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XENOPHON
MEMORABILIA
OECONOMICUS
SYMPOSIUM
APOLOGY



Translated by
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XENOPHON

MEMORABILIA

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TRANSLATED BY

E. MARSHALL
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XENOPHON

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INTRODUCTION

Note on the Titles : (a) The Memorabilia.

THE title by which this work is familiarly known to us, dates only from 1569, when Johann Lenklau prefixed it to the Latin version that accompanied his great edition of Xenophon's works. Before that time scholars had commonly used the Greek title *Apomnemoneumata*, i.e. *Memoirs*, or the awkward description *De factis et dictis Socratis memoratu dignis*. The correct Latin equivalent of the Greek name is *Commentarii*, which, in fact, occurs in the description of the book given by Aulus Gellius (XIV. iii.), viz. *libri quos dictorum et factorum Socratis commentarios composuit (Xenophon)*.

The Greek title itself is not altogether satisfactory ; for in reality the *Memorabilia* consists of four separate parts, which were certainly not all composed at the same time, and to the first of these parts the title does not apply.

(b) The Oeconomicus.

"In many respects," writes Cicero in a well-known passage of the *de Senectute*, "Xenophon's works are very useful. How eloquently he praises agriculture in his book entitled *Oeconomicus*, which deals with the care of one's property." Philodemus and Galen refer to the book as the *Oeconomica*. The ancients certainly did not suppose that the title meant the *Economist* or *Householder*, but understood it to denote

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exactly what Cicero's words suggest—a *Discourse on Estate Management*. The same holds good *mutatis mutandis* of the titles *Hipparchicus* and *Cynegeticus*.

I

The first part of the *Memorabilia*, which is confined to the first two chapters of the First Book,¹ is a Defence of Socrates, who had been tried and condemned to death on a charge of "impiety," in the spring of 399 B.C. At the time of the trial Xenophon was absent in Asia. No speech delivered by any one of the three prosecutors—Anytus, Meletus, and Lycon—had been published, and Xenophon in consequence is only able to give the gist, not the exact form, of the indictment (I. i. 1), which had been drawn by Meletus. His reply to this indictment extends to the eighth section of the second chapter.

At this point a surprise is in store for the reader. For in the next sentence (I. ii. 9) Xenophon suddenly refers to "the prosecutor" in the singular, and proceeds to combat a series of accusations that he had brought. This "prosecutor" had charged against Socrates: (1) that he encouraged his companions to despise the laws (ii. 9); (2) that Critias and Alcibiades, who had done great evil to the state, were his associates (ii. 12); (3) that he taught young men to despise their fathers and their other relations, and to be false to their friends (ii. 49); (4) that he encouraged unscrupulous conduct and an anti-democratic spirit by the use he made of the poets (ii. 56).

Xenophon at first sight appears to be replying here

¹ The absurd division into books and chapters is, of course, not due to Xenophon himself.

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to a speech actually delivered for the prosecution. But, as we have just seen, this cannot be the case. To whom, then, and to what is he replying? The correct solution of this problem was first given by Cobet, and it has been supported by a series of indisputable proofs by several subsequent scholars. The man Socrates had died in 399 B.C., and had left nothing written. But his ardent and gifted disciples—especially Antisthenes, a fanatical admirer, and a little later Plato—very soon began to publish works about Socrates, especially dialogues in which Socrates appeared as the chief interlocutor. One of these earlier Socratic works is, of course, the *Apology* of Plato. And so it came about that a literary Socrates grew into being—a figure that retained much, doubtless, of the historical man, but was not identical with him, and might be variously represented by the different authors, and even by the same author in different works.

This cult of Socrates actually provoked opposition. For shortly after the year 393 B.C. a well-known “sophist” named Polycrates published an attack on his memory, throwing his attack into the form of an imaginary speech delivered by one of the three prosecutors, Anytus, at the trial. In after ages a belief not unnaturally grew up that Anytus had actually employed this man, Polycrates, to write his speech for the prosecution. In reality the “Accusation of Socrates” written by Polycrates was nothing more than a literary exercise, based no doubt on reminiscences of the trial, but strongly coloured by the writer’s own views. Xenophon was now living in exile at Scillus near Olympia; and there he must have read the work of Polycrates. He resolved to compose a reply, traversing the accusation

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step by step.¹ The "prosecutor" then, is Polycrates, or rather Polycrates masquerading as Anytus.

Xenophon's *Defence* of Socrates, therefore (occupying Book I. i. and ii.), has a double purpose. It is intended, first, to be an answer to the actual indictment, so far as Xenophon was aware of its terms; and, secondly, to refute the attack of Polycrates on the memory of the martyred Socrates. As for the substance of the *Defence*, we note that although Plato's *Apology* was certainly written already, Xenophon has not drawn upon it. In fact, throughout these two chapters there are no trustworthy indications that he has laid any of Plato's published work under contribution. At I. ii. 20, indeed, Xenophon quotes in support of his arguments two passages from the poets that are in the *Meno* and the *Protagoras* of Plato, but it would be absurd to suppose that he went to Plato for two commonplace passages that would be familiar to every educated Athenian. In one passage (I. ii. 10) Xenophon expresses an opinion that is known to have been maintained by Antisthenes; in another (I. ii. 19) he combats that Cynic's doctrine of the permanence of Virtue. In neither place is he professing to report the views of Socrates; and even if it is safe to conclude from these two instances that he had consulted the works of Antisthenes, there is, so far as can be ascertained, no trace in the *Defence* that he borrowed such knowledge as he shows of Socrates from Antisthenes. The most likely inference from these negative facts is that

¹ In after ages another rejoinder was written to Polycrates by Libanius (fourth century A.D.), from whose *Defence* a good deal more can be learned about the lost *Accusation* of Polycrates.

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he incorporated only such knowledge of Socrates as he had gained himself by intercourse with the Master. This knowledge, to be sure, is superficial, and does not point to a close intimacy. On the other hand, since Xenophon is concerned only to rebut the specific charges brought by the prosecutors and by Polycrates, we are scarcely entitled to assume that he has told us *all* that he really knew about Socrates in these two chapters.

II

The Socratic literature rapidly grew in bulk. Antisthenes, who developed the Cynic system out of the teaching of Socrates, was probably the first to write "Socratic" dialogues. Plato, a much younger man, soon entered the field in sharp opposition to the Cynic. And others tried their hand. It seems that somewhere about the year 385 B.C., Xenophon, who had perhaps now read what Plato had so far published, and had certainly pondered on the works of Antisthenes and assimilated much of his doctrine, decided to compose a series of memoirs and dialogues as illustrations of his "Defence of Socrates." These illustrations cover the remainder of the First (I. iii. onwards) and the whole of the Second Book of the *Memorabilia*. "I propose to show," he says (I. iii. 1), "how Socrates helped his companions both by his deeds and his words: and, in order to do so, I shall relate all that I remember about them."

Though he makes no reference here to his earlier work, he follows its arrangement closely. He first gives details to prove that Socrates accepted the gods of the state (I. iii. 1-4). Then he insists on the moral tendency of the conduct and teachings of Socrates

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(5-15); and here he recalls an outspoken conversation between the Master and himself about love. It is the only conversation in the collection in which Xenophon himself takes part. Having proceeded thus far, he suddenly modifies his plan; and writes a new and controversial introduction to a complete series of dialogues, dealing again with the two topics already handled—the piety and the morality of Socrates—before proceeding to illustrate his third topic. He says no more about the *actions* of Socrates; and the reason presumably is, that he was conscious that he could not add anything new to what he had already said in the *Defence*, little as that was. At any rate, it is noteworthy that, having undertaken to tell all that he remembers about the helpful deeds of Socrates, he has after all told us so very little, but has in the main confined himself to the conversations.

It will be convenient to have a list of the ensuing topics side by side with the corresponding passages of the *Defence*:

1. I. iv., *On Piety*: I. i. 2-19.
2. I. v.-vi. 10, *On Self-discipline*: I. ii. 1-5.
3. I. vi. 11-14, *On Taking Fees*: I. ii. 5-8.
4. I. vi. 15-II. 1., *On Obedience to the Laws and Service to the State*: I. ii. 9-48.
5. II. ii., *On The Duty of Children to Parents*: I. ii. 49-50.
6. II. iii., *On The Relations between Brothers*: I. ii. 51.
7. II. iv.-vii., *On The Treatment of Friends and Relations*: I. ii. 52-55.
8. II. viii.-x., *On Socrates as Philanthropist*: I. ii. 56-61.

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Xenophon's statement that he himself "heard" these conversations is a mere literary device. Some of them may quite possibly be based on actual recollection. But others are almost certainly pure invention. Who could suppose, for instance, that Socrates lectured his son on his duty to his mother (II. ii.), or urged Chaerecrates to make up a quarrel with his brother (II. iii.), while a third person, Xenophon, stood by silent, storing up all that good advice in a capacious memory? The supposition of Mr. Dakyns that such conversations were repeated to Xenophon by Lamprocles, Chaerecrates and others is very unlikely, unless we could imagine that Xenophon went about Athens gathering reports of Socrates' conversations before he left for Asia, and when as yet he had no notion that he would ever come to write Socratic memoirs. The opening conversation of the collection, that on Piety (I. iv.), probably owes much to the study of Antisthenes. The chapters on the education of the Ruler (II. i.) and on the proper relations between parents and children, brothers, relatives and friends, contain much that we associate with Xenophon himself rather than with Socrates; and it is difficult to imagine Socrates declaiming to Aristippus a long passage from a work of Prodicus which was often part of its author's own programmes (II. i. 21).

Does Xenophon owe anything to Plato in this part of the *Memorabilia*? The question hardly admits of a confident answer. The passage about the "Kingly Art" and "Happiness" in II. i. 17 bears a close resemblance to a sentence in the *Euthydemus* of Plato (p. 291 b). But we know that the "Kingly Art" was a commonplace with Antisthenes, as may be seen from some words put

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into his mouth in Xenophon's *Banquet* (iv. 6). Again, the opening words of I. vi. 14 strongly suggest a passage in Plato's *Lysis* (p. 211 d). But a similar sentiment is attributed to Socrates by Epictetus (III. v. 14) and reappears in Dio Chrysostom (III. 128), and as both these authors borrow largely from Cynic sources, the common source of all four passages may possibly be Antisthenes again, though it certainly looks as if Xenophon here had borrowed from Plato, so close is the correspondence.

However that may be, we have here a series of imaginary conversations to which Xenophon's study of the Socratic literature has contributed not a little. But no doubt many of his reflections are really based on his recollection of Socrates himself. There is no proof in them, however, that Xenophon had really been one of his intimate companions, and indeed he nowhere makes any such claim. These remarks apply equally to the Collections which make up the Third and the Fourth Books.

III

The Third Book of the *Memorabilia*, which consists of miscellaneous dialogues loosely strung together, and an appendix of aphorisms, clearly forms yet another separate work. The first seven chapters are linked together by a common subject—the civil and military service of the state. But at the eighth chapter the writer passes abruptly to the relation of a dialectical encounter between Socrates and Aristippus the Cyrenaic, on the identity of the Beautiful and the Useful, and appends to it a discourse of Socrates on the same theme. Next we come on a series of definitions.

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Then follow other conversations on detached topics. The aphorisms that fill the last two chapters are concerned with very small things: and they are quite in the Cynic manner. The talk between Socrates and the younger Pericles (c. v.) may really have occurred in the year 411 B.C.; but the ambitions of Thebes are alluded to in a manner that suggests the period of the Theban Supremacy, the years following the battle of Leuctra (fought in 371 B.C.), as the time of composition, and there is a suspiciously Xenophontine ring in the allusions of Pericles to the excellence of the Spartan institutions (v. 15-16).

The fact is, the whole of the subjects dealt with in the first seven chapters of this Third Book are just those in which Xenophon, the old campaigner and worshipper of efficiency, took a special interest. Ten passages in the conversations on the duties and qualifications of commanders are repeated from the *Cyropaedia*; and here and there the author of the *Anabasis* and the *Hipparchicus* reveals himself pretty clearly.

Nevertheless, the spirit of these dialogues, with their insistence on Knowledge as the only sure basis of efficiency, is genuinely Socratic. Nor does the rest of the Third Book, from c. viii. onwards, contain anything inconsistent with the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues. Thus the cross-examination of the artists in the tenth chapter is entirely in keeping with the Platonic Socrates, whose habit it is to appose all sorts and conditions of men respecting their special work. The amusing interview with Theodoté, the courtesan, is surprising in its context. The intention of it, apparently, is to show Socrates in a lighter vein, in the mood that we associate with the persiflage of a *Banquet*. The

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definitions in the ninth chapter are not alien to Socrates; but it may be that Xenophon drew them from the works of Antisthenes, whose opinions are known to have coincided with those expressed in them.

We may fairly accept as historical the explicit declaration in the *Defence* (I. ii. 4) that Socrates attached importance to physical culture. In the *Dialogues* of Plato, so far as I recollect, he does not display much real interest in the physical exercises of the wrestling-ground and the gymnasium; at any rate his chief interest is clearly in other matters when he enters those places. But in the *Republic* Plato on his part fully recognizes the value of "gymnastic" in education, and indeed builds up in his own way a complete theory of the subject. The germs of this theory may very well have come from Socrates himself. If that is true, then just as Plato develops the opinions of Socrates in his way, so Xenophon in the twelfth chapter of this book colours the same opinions with notions of his own, drawn from his experience in Asia, his admiration of Spartan institutions, and very likely, from his study of Antisthenes.

Lastly, what are we to say of the dispute with Aristippus about the Good and the Beautiful (c. viii.)? The truth of the account that Xenophon gives of Socrates' views on this matter must clearly be rejected if we suppose that Plato derived from Socrates himself the theory of eternal, unchanging Ideas or Forms of Goodness and Beauty; for, according to the Socrates of Xenophon nothing is good, beautiful or useful in *itself*, but only in relation to *something*. But it is, to say the least, exceedingly doubtful whether Socrates is responsible for

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the "Theory of Forms or Ideas," which makes no appearance in the early Dialogues of Plato. The doctrine of the Xenophontine Socrates is that all things Good and Beautiful must contribute to the advantage or enjoyment of man: nothing is Good but what is Useful for the particular purpose for which it is intended. The very same doctrine is propounded by Socrates in the *Greater Hippias* (rightly or wrongly attributed to Plato), but on examination is rejected by him as untenable. But Plato in the *Gorgias* makes Socrates declare that a thing is Beautiful because it is pleasant or useful or both; and the doctrine is unchallenged. Lastly, there is a passage of similar import in the *First Alcibiades*. If the *Greater Hippias* was really written by Plato, it must be later in date than the *Gorgias*, but earlier than the Third Book of the *Memorabilia*; and Xenophon, assuming that he had read it, has tacitly implied that the views of Socrates are not correctly represented there. Whence did he derive his knowledge? If not from the *Gorgias*, it is very significant that his exposition agrees with what Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates in that Dialogue.

IV

We pass now to the Fourth Book. In the noble and impassioned peroration with which this book concludes, the virtues of Socrates are summed up. Socrates was pious, just, self-controlled and wise: he was masterly in exposition and definition, in refuting error and exhorting to goodness. This concluding sentence is clearly a summary of the contents of this Fourth Book in the form in which it has come down to us; and it is

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in itself a sufficient refutation of the widely held opinion that large portions of the Fourth Book are spurious. The peroration applies only to this last book ; at any rate it contains no reference to many of the topics that have been dealt with in the preceding portions of the collection, whereas it entirely covers the topics of the last. The natural inference is that the Fourth Book is yet another independent work.

This inference gains strong support from the actual contents of the book. The subject throughout is Education. Many topics already treated recur without any indication given that they have already been discussed. The style too differs to some extent from that of the preceding parts, in that it is somewhat fuller and more elaborate. The matter is arranged in an orderly fashion, in striking contrast with the desultory miscellany that makes up the latter part of the preceding book. Most of the conversations (c. ii., iii., v., vi.) are carried on with Euthydemus, a handsome, bookish and self-confident young man, eager to distinguish himself "in speech and action." The first of these conversations with the youth shows how Socrates convinced young men like Euthydemus that their essential need was to get real education. Next we are introduced to something like a complete system of Socratic education. The first object of Socrates was to make his followers "prudent," *i. e.* to train the character. Training in power to "speak and act" came after training of character, and it turns out presently that Socrates put speech and action in the inverse order of importance ; and, moreover, held that sound action could come only from one who was master of himself. Competence in "speech" depended on power to reason and to define correctly.

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We have seen that Euthydemus hoped to excel in "speech and action." Socrates brings him to see that the right way to attain the goal of his ambition is first to learn Prudence, then to realize what is the only sure foundation of right action, and lastly to study the laws of sound reasoning.

We should certainly have expected that throughout the book Socrates would have been represented as addressing himself to Euthydemus, and to none other. But this is, in fact, not the case. The fourth chapter contains an argument on Justice. If we regard the subject with which it deals, it is quite in place where it stands; but it is strange to find the series of hortatory discourses interrupted by an argument addressed to Hippias, the "sophist," on the identity of Law and Justice. Moreover, in the opening sentence of the seventh chapter Xenophon apparently disregards this argument with Hippias; and yet it is clear from the wording of the peroration, which is in exact correspondence with the topics of the discourses, that he had, when he wrote it, dealt with the topic of Justice.

All the conditions will be satisfied if we suppose that when he had written the fourth chapter down to the point where he was to relate what Socrates *said* about Justice by means of a dialogue (iv. 5), he incorporated this argument between Socrates and Hippias, which he had composed at some previous time, instead of writing a new dialogue in conformity with the others.

The talk with Hippias is in itself remarkable. For it represents Socrates as identifying Law and Justice. We have read in the *Defence* of Socrates (I. ii. 9) that Polycrates charged him with "despising the established laws," and we find that Xenophon