art whose business it is to care for souls. And we assert (I think) that that art is politics. Or what?

Kl. It certainly is.

toward the wrong things—does one exist or how shall we say?"

Kl. "One does," he will presumably assert, naming wine.

Ath. Isn't it just the opposite of the one now mentioned? Doesn't it first make a human being who drinks it immediately more cheerful than he was before, and to the degree to which he tastes more, doesn't he become more puffed up with good hopes and an opinion of his own power? Then, finally, doesn't he wind up being filled with complete license of speech, believing himself wise; isn't he filled with freedom and total fearlessness, so that he doesn't hesitate to say or even to do anything? Everyone would agree with us on this description, I think.

Kl. How could they not?

Ath. Let's recollect how we asserted that there are two things in our souls that need to be cultivated: on the one hand that we be as bold as possible, and on the other hand the opposite, that we be as fearful as possible.

Kl. Which you said belonged to awe, we suppose.

Ath. You two remember in a fine way. But given that courage and fearlessness in the midst of fears should be practiced, one should consider whether the opposite quality in the midst of the opposite things should also be cultivated.

Kl. That seems likely, anyway.

Ath. Then it's likely that those experiences in which we are naturally inclined to be especially rash and bold are the ones in which we should practice becoming as little filled with shamelessness and boldness as possible, and instead be afraid to say or suffer or do anything shameful on each occasion.

Kl. That's likely.

Ath. Aren't all the experiences where we're like that these: spirited anger, erotic desire, insolence, lack of learning, love of gain, cowardice, and, in addition, wealth, beauty, strength, and everything which drives a person out of his wits with the intoxication of pleasure? Now is there any one of these that is as inexpensive or comparatively harmless, first for testing and then for practicing, than the test and play associated with wine? What pleasure can we say is more measured, if indulged in with any kind of care? Let's just consider it. To test a harsh and savage soul from which tens of thousands of injustices come, is it safer to run the risks involved in making con-

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Lacedaimonians, and we have gone through music but have omitted to speak of gymnastic: now how do you think either of us is going to answer you this question?

673c Ath. I at least would assert that you have with your question given a pretty clear answer; I understand your present question to be an answer, as I say, and in fact a command to complete the discussion of gymnastic.

Kl. You have understood very well: so do it.

Ath. It must be done; of course, it's not very difficult to talk to you about what you both know. You have much more experience in this art than you had in the other.

Kl. What you say is pretty much true.

673d Ath. Well, the source of this play is once again the fact that every living being is by nature accustomed to jumping, and that humankind, as we asserted, obtained a perception of rhythm and thus engendered and gave birth to dance. When song recalled and awakened rhythm, the two in common gave birth to the chorus and to play.

Kl. Very true.

Ath. Now the one, as we said, we've already gone over; next we will try to go through the other.

Kl. Yes indeed.

673e Ath. First, though, if it's all right with you two, let's put the capstone on our discussion of the use of drunkenness.

Kl. What capstone and what sort do you mean?

Ath. If a city will consider the practice that has now been discussed as something serious, and will make use of it, in conformity with laws and order, for the sake of moderation, and will not refrain from other pleasures but will arrange them with a view to mastering them according to the same argument, then all these things should be employed, in this manner.

674a On the other hand, if this is treated as something playful, if anyone who wishes will be allowed to drink whenever he wishes, with whomever he wishes, along with all sorts of other similar practices, I would not vote for the use of drunkenness at any time by this city or this man. Indeed, I would go beyond the Cretan and the Lacedaimonian usage, and advocate the Carthaginian³¹ law which forbids anyone to taste this drink while out on campaign and requires that only water be drunk for all that time. I would add to that law, and forbid drinking within the city too, among female and male slaves,

and among magistrates during the year in which they serve; pilots and judges would not be allowed to taste wine at all while they were performing their services, and the same would apply to anyone who was about to give advice in an important council meeting. Moreover, no one would be allowed to drink at all during the day except for purposes of physical training or illness, nor at night would any man or woman who was intending to create children. And someone might list many other circumstances in which those who possess intelligence and a correct law should not drink wine. 674b

So according to this argument no city would need many vines, and while the other farm products and the diet as a whole would be regulated, the wine production would be almost the most measured and modest of all. Let this, strangers, if you agree, be our capstone to the argument about wine. 674c

Kl. Beautifully spoken, and we agree.