THE

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

ISOCRATES.

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(Continued from p. 424.)

Objections to Isocrates as Writer and Teacher, in his own Age.

The defamers of Isocrates in his own age were of such a character that he did not feel called upon to reply to them until he was quite advanced in life (eighty-two years old), and then only because he saw that the multitude did not understand the nature of his studies and instruction and the manner of his life; so that he would be placed in a false position not only among his contemporaries, but also in the estimation of succeeding ages. He says: "Although I have known that my manner of life is the subject of calumny with some of the sophists, who accuse me of drawing up petty pleas for the courts, just as one might dare to call Phidias who made the statue of Minerva a mere puppet-maker, or Zeuxis and Parrhasius as painters of sign-boards, — still, I have not defended myself against their petty slanders, because I supposed their prating was without influence, and that I had made it evident to all that I had taken upon myself not to speak and write upon petty private contracts, but upon subjects of such magnitude and importance that no one else except my pupils and their imitators have ventured to handle them. On account of this my choice of labor, and my study

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to consult for things that make for peace, I supposed, even until quite an old man, that I had the good will of all those in private life." "But now, unexpectedly, when near the end of life, ... I have found out that some of these are not so well disposed toward me as I had hoped. A part of them because they are quite ignorant of my course of life, and disposed to listen to those who have anything to say prejudicial to me; and others who, although they know well how I pass my time, are envious, and are of like mind with the sophists, and rejoice that others have an erroneous opinion concerning me." "I therefore cast about me to see how I could best make posterity acquainted with the character I have established, the life I lead, and the instructions I give to others, and not allow myself to be misunderstood in reference to these things, and remain at the mercy of my detractors; . . . . . and I concluded to write a discourse as a picture of my thoughts and actions, which should remain as a memorial more honorable than any statue of brass."[1]

That he did not consider his course a failure, or unworthy of the approbation of his contemporaries, notwithstanding the opposition that he met, and his inability to attain to his aspirations or control adverse circumstances, a passage in a letter written in his old age shows: "Although," he says, "I have kept aloof from civil employment and from the orator's stand, in default of self-confidence and voice, still, I have not been entirely useless, or without honor and influence, but have been an undoubted counsellor and aid to those who have taken upon themselves the advocacy of your best interests and those of the allies, and have had more influence by my writings in favor of the freedom and independence of the Greeks than all those who have harangued before popular assemblies. For this you would justly give me your most hearty thanks."[2]

It is noticeable that the main point of objection to him was the same that was brought against Socrates. He says: "According to the indictment, my accuser seeks to bring

[1] Antid., §§ 3. 4. 5. [2] Letter 8th, to the Magistrates of Mitylene.

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upon me the suspicion of *having corrupted the youth*, by teaching them to speak and to carry their point in judicial contests contrary to justice."[1] But instead of making the effort to prove this accusation, the detractor attempts to bring envy and odium upon him by an exaggerated account of his popularity and influence. "He makes me so great," Isocrates says, "as no one either of those employed in the courts or in the study of rhetoric has ever been, and my pupils more in number than those of all the teachers of rhetoric.[2] For he says that not only private citizens, but orators and generals and kings and other rulers have been my disciples,[3] and that I have received, and am now receiving, immense treasures from them. In this style he brings his action, since he supposes that by such exaggerated statements concerning me and my wealth and the number of my disciples he will excite a feeling of envy in all who hear him, and by the action before the court rouse your anger and hatred, which feelings make the judges harsh in their decisions."[4] His most prominent argument in defence, in addition to the general course of his life in private, was, that no one whom he had injured had appeared to testify against him, as he would be sure to do, in this hour of his peril, if any such there were.[5]

Whilst, too, his writings and his whole influence had been to urge his own state to such conduct as should conduce to to her best good and free the other states from present evils, and such as to show that his desire was to induce all the citizens to aspire to the highest excellence, how could he corrupt his disciples?[6] The reputation obtained by his

[1] *Πειρᾶταί με διαβάλλειν ὁ κατήγορος ὡς διαφθείρω τοὺς νεωτέρους λέγειν διδάσκων, κ.τ.λ.* — Antid., § 30.

[2] *Ἐγὼ πλείους (μαθητας), ἢ σύμπαντες οἱ περὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν διατρίβοντες.* — Antid., § 16.

[3] *Οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἰδιώτας φησί μου γεγενῆσθαι μαθητὰς ἀλλὰ καὶ ῥήτορας καὶ στρατηγοὺς καὶ βασιλέας καὶ τυράννους.*—Antid , § 30.

[4] *Τοῦτον δὲ τὸν τρόπον πεποίηται τὴν κατηγορίαν, ἡγούμενος ἐκ μὲν ὧν καταλαζονεύεται περί μου καὶ τοῦ πλούτου καὶ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν μαθητῶν φθόνον ἅπασι τοῖς ἀκούουσιν ἐμποιήσειν, κ.τ.λ.*

[5] See Antid., § 33 sq.

[6] See Antid., § 86 sq.

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writings also brought him many pupils, none of whom would have remained if they had not found him what they expected. "But now," he adds, "although they were so many, and had remained with me, some three, some four years, still no one of them was ever known to find fault with me; but at last, when about to return to parents and friends, they were so well satisfied with my training that they took their leave with sorrow and tears."[1]

He also triumphantly refers to those by name who have been life-long disciples, in proof that his influence upon his pupils is good rather than bad. "I will bring forward those who have been my disciples from my youth even until old age, and will name those among you who are my contemporaries, as witnesses of the truth of what I say. Among the earliest of my pupils were Eunomus and Lysithides and Callippus, and after these were Onetor, Anticles, Philonides, Philomelus, and Charmantides. These were all honored by the state with golden crowns, not because they aspired to renown abroad, but because they were good men and did great good to the state. Place me in whatever relation to these men that you please; for as far as the present question is concerned it will in any case be honorable to me. For if you consider me as their adviser and teacher you will justly have more regard for me than for those who, on account of their virtues, are entertained in the Prytaneum at public cost. For each one of these has made *himself only* a good man and citizen, but I *as many*, as I have before indicated to you."[2]

The only other objection made to him as teacher of oratory was that he himself was not an orator, and his reply was, according to Plutarch, that "the whetstones are not themselves sharp, but yet are able to sharpen iron."[3] He, too, was

[1] *Νῦν δὲ τοσούτων γεγενημένων, καὶ τῶν μὲν ἔτη τρία τῶν δὲ τέτταρα συνδιατηθέντων, οὐδεὶς οὐδὲν φανήσεται τῶν παρ' ἐμοὶ μεμψάμενος, ἀλλ' . . . . . οὕτως ἠγάπων τὴν διατριβὴν ὥστε μετὰ πόθου καὶ δακρύων ποιεῖσθαι τὴν ἀπαλλαγήν.*—Antid., §§ 87, 88.

[2] Antid., §§ 94, 95.

[3] *Αἱ ἀκόναι αὐταὶ μὲν τεμεῖν οὐ δύνανται, τὸν δὲ σίδηρον τμητικὸν ποιοῦσιν.* Plutarch's Vita, p. xxx; Horace, too says: Ergo fungar vice cotis, acutum reddere quae ferrum valet, exsors ipsa secandi.

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accustomed to say to his friends that he taught for a thousand minae, but would gladly give ten thousand to any one who would teach him confidence and strength of voice.[1]

Isocrates' Love of Country.

A genuine love of country is conspicuous throughout the writings of Isocrates. The whole of Greece with her Asiatic colonies are the object of his regard and affection when their interests conflict with those of foreign nations, and especially with those of the Persians. His hatred to the latter, as the oppressors of the Greeks, appears in nearly all his writings, and is the basis of the Panegyricus and Philippus. He appeals to the example of the earlier Greeks, who, he says, would not return a favor for a benefit received from the Persians, so enduring is their anger toward them. "Our ancestors condemned many to death on suspicion of favor to the Medes, and even now, before business is entered upon, in our convocations, curses are imprecated upon any who may be guilty of such treachery. The Eumolpidae, on account of their hatred of the Persians, made known by criers that all foreigners should be excluded from the celebration of the mysteries as murderers. Our dislike to them is so ingrained that the myths in which the calamities of the Trojans and Persians appear are most of all pleasing to us. We recite in our festal assemblies triumphal songs relating to our wars with the barbarians, but elegies over our conflicts with the Greeks, in our days of sadness. I suppose that one great charm of the poetry of Homer arises from his eulogies of those who fought against the barbarians. It is, too, on this account that our ancestors gave his art so prominent a place in musical contests, and in the training of the young; so that often listening to those poems enmity, to the barbarians would be kept active, and admiration for those who fought against them may and would enkindle our emulation for such exploits."[2]

He feels above all things the indignities offered to Greece

[1] Τόλμαν καὶ εὐφωνίαν.

[2] Paneg., § 157 sq.

by the peace of Antalcidas, and the abuses that followed it, and tries to rouse his countrymen to throw off the degradation of the yoke that they had allowed to be cast upon them. It is now this hated king of those Persians who have so often shown their inferiority to the Greeks, "who manages our affairs, and prescribes what each must do; and except that he has not established governors in our towns, what has he left undone? For is he not the arbiter of war and peace, and has he not taken upon himself the guidance of our affairs? Do we not make suit to him as commander in our difficulties with one another? Do we not call him *the great king*, as if we were captives?[1]

Such were his feelings in reference to the whole of Greece when her interests came into conflict with foreign nations. But when, as was often the case, the Grecian states were at variance with each other, Athens called forth his warmest and heartiest commendations. "Our state," he says, "is acknowledged to be the most ancient, the greatest, and the most renowned among men. Upon this as a basis, still greater honors have accrued. The land that we inhabit we have neither seized upon by violence nor acquired by occupation. Neither are we a heterogeneous mass collected from various nations, but so noble and pure is our origin that we may ever, through all time, have her from whom we are born; since we are natives of our own soil, and can call our country by the names of our most endeared objects; for we alone of all the Greeks can call the same our nurse and native country and mother."[2]

The benefactions of Athens to the rest of Greece is dwelt upon in the Panegyricus, and elsewhere in his writings, lovingly and with the greatest assurance.[3] "These, he says, we shall best understand if we examine in order from the beginning the acts of our state. For we shall find that she has been in the front rank in the perils of war, and has been

[1] Paneg., §§ 120, 121.
[2] Paneg. §§ 23, 24. Lysias has this same declaration.
[3] See Paneg., § 26 sq.

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the originator of that civil code by which we have, instead of nomads, become the inhabitants of fixed abodes, and collected together in towns, and enjoyed the privileges of cultivated life."[1] "Through her we have the advantages of agriculture, the mysteries,[2] and festive assemblies. She has acquired territory, founded colonies, invented the useful and ornamental arts, cultivated philosophy, taught proficiency in the use of language,[3] and inculcated piety towards the gods; and, in fine, it is useless to attempt to teach the honor that belongs to her, such benefits has she bestowed upon the Greeks. No one, indeed, could invent a recompense which would be a fit return for her benefactions.[4]

His patriotism is conspicuous in his influence as teacher. It was for his country that he labored to form the minds and character of his fellow-citizens. Of them he demanded no pay. Pecuniary reward he received from those who came from abroad, but he was satisfied if his home pupils became good and influential citizens.

Isocrates' invitation to Philip to make himself the head of united Greece in order to enable them to throw off the dominion of Persia, has sometimes been alleged as suggesting a suspicion of treason. But I can find nothing but a loving regard for Greece in it, although his confidence in Philip proved to be too implicit. He felt doubtless, that the aid of the Macedonian was the last resource left to his country, and hoped that he was appealing to a nature as generous and honor-loving as his own. Thus Gillies says: "Even Demosthenes, the inveterate enemy of Philip, though at first he exclaimed against the peace with this prince, yet afterwards published a discourse to persuade the Athenians to observe it, though he continued to inveigh against Philip in the public assembly he was sensible that his countrymen were unable to resist him in the field. But Isocrates, more cautious, instead of irritating that powerful monarch, endeavored to appease him. He attempts by insinuation and address to deceive the man who had so long deceived the

[1] Paneg., § 26. [2] Ibid., § 28 sq. [3] Ibid., § 47 sq. [4] Ibid., § 33.

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Greeks. As ambition was the predominant passion in the breast of Philip, Isocrates offers to him the idea of an enterprise more glorious and splendid than even the conquest of Greece. It becomes a prince like you, he says, to despise little interests and inglorious victories. You ought to attempt an enterprise which, if succesful, will raise your renown above that of all former monarchs, and which, though unfortunate, will ensure you the love and esteem of your countrymen."[1]

It seems strange that Demosthenes judged so differently from Isocrates of the character of Philip, as is shown by his Philippics, which Isocrates probably refers to as slanderous to his Philip. But, as Rauchenstein[2] says, Isocrates, born five years before the Peloponnesian war, had as a boy and young man seen Athens at the height of its prosperity, and been familiar with the improvements which had resulted to Athens from the age of Pericles. This early impression often burst forth in his praises of that age and of the earlier democracy. But the Decelean war, which began B.C. 413, in his twenty-third year, he considered as the turning point, after which the glory of Athens waned, and internal corruption increased.[3] From that time he saw the wild rule of demagogues, the deep humiliation of Athens, the reign of terror of the Thirty and its results, the citizen's war; and soon after the end of that, relaxation of discipline, idleness, poverty, deterioration, and all the evils of democracy for nearly seventy years. How could the grey-haired old man with all these experiences have the same faith and hope as young and strong Demosthenes, with his fewer years of struggle? Isocrates felt the insufficiency of the old worn-out systems of Greece, but he was full of faith that his people were destined to a better fate if only the right man should come, as he certainly must, who would unite all the states against their old enemy.

In the Panegyricus he had labored to bring about a reconciliation among the Greeks, so that they, by a united effort, might free the Grecian colonies in Asia, and give indepen-

[1] Life of Isoc., p. 133. [2] Einl., S. 12. [3] On the Peace, §§ 37, 84

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dence and prosperity to the whole of Greece. But this could not be accomplished without discarding the Peace of Antalcidas, and that had been brought about so much by Spartan influence, and in favor of Spartan supremacy among the Greeks, that they were hard to be persuaded.[1] Although his feeling of the superiority of Athens so pervades this oration, still he contrives wisely to make all the circumstances contribute to rouse resentment against the barbarians, that it should seem that it could not fail of its design. But, as is well known, it did; and the Greeks continued in their intestine broils, and wrought out their own destruction."[2]

He next (366 B.C.) turned to Archidamus of Sparta, a descendant of the Heraclidae. But the dissensions of the Greeks still continued. Four years after (362 B.C.) the fourth invasion of the Peloponnesus was made by the Thebans, in which Epaminondas lost his life. Five years later still the Social war commenced between Athens and her allies, which proved exhausting to the Grecian states, and, in the same year, the still more disastrous Sacred war commenced between Thebes and Phocis, and lasted ten years. For a time, too, Isocrates placed some confidence in the aid of Dionysius of Syracuse and in that of Jason of Pherae, whose conquest of the Persian king ended in words only.[3] But when all other resources failed, and he saw his country drifting slowly, but surely into absolute subjection, he made the effort which, to one less confident in the love of the right and honor, would have seemed fool-hardy; but to him it offered a gleam of hope, which, however, the battle of Chaeronea soon obliterated.

The Political Ethics of Isocrates.

As a writer in political ethics Isocrates has perhaps few, if any, equals among the ancients; and yet he never wrote specifically on that subject. But the practical bearing of his writings in the direction of state-policy, and devotion to the best interests of his country, whether upon the side of the

[1] Paneg., § 18 sq. [2] Gillies's Introd. to Paneg., p. 12.
[3] See Rauchenstein's Einl., Reden des Isoc., S. 10, and Phil., § 119.

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ruler or the subject, — for he placed himself in both relations, — cannot be questioned. Dionysius says: "I suppose if any one wishes not a one-sided, but a comprehensive, knowledge of state government and policy, he should study Isocrates assiduously." "Who," he asks, "would not be incited to a love of the state and people, or to the nurture of civil honesty, by reading the Panegyricus? For in that whilst he commemorates the virtues of their ancestors who liberated Greece from the dominion of the barbarians, he not only depicts them as brave warriors, but as men possessed of a most noble character, not more coveting military and political renown than striving for a well-ordered life; desiring less the things of others than those impossible to obtain; judging of happiness not according to a money standard, but by a good name and honorable deeds; and feeling that they should leave to their posterity great and unenvied wealth if they bequeathed them a good reputation among the people."[1]

In respect to the nature of government he well says: "Government is the very soul of the state, having the same power as the mind in the body. For it is that which gives counsel concerning all things, devises and guards what is good, and wards off evil. It assimilates to itself laws, statesmen, and citizens, and controls their action."[2] The constitution of Athens, as devised by Solon and revised by Clisthenes (and interpreted by Isocrates), is, in its working, a model for all ages: "They did not," he says, "establish a polity which, while it claimed for itself equity and lenity, was actually oppressive in its application to those who lived under it; nor one that trained its subjects to consider democracy as license; freedom, lawlessness; and liberty of speech, the right to utter calumnious and seditious sentiments; and the permission to do all these things as the highest good. On the contrary, by frowning on and punishing all such perverters of freedom,

[1] See Dionysius, Vita, p. 57; also Panegyricus, § 76: Οὐδὲ πρὸς ἀργύριον τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν ἔκρινον, ἀλλ' οὗτος ἐδόκει πλοῦτον ἀσφαλέστατον κεκτῆσθαι καὶ κάλλιστον, ὅστις τοιαῦτα τυγχάνοι πράττων, ἐξ ὧν αὐτός τε μέλλοι μάλιστ' εὐδοκιμήσειν καὶ τοῖς παισὶ μεγίστην δόξαν καταλείψειν.

[2] Areop., § 14.

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it made all of the citizens better and wiser. It also trained all to be good citizens by teaching them to distinguish that equality which treats all alike from that which gives to all according to their deserts, rewarding and punishing all as each deserves. ..... Offices, also, were bestowed upon those alone who were best and best qualified for their respective duties, with the hope that private citizens would be assimilated to their rulers."[1]

The mutually advantageous relation of different classes in society, if accepted in theory, is not always carried out in practice and feeling in our own, as it was not in his, age. "They [our ancestors] not only agreed in reference to public matters, but in private life they respected each other's rights as right-minded fellow-citizens should do. The poorer classes were so far from envying those who had accumulated property that they cared for the greater estates as their own, because they supposed that the prosperity of these was gainful to themselves. Those who had wealth did not despise those who were less fortunate, but, with the feeling that their poverty was their own disgrace, they gladly ministered to their necessities. Some they supplied with land at a moderate rent, others they employed in trade, and still others were furnished with means for pursuing other avocations. For they did not fear either that they should lose the whole, or be obliged to resort to harsh means for recovering any part of what was loaned. They felt as secure in reference to it as if it were shut up in their coffers at home. For they saw that those who were made judges of private transactions did not use partiality, but adhered strictly to the laws, ... and felt greater indignation against the transgressor than the injured party themselves. For those who violated trusts injured the poor, rather than the rich. For the latter, if they intermitted their loans, suffered small loss; but the former, if deprived of aid, would be subject to extreme want."[2]

That civil polity is best of all, in his estimation, which

[1] Areop., § 20 sq. [2] Areop., § 31 sq.

relieves the poor from want by furnishing the means of gaining support by labor and by the benefactions of the rich, shields the young from licentiousness by care in interesting them in business and study, saves magistrates from peculation by visiting transgression with merited punishment, and rescues the aged from despondent inaction by political honors and the due reverence of the young.[1]

His leading precept, when he was giving instruction to Demonicus,[2] the son of his friend, not only for the guidance of his youth, but of subsequent life, is: "First of all, exercise piety toward the gods not only by your offerings, but by faithfulness in abiding by your oaths. For whilst the former is an indication of your pecuniary ability, the latter is a proof of your soundness of character. Honor the deity at all times, but especially in connection with the public sacrifices. Thus you show not only your piety toward the gods, but your obedience to the laws."[3] His respect for law was to be not merely eye-service; for he enjoins not only the faithful observance of the written laws, but obedience to the wishes and imitation of the example of the ruler as the most authoritative law.[4] Neither does the form of government affect the duty of obedience. "For," he says, "as those living under a democracy must obey the will of the many, so those under a king must respect the authority of the king."[5]

Upon the king he enjoins, with even more distinctness, piety, self-culture, personal subjection, a blameless life, and a subservience of all self-interest to the best good of the governed. The limits of one Review Article allow but a meagre selection of the noble precepts with which his Nicocles is filled, and which are also scattered through his other writings. In general, he says to the king, "Manage your state as you would your own paternal household. . . . . Worship the gods as enjoined by

[1] Areop., § 55.

[2] *Προειλόμην . . . . . ἅμα τοῦ τε παρόντος βίου συμβουλίαν ἐξενεγκεῖν καὶ τοῦ μέλλοντος χρόνου παράγγελμα καταλιπεῖν*, § 44.

[3] Demon., § 13.

[4] *Ἰσχυρότατον μέντοι νόμον ἡγοῦ τὸν ἐκείνων [βασιλέων] τρόπον.* — Dem., § 36

[5] Demon., § 36.

your fathers, but consider that the best sacrifice and the highest service is to show yourself as the best and most righteous. . . . . . All must acknowledge that it is the office of a king to remedy defects, supply the wants of the state, and guard its prosperity, and raise it from a low to a high position. . . . . . It is plainly not so necessary for athletes to exercise the body as for kings to cultivate the mind and heart. . . . . . They should make special effort to excel as much in virtues as they do in honors,[1] and not suppose that whilst care and labor avail in other matters they have no influence in the enlargement of their own virtue and wisdom. . . . . . Have not less dominion over yourself than over others, and reckon it most kingly to be subject to no passion, but to rule your desires more authoritatively than your subjects."[2]

More particularly, he says: "If you find that any prescriptions or laws are unjust in their bearings, either annul or correct them. Strive earnestly to originate the best measures; and if you cannot do that, adopt those which others have found best. Let them be wholly just, useful, and homogeneous, and such as will make differences among citizens fewest and reconciliations easiest. . . . . . Perform the office of judge, when controversies arise, with the strictest impartiality and consistency, always giving the same decision in reference to the same things." Again, he says: "You will best rule the people if you suffer them never to do or suffer wrong, and are careful that the best receive the honor, whilst the other citizens experience no wrong. For these are the ground-principles for the best administration of the government."[3]

Isocrates' precepts for those who occupy places of trust and authority, if they may seem commonplace truisms, yet are not always more heeded in our own than in his age: "If you are appointed to office, employ no unfaithful assistant in your duties, as his delinquencies will be imputed to you. . . . . . Go not out of office richer, but more honored, than when you entered upon it; for the praise of the many is better

[1] Ad. Nicoc., §§ 11,12. [2] Ibid., § 29. [3] Ibid., § 316, and cf. Plataiens, § 34.

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than great riches. . . . . . Be not an aider or abettor of any wrong-doing; for you will have the reputation of that to which you give your influence in others. . . . . . Exert yourself to gain the ability to acquire wealth and power, but abstain from grasping more than is your due, so that you may seem to desire justice not from weakness, but from love of the right."[1]

His exhortations to the leaders in society and government are adapted to times of prosperity, as well as adversity. After enumerating the signs of wealth and power at Athens, he says: "These very things especially excite my apprehensions, because I see that those states that feel most confident in their prosperity counsel most unwisely, and that extreme self-confidence is the precursor of the greatest peril. The cause is obvious; for unmixed good or ill is not the lot of man. Folly and license are often the offspring of wealth and power; but poverty and lowliness of mind beget wisdom and moderation. So it is uncertain whether we ought to strive to leave the one or the other [wealth or power] to our posterity."[2]

The feeling of Isocrates was strong that the only firm basis of a government was the virtue and intelligence of the citizens: "Increase of virtue comes not from these things [i.e. many and accurate laws], but from the habits of daily life; for the many are assimilated in character to the education that they have received. The number and accuracy of the laws are a sign of the imperfections of those governed. . . . . . It is not necessary to have the piazzas covered with edicts, but to have the principles of justice in the heart. Without these, the best laws can be of no avail; for they only who are well educated are sufficiently prepared to receive them."[3]

"The whole object of the discourse upon the Peace," he says, "is to show the folly and madness of supposing that injustice can ever be advantageous, and that the retaining by violence of territory belonging to others can be otherwise

[1] Demon., § 38. [2] Areop., § 38. [3] Aerop., § 40, 41.

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than calamitous."[1] His rebuke of those who maintain a contrary sentiment is plain and pointed: "Wretched sophistry!" he says; "as if wealth, power, honor — in one word, happiness itself — were not the reward of virtue; as if the virtues of the mind were not accompanied with every other advantage; as if such as neglect them were not blind to their truest interest; and the temperate, the brave, and the just were not especially favored by gods and men. For my own part, I am persuaded that these alone obtain what is truly useful, while the unjust become the victims of gain; and like creatures which are caught with a bait, purchase an accidental pleasure at the price of absolute destruction. But the pious and just live perfectly secure, and eternal felicity lies open to their view."[2] It is, too, still more necessary for states than individuals to practice virtue and eschew vice. For a bad man may die before punishment is executed, but states, from their undying nature, are subject to certain vengeance from gods and men.[3]

The exhortations of Isocrates at the close of his honest and bold and patriotic plea with the Athenians for peace, is as good a proof of his love of country and the right, as the soundness of his political code. "I have this to add as the crowning idea of my discourse, to which the whole has been tending, and as the test principle of all political action, that if we would end the calumnies that now are put upon us, cease from needless war, and secure for our state a supremacy both high and enduring, we, mindful of the calamities that arise from them, must discard all tyrannical rule and unjust authority. . . . . A great deal might be said upon this topic, but the length of this discourse, and my advancing years, admonish to refrain. But I advise and entreat all who are in the bloom and vigor of life to speak and write such things as may, avoiding injury to the others, incite the leading states of Greece to virtue and just dealing, which with

[1] Peace, § 17.
[2] Peace, § 31, 32 (Gillies's translation); see also Isoc., Plataieus, § 25.
[3] Peace, § 120.

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the prosperity of Greece will advance the interests of liberal culture.[1]

The form of government that he preferred for his own state was, as has been before hinted, a democracy, and for an oligarchy he had no tolerance. "All my discourses," he says, "plainly show my hatred of oligarchy and every species of tyranny, and my love of equal rights, and a democracy based on justice and reason. .... Its superiority is shown in the history of our own ancestors when they lived under it, and thereby became the most distinguished of nations, and in that of the Lacedemonians, and other peoples that have become most renowned and prosperous. Even our present system, faulty as we all feel it to be, is divine in comparison with the rule of the Thirty."[2]

It need not be denied that the troubles and abuses of the popular government of his time not only caused in him longings for a full re-instatement of the Areopagus, but also suggested vividly the advantages of a monarchy where such a ruler as Evagoras or Nicocles occupied the throne; into the latter of whose mouth, in the address which he prepared for him to give to his people, he puts them fully and vividly."[3]

Wieland well characterizes the spirit and influence of Isocrates' writings in their political bearing. "Any one," he says, "familiar with his works cannot resist the belief that it was his true zeal, when he for half a century used to the full all the powers of his mind, and all the resources of his art, to turn back the Athenians and the rest of the Greeks to the better ways of thought and life of their ancestors, and to persuade them that the erroneous and hurtful notions that we are able to build up our own interests by the oppression of others, unmistakably will accelerate our own ruin; that justice in word and deed, without which the most powerful states cannot long maintain their power, is indispensable to the bare existence of the smaller states, and that nothing

[1] Ἐν ταῖς τῆς Ἑλλάδος εὐπραγίαις συμβαίνει καὶ τὰ τῶν φιλοσόφων πράγματα πολὺ βελτίω γίγνεσθαι.

[2] Areop., § 60 sq.

[3] Nicocles, § 14 sq.

else than a public spirit which would animate all the Greek states and towns, and unite them, as it were, into one great family, could make this state-bond (which exists only by its concord and brotherly feeling, without which it would be powerless and fall to pieces of itself, but with which it is vigorous, terrible, and every way powerful) secure from the disgrace of subjection to an Asiatic despotism, or from the danger of an unlooked-for bondage to an ever-growing European neighbor. All his writings breathe forth these only true principles of state policy, which consists merely in the application of the principles of morals to the intercourse of common life, and to the carrying on of existence in communities; and in this regard he seems to me to have acted worthily of his name, Isocrates,[1] and to have been among the rhetoricians of his age what Socrates was to the sophists of his. But his labors had also in reference to the great object for which he labored no better result."[2]

In what Sense did Isocrates claim to be a Philosopher?

The question naturally suggests itself what right Isocrates had to designate his teachings as philosophy[3] (*φιλοσοφία*), and his pupils as students in philosophy (*οἱ ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ὄντες*). Although he shows some acquaintance with the philosophical terms[4] of Socrates and Plato, yet he plainly had no taste for, or familiarity with, their minute speculations and dialectic niceties. He had probably been a hearer of Socrates in company with Plato, and they had, as has been seen, the highest appreciation of Isocrates' talents; but the only ground of sympathy between them must have been the high-toned moral bearing and intellectual culture,

[1] That is according to the explanation of H. Wolf.: *κρατοῦντα τὸ ἴσον*, or aequabiliter temperatum boni et aequi observantem. Still the other explanation: aequalium victorem is preferable."

[2] Benseler's Einl., to the Paneg.

[3] See Paneg., § 13, and Rauchenstein's Einl. to Paneg., and Areop., p. 6.

[4] Rauchenstein cites the contrast between *δόξα* and *ἐπιστήμη*, 13. § 8, the use of *ἰδέαι* 3. § 20, *φύσεις μετεχούσας τούτων τῶν ἰδεῶν*, i.e. *τῆς σωφροσύνης* and *τῆς δικαιοσύνης*.

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so prominent in them all. Some passages in both Isocrates and Plato would seem to indicate opposition in sentiment[1] upon some points between them, but not of a nature to produce any acrimony or even want of mutual regard.[2]

Isocrates' own words are the best explanation of what he means by philosophy. "It is that which has trained us to right action, and humanized our intercourse with one another, and taught us to distinguish between the evils that arise from imprudence and necessity, and to ward off the one and bear nobly the other."[3] In Antidosis, too, he defines it: "Since men have not by nature that knowledge which enables them to determine what in all cases is best to be done or said, I suppose those are wise who by their intelligent judgment are able best to attain to the highest good; and philosophers are those who occupy themselves with those things which will most easily and quickly give them this ability of right discrimination."[4] Philosophy in Isocrates' view is all that culture of the mental and moral powers that enables men to think out and carry into practice, and especially to express in words, whatever is best fitted to the relations of speaker and hearer.[5] Thus Dyonysius advises all of those of his own age who wish to cultivate true philosophy, and who are not satisfied with the contemplation of virtue merely, but desirous of its practice, and who are not so solicitous to pass a quiet life as one that will be most useful to the greatest number, to imitate the plan of life that Isocrates laid down."[6]

The study of philosophy is with him the study of literature in its best and most extended sense, and philosophers are students of literature. His ideal philosopher would be a man of the highest culture in morality and intellect. And as his aim was to give this culture, he properly called his school a school of philosophy, himself a teacher of philosophy, and his pupils students in philosophy. The best phi-

[1] See Note on p. 6, of Rauchenstein.

[2] See p. 423.

[3] Paneg., § 47.

[4] Antid., § 270, 271.

[5] See Antid., § 180 sq.

[6] Vita, p. 57.

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losophy is that which enables a man to exercise the best moral influence. In a more restricted sense, philosophy is the careful study of any subject. And the true orator receives by him the name of philosopher, because he considers that careful and thorough training and study are prime requisites for the orator. Hence, he says: "Those who turn the minds of the youth simply to exert themselves to become eloquent, perform a good work, but those who labor to form in them good and intelligent characters accomplish a far higher end, in as much as to *live* well is a far better attainment than to speak well."[1]

It is well known that Isocrates, as well as Socrates and Plato, was often ranked as a sophist, and made responsible for their sentiments, and thus was not only subject to calumny from others, but was also envied and hated by them. But he was careful to make known how far he was from the pretension and arrogance of many of them whom he called *ἀγελαίους σοφιστάς*.[2] He characterizes them, as does also Plato, as professing to know all things, and as ready at the smallest expense to teach others all things, and yet (which Isocrates considers as the most damning sin) not feeling confidence that their teaching will turn out their pupils as honest men, but requiring pledges of their honor and honesty to be deposited with others.[3] This same arrogance which they exhibit they impute also to Isocrates, which he triumphantly discards by appealing to the character and testimony of his life-long pupils.

Isocrates' Moral and Practical Teachings.

The works of Isocrates abound in precepts of morality, and rules for the successful guidance to an honorable and

[1] See Demon., §§ 3, 4. *Ὅσοι μὲν οὖν πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτῶν φίλους τοὺς προτρεπτικοὺς λόγους συγγράφουσι, καλὸν μὲν ἔργον ἐπιχειροῦσιν, οὐ μὴν περί γε τὸ κράτιστον τῆς φιλοσοφίας διατρίβουσιν· ὅσοι δὲ τοῖς νεωτέροις εἰσηγοῦνται, μὴ δι' ὧν τὴν δεινότητα τὴν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἀσκήσουσιν, ἀλλ' ὅπως τὰ τῶν τρόπων ἤθη σπουδαῖοι πεφυκέναι δόξουσι, τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον ἐκείνων τοὺς ἀκούοντας ὠφελοῦσιν, ὅσον οἱ μὲν ἐπὶ λόγον μόνον παρακαλοῦσιν οἱ δὲ τὸν τρόπον αὐτῶν ἐπανορθοῦσι.*

[2] See his Discourse against the Sophists, Panath., § 14. [3] Sophists, § 2 sq.

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useful life, some of which have been already quoted.[1] His picture of the habits of the young men of former ages, to which he exhorts those of his own time to return, is worthy of notice. "The youth did not then frequent the gaming-houses or the music-shops, or other places of frivolous amusement and dissipation, such as those in which they now pass their time, but engaged in those studies and pursuits which were appointed them, with admiration emulating those who excelled in them. They had such an aversion to the forum that if they were ever compelled to pass through it, they showed their modesty and reserve by their demeanor in it. Want of respect for the aged they considered worse than the young men now-a-days do disobedience to parents. No slave, even, of good character, would venture to eat or drink in a low tavern, for they were desirous of maintaining a reputable demeanor, and of avoiding that of a buffoon. The ability to say sharp things and to scoff, which we consider a mark of genius, they supposed to be a misfortune."[2]

In a discourse written when he was eighty-two he quotes from his different discourses to prove that all his writings inculcate virtue and justice, whether they are in disconnected moral precepts, as in Demonicus and Nicocles, or in more connected piece, such as the Panegyricus, Panathenaicus. But our limits do not allow extended quotations, and indeed one would hardly know where to begin, so full are his writings of precepts and indirect lessons, which inculcate a high-toned morality, such as are seldom found in authors who precede the Christian dispensation. Even the much vaunted precepts of the Buddhists can scarcely be said to equal, and certainly not excel them.

He inculcates not only upon subjects, but rulers, to worship the gods by the prescribed rites, but especially by a strict regard to the truth and the literal observance of oaths, which are to be taken only when religion and honor are at stake, and never for pecuniary gain.[3] Always show yourself such a

[1] See p. 435 sq. [2] Areop., § 48, 49.

[3] See Demon., § 13 ; Ad. Nicoc. ; also Demon., § 23 : Ὅρκον ἐπακτὸν προσδέχου διὰ δύο προφάσεις, ἢ σεαυτὸν αἰτίας αἰσχρᾶς ἀπολύων, ἢ φίλους ἐκ μεγάλων κινδύνων διασώζων. ἕνεκα δὲ χρημάτων μηδένα θεῶν ὀμόσῃς, μηδ' ἂν εὐορκεῖν μέλλῃς.

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lover of truthfulness that your words may be more relied on than the oaths of others.[1] Truthfulness in all relations and in all places he inculcates with such plainness and frequency as to show that it was not only the basis of his own character, but of the character he would form in others. He recognizes conscience, too, as a ground for right action. "If you conceal a wrong act for the present it will come to light at some future time; but even if you succeed in keeping it secret from others, *you yourself will be conscious of it.*"[2]

He enjoins upon his hearers, whether in the relation of kindred or friends or fellow-citizens, to judge of the treatment to be extended to others by the substantially Scripture rule: "Whatsoever ye would that others do to you, do ye the same to them"; or, in other words, put yourselves in their places, and decide by what you would then wish.

Practical precepts for the ordinary life, day by day, are found abundantly in Isocrates' writings: "Decide slowly, but act promptly when you have decided."[3] "Seek prosperous issues from the gods, but wise counsel from yourself." "Be content with the present, but seek better things in the future."[4] "Do not so much desire a great accumulation of good things of this life as a moderate enjoyment of them in the present time." "He who labors zealously to accumulate wealth, when he knows not how to enjoy what he already has, is like a purchaser of a spirited horse which he cannot ride."[5] "Seek that pleasure which is free from the taint of dishonor as a great good, but count that which is without honor as most evil."[6] "See to it that you control all those things by which it is base that the mind should be overcome, such as love of gain, anger, pleasure, grief. This you will do if you consider that to be *gain* by which you procure a better name, and not wealth merely; and if you indulge in such *anger* towards offenders as you would wish others to exhibit towards you when you offend; and if you count it base while you rule your servants to be slaves to *pleasure;* and in *grief*, if you

[1] Nicoc., § 22. [2] Demon., §§ 16, 17. [3] Ibid., § 17 sq.
[4] Demon., § 29. [5] Ibid., § 27. [6] Ibid., § 16.

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observe the calamities of others and recollect that you are mortal."[1]

Next to truthfulness Isocrates would seem to value good learning. "Consider it, he says, far better to have laid up much useful knowledge than great wealth; for the latter may quickly pass away, whilst the former is a possession for all time. Wisdom alone of all our acquistions is immortal. ..... Do not hesitate to make a long journey to those who promise to teach you anything valuable. When merchants make long sea voyages to increase their estates, is it not base that the young should shrink from a land journey for the improvement of their minds?"[2]

The Domestic and Private Life of Isocrates, and his Death and Burial.

Of the domestic character of Isocrates little is known. The insinuations of Plutarch that he was guilty of some sensual indulgence in early life seems not to have much foundation, and is sufficiently contradicted, in the absence of proof, by his subsequent life and writings. His commendations of a life of purity and self-command are abundant and explicit. He did not marry until late in life, and then to a widow, by the name of Plathane, the daughter of the orator Hippias, the youngest of whose three sons, Aphareus, he adopted. This adopted son seems to have profited by the instruction of Isocrates, and, in imitation of him, wrote orations, and was also the author of tragedies, and performed the duties of a son with faithfulness and affection. When Isocrates was called upon unjustly to fit out a trireme, Aphareus was able successfully to defend him.[3]

Perhaps no circumstance of his life is more indicative of his kindly domestic character than his letter, in extreme age, to the Mytilenians, at the request of the children of Aphareus, asking permission for their music teacher and his relatives to return from exile. "The children of Aphareus, my grandchildren, who have been the pupils of Agenor in music, have

[1] Demon., § 21. [2] Ibid., § 19. [3] Antid., § 145.

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requested me to write you a letter asking you, as you have recalled certain others from banishment, that you will extend your clemency to him and his father and brothers. I replied to them that I feared I should seem out of my place and meddlesome if I asked so great a favor from those with whom I had never before had communication or acquaintance. But they were still more importunate. And when they found that I did not yield to their entreaties they showed themselves plainly displeased and grieved. Seeing this, I at last promised to write and send the letter to you."[1]

The meridian of the life of Isocrates would seem to have been almost cloudless. Possessed of a healthy mind and a body that knew little or anything of pain or disease, associated with the men of the highest character and the most elevated position, loved and honored by the most gifted young men of the age, many of whom had been or were his pupils, surrounded by every comfort which an ample fortune could give, untramelled by public or private business, nothing but the varying fortunes of his beloved Athens seemed to give him cause for anxiety or annoyance. Those who from envy and malice put a wrong construction upon what he wrote, and attempted to impugn his motives, he says, "did not move him," so certain was he that his intentions and influence were good.

But as age advanced he became more sensitive to criticism, and more solicitous that his name should descend to posterity as untarnished as he felt his life to have been pure.[3] Still he felt such confidence in his own integrity of purpose, and such assurance that the voice of posterity would sanction it, that he, if indeed he could have in any circumstances, has now no disposition to have recourse to any other than the most high-minded measures for defense. So, after quoting from several of his discourses which had been previously made public, he says: "I see that others, when on trial, at the close of their defense, supplicate and entreat you and bring forward their children and friends in order to influence your feelings.

[1] Epist. to Myt., 8. [2] Panath. [3] See above.

But I suppose that no such thing is suited to one of my age. And besides I should blush for shame if I used any other means of defense than my previous writings, which I have just recited to you. For I am confident that I have spoken in them with such reverent regard and honesty, both with reference to our country and ancestors, but especially in reference to the gods, that if any human affairs committed to their care receive their attention, I suppose no one of these which now concern me will escape their notice. I therefore do not stand in dread of your decisions concerning me, but have the confident belief and hope that my life will come to its close, whenever it shall be best, making this proof that I have lived in past time, until this day, as those should live who reverence the gods and are loved by them."[1]

When Isocrates was in his eighty-fourth year and in the midst of an elaborate discourse in praise of Athens, the almost unbroken tenor of his laborious life was interrupted by an attack of disease with which he struggled for three years. His own account of it and its attendant circumstances can hardly fail of interest to the student of his works. "I wish," he says, "to say a word upon what befell me when I was writing this discourse, which I began at the advanced age specified in the beginning. When it was half written I was attacked by a disease which, although delicacy forbids me to name it,[2] frequently ends the life not only of the old, but also of those in the vigor of life, in three or four days. With this I struggled continually for three years, suffering daily so much, that not only those who were with me, but those who heard about it from them, admired me for my powers of endurance more than for those things which had called forth their praise in former days."[3]

In the following quotation from the same discourse we have the outlines of a picture of the closing labors of the

[1] Antid., § 321, 322.

[2] Coray says: Meint er etwa den Durchfall (Diarrhoë) eine bei den Alten sehr gefährlich Krankheit.

[3] Panath., § 266 sq.

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veteran scholar, surrounded by admiring friends, such as Cicero praised in his treatise on old age. Isocrates says: "When I was thus exhausted by disease and worn with age, some of those who frequented my house, and had often read that part of my discourse that was written, urged and entreated me that I would not leave it half written, nor even incomplete, but that I would devote myself at short intervals [i.e. as my strength would allow] to its completion. They did this not as a mere ceremonious attention to me, but with the highest encomiums of what was written, and saying things which if they had been heard by those who were not familiar with or attached to me, must have seemed to have been the most arrant flattery; and, if I had listened to them, I should have shown myself in the last stages of senile folly. I thus yielded to them; incurring, perhaps, this reproach from some, when I wanted but three years of being an hundred, ... and was so enfeebled that anybody else would not only not apply himself to writing, but would not feel able to listen to a discourse written and read by another." [1]

The battle which crushed the liberties of Greece and made it little more than a dependency upon the king of Macedon, was fought at Chaeronea in Boeotia, and the news was not long in reaching Athens. The consternation that shone in every face and filled every heart, was too much for the patriot of almost a hundred years to endure. He had labored long with his fellow-citizens, admonished, entreated, advised them, with the hope that something of the vigor and honesty of the age of Solon and his successors might again return. He had endeavored to kindle in the breast of Philip a glow of the nobility that he hoped was latent in his blood that had flowed down to him from a Greek fountain, and sentiments of a noble and generous ambition to be, by the aid of the united Greeks, the conqueror of the Persian despot. But all had failed. His life-work was blurred; he might almost, at the moment, feel that it was obliterated, and the page on which it was inscribed a blot. From this time he took no

[1] Panath., § 268 sq.

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food, and in three or four days was gathered to his fathers, repeating the first line of three of the dramas of Euripides:

> *Δαναὸς ὁ πεντήκοντα θυγατέρων πατὴρ —*
> *Πέλοψ ὁ Ταντάλειος εἰς Πίσαν μολὼν —*
> *Σιδώνιον ποτ' ἄστυ Κάδμος ἐκλιπών.*[1]

Isocrates was buried, in the midst of his kindred, near the Cynosarges, on a mound to the left, in the suburbs of Athens, where the school of the Cynics was held, and where were temples of Hercules, and other worthies. Not only his father and mother and aunt, and brother Theodorus, and a cousin of Isocrates, but his wife, his adopted son Aphareus, with his children, were clustered about him. Six mural tablets marked their graves. Over that of Isocrates was a column thirty cubits high, surmounted by a syren of the stature of seven feet, symbolical of the charms of his eloquence. Not far off stood a tablet on which were delineated poets and his teachers, among whom was Gorgias, with Isocrates standing near, looking upon an astronomical globe.

In the vestibule of the temple at Eleusis, too, there is a brazen statue erected to him by Timotheus the son of Conon, and pupil and life-long friend of Isocrates.[2] His step-son Aphareus, also, could not leave him whom he had so loved and honored in life, without a public token of his regard. He placed upon a column in the temple of Jupiter Olympus a brazen statue in his honor.[3]

[1] Plutarch's Vita, p. xxvii. and Note (Auger's edition). By these lines Wolf says: "Isocrates wished to indicate that Greece was now subjected to its fourth enslavement to a barbarian dominion. The Macedonians, as appears from Demosthenes, were included among barbarians, although Philip was considered as an Aegean and descendant of Hercules."

[2] The inscription was as follows:

> *Τιμόθεος φιλίας τε χάριν ξενίην τε προτιμῶν,*
> *Ἰσοκράτους εἰκῶ τήν δε ἀνέθηκε θεαῖς.*
> *Λεοχάρους ἔργον.* — Plutarch's Isoc., p. xxx.

[3] The following was the inscription upon it:

> *Ἰσοκράτους Ἀφαρεὺς πατρὸς εἰκόνα τήνδε ἀνέθηκε*
> *Ζηνὶ, θεούς τε σέβων καὶ γονέων ἀρετήν.*

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