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理 想 国

Republic

Jofia Llewellyn Davies
David James Vaughan

译



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BOOK ONE

I went yesterday to the Piraeus with Glaucon the son of Ariston, to offer up prayer to the goddess, and also from a wish to see how the festival,¹ then to be held for the first time, would be celebrated. I was very much pleased with the native Athenian procession; though that of the Thracians appeared to be no less brilliant. We had finished our prayers, and satisfied our curiosity, and were returning to the city, when Polemarchus the son of Cephalus caught sight of us at a distance, as we were on our way towards home, and told his servant to run and bid us wait for him. The servant came behind me, took hold of my cloak, and said, 'Polemarchus bids you wait.' I turned round and asked him where his master was. 'There he is,' he replied, 'coming on behind: pray wait for him.' 'We will wait,' answered Glaucon. Soon afterwards Polemarchus came up, with Adeimantus the brother of Glaucon, and Niceratus the son of Nicias, and a few other persons, apparently coming away from the procession.

Polemarchus instantly began: Socrates, if I am not deceived, you are taking your departure for the city.

You are not wrong in your conjecture, I replied.

Well, do you see what a large body we are?

Certainly I do.

Then either prove yourselves the stronger party, or else stay where you are.

No, I replied; there is still an alternative: suppose we persuade you that you ought to let us go.

Could you possibly persuade us, if we refused to listen?

Certainly not, replied Glaucon.

Make up your minds then that we shall refuse to listen.

Here Adeimantus interposed, and said, Are you not aware that towards evening there will be a torch-race on horseback in honour of the goddess?

On horseback! I exclaimed: that is a novelty. Will they carry

torches, and pass them on to one another, while the horses are racing? or how do you mean?

As you say, replied Polemarchus: besides, there will be a night-festival, which it will be worth while to look at. We will rise after dinner, and go out to see this festival; and there we shall meet with many of our young men, with whom we can converse. Therefore stay, and do not refuse us.

Upon this Glaucon said, It seems we shall have to stay.

Well, said I, if you like, let us do so.

We went therefore home with Polemarchus, and found there his brothers Lysias and Euthydemus, and, along with them, Thrasymachus of Chalcedon, and Charmantides the Paeanian, and Cleitophon the son of Aristonymus. Polemarchus's father, Cephalus, was also in the house. I thought him looking very much aged; for it was long since I had seen him. He was sitting upon a cushioned chair, with a garland upon his head, as he happened to have been sacrificing in the court. We found seats placed round him, so we sat down there by his side. The moment Cephalus saw me, he greeted me, and said, It is seldom indeed, Socrates, that you pay us a visit at the Piraeus: you ought to come oftener. If I were still strong enough to walk with ease to the city, there would be no occasion for your coming here, because we should go to you. But as it is, you ought to come here more frequently. For I assure you that I find the decay of the mere bodily pleasures accompanied by a proportionate growth in my appetite for philosophical conversation and in the pleasure I derive from it. Therefore do not refuse my request, but let these young men have the benefit of your society, and come often to see us as thoroughly intimate friends.

To tell you the truth, Cephalus, I replied, I delight in conversing with very old persons. For as they have gone before us on the road over which perhaps we also shall have to travel, I think we ought to try to learn from them what the nature of that road is - whether it be rough and difficult, or smooth and easy. And now that you have arrived at that period of life, which poets call 'the threshold of Age,' there is no one whose opinion I would more gladly ask. Is life painful at that age, or what report do you make of it?

I will certainly tell you, Socrates, what my own experience of it is. I and a few other people of my own age are in the habit of frequently meeting together, true to the old proverb. On these occasions, most

of us give way to lamentations, and regret the pleasures of youth, and call up the memory of amours and drinking parties and banquets and similar proceedings. They are grievously discontented at the loss of what they consider great privileges, and describe themselves as living well in those days, whereas now, by their own account, they cannot be said to live at all. Some also complain of the manner in which their relations insult their infirmities, and make this a ground for reproaching old age with the many miseries it occasions them. But in my opinion, Socrates, these persons miss the true cause of their unhappiness. For if old age were the cause, the same discomforts would have been also felt by me, as an old man, and by every other person that has reached that period of life. But, as it is, I have before now met with several old men who expressed themselves quite in a different manner, and in particular I may mention Sophocles the poet, who was once asked in my presence, 'How do you feel about love, Sophocles? Are you still capable of it?' to which he replied, 'Hush! if you please: to my great delight I have escaped from it, and feel as if I had escaped from a frantic and savage master.' I thought then, as I do now, that he spoke wisely. For unquestionably old age brings us profound repose and freedom from this and other passions. When the appetites have abated, and their force is diminished, the description of Sophocles is perfectly realised. It is like being delivered from a multitude of furious masters. But the complaints on this score, as well as the troubles with relatives, may all be referred to one cause, and that is, not the age, Socrates, but the character, of the men. If they possess well-regulated minds and easy tempers, old age itself is no intolerable burden: if they are differently constituted, why in that case, Socrates, they find even youth as irksome to them as old age.

I admired these remarks of Cephalus, and wishing him to go on talking, I endeavoured to draw him out by saying: I fancy, Cephalus, that people do not generally acquiesce in these views of yours, because they think that it is not your character, but your great wealth, that enables you to bear with old age. For the rich, it is said, have many consolations.

True, he said, they will not believe me: and they are partly right, though not so right as they suppose. There is great truth in the reply of Themistocles to the Seriphian who tauntingly told him, that his reputation was due not to himself, but to his country - 'I should not have become famous, if I had been a native of Seriphus; neither

would you, if you had been an Athenian.' And to those who, not being rich, are impatient under old age, it may be said with equal justice that while on the one hand, a good man cannot be altogether cheerful under old age and poverty combined, so on the other, no wealth can ever make a bad man at peace with himself.

But has your property, Cephalus, been chiefly inherited or acquired?

Have I acquired it, do you say, Socrates? Why, in the conduct of money matters, I stand midway between my grandfather and my father. My grandfather, whose name I bear, inherited nearly as much property as I now possess, and increased it till it was many times as large; while my father Lysanias brought it down even below what it now is. For my part, I shall be content to leave it to these my sons not less, but if anything rather larger, than it was when it came into my hands.

I asked the question, I said, because you seemed to me to be not very fond of money: which is generally the case with those who have not made it themselves; whereas those who have made it, are twice as much attached to it as other people. For just as poets love their own works, and fathers their own children, in the same way those who have created a fortune value their money, not merely for its uses, like other persons, but because it is their own production. This makes them moreover disagreeable companions, because they will praise nothing but riches.

It is true, he replied.

Indeed it is, said I. But let me ask you one more question. What do you think is the greatest advantage that you have derived from being wealthy?

If I mention it, he replied, I shall perhaps get few persons to agree with me. Be assured, Socrates, that when a man is nearly persuaded that he is going to die, he feels alarmed and concerned about things which never affected him before. Till then he has laughed at those stories about the departed, which tell us that he who has done wrong here must suffer for it in the other world; but now his mind is tormented with a fear that these stories may possibly be true. And either owing to the infirmity of old age, or because he is now nearer to the confines of the future state, he has a clearer insight into those mysteries. However that may be, he becomes full of misgiving and apprehension, and sets himself to the task of calculating and reflecting

whether he has done any wrong to any one. Hereupon, if he finds his life full of unjust deeds, he is apt to start out of sleep in terror, as children do, and he lives haunted by gloomy anticipations. But if his conscience reproaches him with no injustice, he enjoys the abiding presence of sweet Hope, that 'kind nurse of old age,' as Pindar calls it. For indeed, Socrates, those are beautiful words of his, in which he says of the man who has lived a just and holy life, 'Sweet Hope is his companion, cheering his heart, the nurse of age - Hope, which, more than aught else, steers the capricious will of mortal men.'² There is really a wonderful truth in this description. And it is this consideration, as I hold, that makes riches chiefly valuable, I do not say to every body, but at any rate to the good. For they contribute greatly to our preservation from even unintentional deceit or falsehood, and from that alarm which would attend our departure to the other world, if we owed any sacrifices to a god, or any money to a man. They have also many other uses. But after weighing them all separately, Socrates, I am inclined to consider this service as anything but the least important which riches can render to a wise and sensible man.

You have spoken admirably, Cephalus. But what are we to understand by that very quality, justice, to which you refer? Are we to define it as neither more nor less than veracity and restitution of what one man has received from another, or is it possible for actions of this very nature to be sometimes just and sometimes unjust? For example, every one, I suppose, would admit that if a man, while in the possession of his senses, were to place dangerous weapons in the hands of a friend, and afterwards in a fit of madness to demand them back, such a deposit ought not to be restored, and that his friend would not be a just man if he either returned the weapons, or consented to tell the whole truth to one so circumstanced.

You are right, he replied.

Then it is no true definition of justice to say that it consists in speaking the truth and restoring what one has received.

Nay but it is, Socrates, said Polemarchus, interposing, at least if we are at all to believe Simonides.

Very well, said Cephalus, I will just leave the discussion to you. It is time for me to attend to the sacrifices.

Then Polemarchus inherits your share in it, does he not? I asked.

Certainly, he replied, with a smile; and immediately withdrew to the sacrifices.

Answer me then, I proceeded, you that are the heir to the discussion; What do you maintain to be the correct account of justice, as given by Simonides?

That to restore to each man what is his due, is just. To me it seems that Simonides is right in giving this account of the matter.

Well, certainly it is not an easy matter to disbelieve Simonides, for he is a wise and inspired man. But what he means by his words, you, Polemarchus, may perhaps understand, though I do not. It is clear that he does not mean what we were saying just now, namely that property given by one person in trust to another is to be returned to the donor, if he asks for it in a state of insanity. And yet I conclude that property given in trust is due to the truster. Is it not?

Yes, it is.

But when the person who asks for it is not in his senses, it must not be returned on any account, must it?

True, it must not.

Then it would seem that Simonides means something different from this, when he says that it is just to restore what is due.

Most certainly he does, he replied, for he declares that the debt of friend to friend is to do good to one another, and not harm.

I understand: the person who returns money to a depositor does not restore what is due, if the repayment on the one side, and the receipt on the other, prove to be injurious, and if the two parties are friends. Is not this, according to you, the meaning of Simonides?

Certainly it is.

Well: must we restore to our enemies whatever happens to be due to them?

Yes, no doubt – what is due to them: and the debt of enemy to enemy is, I imagine, harm; because harm is at the same time appropriate to such a relation.

So then it would seem that Simonides, after the manner of poets, employed a riddle to describe the nature of justice; for apparently he thought that justice consisted in rendering to each man that which is appropriate to him, which he called his due. But here let me entreat you to give me your opinion. Suppose that consequently some one had asked him the following question: 'That being the case, Simonides, what due and appropriate thing is rendered by the art called medicine, and what are the recipients?' What answer do you think he would have returned us?

Obviously he would have said that bodies are the recipients, and drugs, meats, and drinks the things rendered.

And what due and appropriate thing is rendered by the art called cookery, and what are the recipients?

Seasoning is the thing rendered; dishes are the recipients.

Good: then what is the thing rendered by the art that we are to call justice, and who are the recipients?

If we are to be at all guided by our previous statements, Socrates, assistance and harm are the things rendered, friends and enemies the recipients.

Then by justice Simonides means doing good to our friends, and harm to our enemies, does he?

I think so.

Now, in cases of illness, who is best able to do good to friends and harm to enemies, with reference to health and disease?

A physician.

And, on a voyage, who is best able to do good to friends and harm to enemies, with reference to the perils of the sea?

A pilot.

Well: in what transaction, and with reference to what object, is the just man best able to help his friends and injure his enemies?

In the transactions of war, I imagine – as the ally of the former, and the antagonist of the latter.

Good. You will grant, my dear Polemarchus, that a physician is useless to persons in sound health.

Certainly.

And a pilot to persons on shore.

Yes.

Is the just man, also, useless to those who are not at war?

I do not quite think that.

Then justice is useful in time of peace too, is it?

It is.

And so is agriculture, is it not?

Yes.

That is to say, as a means of acquiring the fruits of the earth.

Yes.

And further, the shoemaker's art is also useful, is it not?

Yes.

As a means of acquiring shoes, I suppose you will say.

Certainly.

Well then, of what does justice, according to you, promote the use or acquisition in time of peace?

Of covenants, Socrates.

And by covenants do you understand co-partnerships, or something different?

Co-partnerships, certainly.

Then is it the just man, or the skilful draught-player, that makes a good and useful partner in playing draughts?

The draught-player.

Well, in bricklaying and stonemasonry is the just man a more useful and a better partner than the regular builder?

By no means.

Well then, in what partnership is the just man superior to the harp-player, in the sense in which the harp-player is a better partner than the just man in playing music?

In a money-partnership, I think.

Excepting perhaps, Polemarchus, when the object is to lay out money; as when a horse is to be bought or sold by the partners, in which case, I imagine, the horse-dealer is better. Is he not?

Apparently he is.

And again, when a ship is to be bought or sold, the ship-wright or pilot is better.

It would seem so.

That being the case, when does the opportunity arrive for that joint use of silver or gold, in which the just man is more useful than any one else?

When you want to place your money in trust and have it safe, Socrates.

That is to say, when it is to be laid by, and not to be put to any use?

Just so.

So that justice can only be usefully applied to money when the money is useless?

It looks like it.

In the same way, when you want to keep a pruning-hook, justice is useful whether you be in partnership or not; but when you want to use it, justice gives place to the art of the vinedresser?

Apparently.

Do you also maintain that when you want to keep a shield or a lyre

without using them, justice is useful; but when you want to use them, you require the art of the soldier or of the musician?

I must.

And so of everything else: justice is useless when a thing is in use, but useful when it is out of use?

So it would seem.

Then, my friend, justice cannot be a very valuable thing if it is only useful as applied to things useless. But let us continue the inquiry thus. Is not the man who is most expert in dealing blows in an encounter, whether pugilistic or otherwise, also most expert in parrying blows?

Certainly.

Is it not also true that whoever is expert in repelling a disease, and evading its attack, is also extremely expert in producing it in others?

I think so.

And undoubtedly a man is well able to guard an army, when he has also a talent for stealing the enemy's plans and all his other operations.

Certainly.

That is to say, a man can guard expertly whatever he can steal expertly.

So it would seem.

Hence, if the just man is expert in guarding money, he is also expert in stealing it.

I confess the argument points that way.

Then, to all appearance, it turns out that the just man is a kind of thief, a doctrine which you have probably learnt from Homer, with whom Autolycus, the maternal grandfather of Odysseus, is a favourite, because, as the poet says, he outdid all men in thievishness and perjury. Justice therefore, according to you, Homer, and Simonides, appears to be a kind of art of stealing, whose object, however, is to help one's friends and injure one's enemies. Was not this your meaning?

Most certainly it was not, he replied, but I no longer know what I did mean. However, it is still my opinion that it is justice to help one's friends, and hurt one's enemies.

Should you describe a man's friends as those who *seem* to him to be, or those who really are, honest men, though they may not seem so? And do you define a man's enemies on the same principle?

I should certainly expect a man to love all whom he thinks honest, and hate all whom he thinks wicked.

But do not people make mistakes in this matter, and fancy many persons to be honest who are not really honest, and many wicked who are not really wicked?

They do.

Then to such persons the good are enemies, and the bad are friends, are they not?

Certainly they are.

And, notwithstanding this, it is just for such persons at such times to help the wicked and to injure the good.

Apparently it is.

Yet surely the good are just, and injustice is foreign to their nature.

True.

Then, according to your doctrine, it is just to do evil to those who commit no injustice.

Heaven forbid it, Socrates: for that looks like a wicked doctrine.

Then it is just, said I, to injure the unjust and to assist the just.

That is evidently a better theory than the former.

In that case, Polemarchus, the result will be that, in those numerous instances in which people have thoroughly mistaken their men, it is just for these mistaken persons to injure their friends, because in their eyes they are wicked; and to help their enemies, because they are good. And thus our statement will be in direct opposition to the meaning which we assigned to Simonides.

That consequence certainly follows, he replied. But let us change our positions; for very probably our definition of friend and enemy was incorrect.

What was our definition, Polemarchus?

That a friend is one who seems to be an honest man.

And what is to be our new definition?

That a friend is one who not only seems to be, but really is, an honest man; whereas the man who seems to be, but is not honest, is not really a friend, but only seems one. And I define an enemy on the same principle. Then, by this way of speaking, the good man will in all likelihood be a friend, and the wicked an enemy.

Yes.

Then you would have us attach to the idea of justice more than we at first included in it, when we called it just to do good to our friend and evil to our enemy. We are now, if I understand you, to make an addition to this, and render it thus -- it is just to do good to

our friend if he is a good man, and to hurt our enemy if he is a bad man.

Precisely so, he replied; I think that this would be a right statement. Now is it the act of a just man, I asked, to hurt anybody?

Certainly it is, he replied; that is to say, it is his duty to hurt those who are both wicked and enemies of his.

Are horses made better or worse by being hurt?

Worse.

Worse with reference to the excellence of dogs, or that of horses?

That of horses.

Are dogs in the same way made worse by being hurt, with reference to the excellence of dogs and not of horses?

Unquestionably they are.

And must we not on the same principle assert, my friend, that men, by being hurt, are lowered in the scale of human excellence?

Indeed we must.

But is not justice a human excellence?

Undoubtedly it is.

And therefore, my friend, those men who are hurt must needs be rendered less just.

So it would seem.

Can musicians, by the art of music, make men unmusical?

They cannot.

Can riding-masters, by the art of riding, make men bad riders?

No.

But if so, can the just by justice make men unjust? In short, can the good by goodness make men bad?

No, it is impossible.

True; for, if I am not mistaken, it is the property, not of warmth, but of its opposite, to make things cold.

Yes.

And it is the property not of drought, but of its opposite, to make things wet.

Certainly.

Then it is the property not of good, but of its opposite, to hurt.

Apparently it is.

Well, is the just man good?

Certainly he is.

Then, Polemarchus, it is the property, not of the just man, but of

his opposite, the unjust man, to hurt either friend or any other creature.

You seem to me to be perfectly right, Socrates.

Hence if any one asserts that it is just to render to every man his due, and if he understands by this that what is due on the part of the just man is injury to his enemies and assistance to his friends, the assertion is that of an unwise man. For the doctrine is untrue, because we have discovered that in no instance is it just to injure anybody.

I grant you are right.

Then you and I will make common cause against any one who shall attribute this doctrine to Simonides, or Bias, or Pittacus, or any other wise and highly-favoured man.

Very good, said he; I, for one, am quite ready to take my share of the fighting.

Pray do you know to whom I refer the authorship of this saying, that it is just to help our friends and hurt our enemies?

To whom?

I attribute it to Periander, or Perdiccas, or Xerxes, or Ismenias the Theban, or some other rich man who thought himself very powerful.

You are perfectly right.

Well, but as we have again failed to discover the true definition of justice and the just, what other definition can one propose?

While we were still in the middle of our discussion, Thrasymachus was, more than once, bent on interrupting the conversation with objections; but he was checked on each occasion by those who sat by, who wished to hear the argument out. However, when I had made this last remark and we had come to a pause, he could restrain himself no longer, but gathering himself up like a wild beast, he sprang upon us, as if he would tear us in pieces. I and Polemarchus were terrified and startled, while Thrasymachus raising his voice to the company, said, What nonsense has possessed you and Polemarchus all this time, Socrates? And why do you play the fool together with your mutual complaisance? No; if you really wish to understand what justice is, do not confine yourself to asking questions, and making a display of refuting the answers that are returned, (for you are aware that it is easier to ask questions than to answer them); but give us an answer also yourself, and tell us what you assert justice to be, and let me beg you to beware of defining it as the obligatory, or the advantageous, or the profitable, or the lucrative, or the expedient; but