

Selected Readings of English Classics on Education



英文教育经典著作选读

• 黄建如 编 •

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读 经 典 原 著 与 大 师 对 话



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英文教育经典著作选读

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本书精选了西方历史上著名的思想家、教育家的作品二十多篇。这些作品经过了时间的检验，凝聚了大师们的毕生心血和对该领域的独到见解，都是教育专业学生必知的、必读的，其难度适中、文字优美、深入浅出，适合作为大学教育专业本科生或研究生的专业英语教材。每篇作品前有作者及其作品简介，后面有比较详细的注解，以帮助理解，因此本书也适合自学和其他一般读者阅读。另外，本书还可起到索引的作用，读者可以花很少的时间阅读这些选段，对这些大师及其作品有一个概括的了解，以便进一步去研读自己感兴趣的原著。

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前言

教育专业的学生如果能读一些经典原著，特别是英文教育经典原著，不仅能有效地提高英语水平，更重要的是，通过读原著能使学生在读本科、念研究生的短短几年里有机会直接面对本专业领域最优秀的知识，加深对西方文化、教育学基础文化的了解和认识，加深对教育思想、教育基本理论的理解和应用，从而达到对本领域更成熟的理解。

本书精选了西方历史上著名的思想家、教育家的作品二十多篇。这些作品经过了时间的检验，凝聚了大师们的毕生心血和他们对该领域的独到见解，都是教育专业的学生必知、必读的。这些经典作品难度适中、文字优美、深入浅出。每篇作品前面都设有“作者及作品简介”和“名家评论”两个板块，后面对作品中出现的生词都加上了比较详细的注释，以帮助理解。因此，本书既适合作为教育专业本科生或研究生的专业英语教材和课外读物，也适合其他专业的学生和一般读者阅读。另外，本书还起到一个索引的作用，读者可以花不多的时间阅读这些选段，了解这些大师、名著的概况，从而进一步去研读自己感兴趣的原著。

本书在选编过程中得到了厦门大学教育研究院的研究生吴治国、王德林、张耀萍、李凌云和杜海林等的大力协助，在此向他们表示衷心的感谢。此外，还要特别感谢我的研究生杜娟同学，她放弃了自己的休息时间做了大量的资料整理和输入工作。

本书参考借鉴了许多我国外国教育史和现当代外国教育研究先贤及同仁的研究成果，在此一并向他们表示感谢。

由于本人的学术水平和英文水平所限，加上部分资料已很难找到，因此，难免留下一些缺憾。书中如有不足和疏漏之处，还请各位专家与读者不吝赐教，以便今后加以改进和完善。

黄建如

2005年12月

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The Republic

Plato

作者及作品简介

柏拉图（Plato，公元前 427—前 347），古希腊著名的哲学家、教育家，西方客观唯心主义哲学的奠基人。

柏拉图受过良好的教育，且热衷于政治活动。20 岁时，他成为苏格拉底（Socrates）的学生。在苏格拉底的影响下，柏拉图开始专攻哲学。柏拉图年青时参加过伯罗奔尼撒战争，亲眼目睹了雅典民主制的衰败和无能。公元前 399 年，他的导师苏格拉底被陷害诬告处死，这一事件对柏拉图的生活和思想产生了巨大的影响，并促使柏拉图彻底抛弃了对民主制的期望，开始致力于探求并实现他的社会政治理想。

为此柏拉图离开雅典，到各地游历，考察各国的政治状况，拜访各学派名流。公元前 387 年，柏拉图回到雅典，在城郊创建了一所高等学府——阿卡德米（Academy）学园。学园的目标不是传授实用的技艺，而是注重思辩的理论智慧。教学科目有哲学、数学、天文学、物理学和音乐理论等，但以哲学为最高级课程。柏拉图在学园进行授业解惑，著书立说四十余年，培养出了一批批政治活动家和学术思想家。柏拉图于公元前 347 年逝世，享年 80 岁。

《理想国》（*The Republic*）是柏拉图的代表作。该书以苏格拉底自述形式写成，以苏格拉底和格劳孔（Glaucon）、阿得曼托斯（Adimantus）等人的对话形式阐述自己的见解，语言生动，从具体事例导出哲理。该书第一卷从讨论“什么是正义”开始，引发了国家的正义问题；第二卷苏格拉底谈论了国家的起源和结构；在第三、四卷中，苏格拉底指出了现实国家的不合理之处；第五卷开始，阿得曼托斯提出了正义国家应该有什么样的婚姻和家庭的问题。从第五卷结尾部分到第六、七两卷全部的篇幅是《理想国》的核心部分和理论基础。柏拉图在这里提出了关于理念型相理论和“哲学王”的主张；从第八卷开始，柏拉图又从理念世界回到了现实世界，着重回答了在现实条件下如何实现“正义”和“善”的理念问题，主要比较了各种政体的优劣；第九卷转入讨论文艺和诗歌问题；第十卷后半部提出了关于灵魂不朽的论证。

《理想国》的主题十分丰富，是一部涵盖了政治、经济、哲学、伦理和教育的综合性著作。其中以较大篇幅阐述教育问题，也可以说，这是西方历史上第一部教育理论著作，被认为是西方教育史上的三大里程碑之一。

名家评论

卢梭：《理想国》是一篇“从来没有人写过”的“最好的教育论文”。它是一部不朽的必读名著。

作品选读

Book Seven

Now then, I proceeded to say, go on to compare our natural condition, so far as education and ignorance are concerned, to a state of things like the following. Imagine a number of men living in an underground cavernous¹ chamber, with an entrance open to the light extending along the entire length of the cavern, in which they have been confined, from their childhood, with their legs and necks so shackled² that they are obliged to sit still and look straight forwards, because their chains render it impossible for them to turn their heads round: and imagine a bright fire burning some way off, above and behind them, and an elevated roadway passing between the fire and the prisoners, with a low wall built along it, like the screens which conjurors³ put up in front of their audience, and above which they exhibit their wonders.

I have it, he replied.

Also figure to yourself a number of persons walking behind this wall, and carrying with them statues of men and images of other animals, wrought⁴ in wood and stone and all kinds of materials, together with various other articles, which overtop⁵ the wall; and as you might expect, let some of the passers-by be talking, and others silent.

You are describing a strange scene, and strange prisoners.

They resemble us, I replied. For let me ask you, in the first place, whether persons so confined could have seen anything of themselves or of each other beyond the shadows thrown by the fire upon the part of cavern facing them?

Certainly not, if you suppose them to have been compelled all their lifetime to keep their heads unmoved.

And is not their knowledge of the things carried past them equally limited?

Unquestionably it is.

And if they were able to converse with one another, do you not think that they would be in the habit of giving names to the objects which they saw before them?

Doubtless they would.

Again: if their prison-house returned an echo from the part facing them whenever one of the passers-by opened his lips, to what, let me ask you, could they refer the voice, if not to the shadow which was passing?

Unquestionably they would refer it to that.

Then surely such persons would hold the shadows of those manufactured articles to be the only realities.

Without a doubt they would.

Now consider what would happen if the course of nature brought them a release from their fetters⁶, and a remedy for their foolishness, in the following manner. Let us suppose that one of

them has been released, and compelled suddenly to stand up, and turn his neck round and walk with open eyes towards the light; and let us suppose that he goes through all these actions with pain, and that the dazzling splendour⁷ renders him incapable of discerning those objects of which he used formerly to see the shadows. What answer should you expect him to make if some one were to tell him that in those days he was watching foolish phantoms⁸, but that now he is somewhat nearer to reality, and is turned towards things more real, and sees more correctly; above all, if he were to point out to him the several objects that are passing by, and question him, and compel him to answer what they are? Should you not expect him to be puzzled, and to regard his old visions as truer than the objects now forced upon his notice?

Yes, much truer.

And if he were further compelled to gaze at the light itself, would not his eyes, think you, be distressed, and would he not shrink and turn away to the things which he could see distinctly, and consider them to be really clearer than the things pointed out to him?

Just so.

And if some one were to drag him violently up the rough and steep ascent from the cavern, and refuse to let him go till he had drawn him out into the light of the sun, would he not, think you, be vexed⁹ and indignant at such treatment, and on reaching the light, would he not find his eyes so dazzled by the glare as to be incapable of making out so much as one of the objects that are now called true?

Yes, he would find it so at first.

Hence, I suppose, habit will be necessary to enable him to perceive objects in that upper world. At first he will be most successful in distinguishing shadows; then he will discern¹⁰ the reflections of men and other things in water, and afterwards the realities; and after this he will raise his eyes to encounter the light of the moon and stars, finding it less difficult to study the heavenly bodies and the heaven itself by night than the sun and the sun's light by day.

Doubtless.

Last of all, I imagine, he will be able to observe and contemplate¹¹ the nature of the sun, not as it *appears* in water or on alien¹² ground, but as it *is* in itself in its own territory.

Of course.

His next step will be to draw the conclusion that the sun is the author of the seasons and the years, and the guardian of all things in the visible world, and in a manner the cause of all those things that he and his companions used to see.

Obviously, this will be his next step.

What then? When he recalls to mind his first habitation, and the wisdom of the place, and his old fellow-prisoners, do you not think he will congratulate himself on the change, and pity them?

Assuredly he will.

And if it was their practice in those days to receive honour and commendations¹³ one from

another, and to give prizes to him who had the keenest eye for a passing object, and who remembered best all that used to precede and follow and accompany it, and from these data divined¹⁴ most ably what was going to come next, do you fancy that he will covet¹⁵ these prizes, and envy those who receive honour and exercise authority among them? Do you not rather imagine that he will feel what Homer describes, and wish extremely “To drudge¹⁶ on the lands of a master, under a portionless wight¹⁷”, and be ready to go through anything rather than entertain those opinions and live in that fashion?

For my own part, he replied, I am quite of that opinion. I believe he would consent to go through anything rather than live in that way.

And now consider what would happen if such a man were to descend again and seat himself on his old seat. Coming so suddenly out of the sun, would he not find his eyes blinded with the gloom of the place?

Certainly he would.

And if he were forced to deliver his opinion again, touching the shadows aforesaid, and to enter the lists against those who had always been prisoners, while his sight continued dim and his eyes unsteady—and if this process of initiation lasted a considerable time—would he not be made a laughing-stock, and would it not be said of him that he had gone up only to come back again with his eyesight destroyed, and that it was not worth while even to attempt the ascent? And if any one endeavored to set them free and carry them to the light, would they not go so far as to put him to death, if they could only manage to get him into their power?

Yes, that they would.

Now this imaginary case, my dear Glaucon, you must apply in all its parts to our former statements, by comparing the region which the eye reveals to the prison-house, and the light of the fire therein to the power of the sun: and if by the upward ascent and the contemplation of the upper world you understand the mounting of the soul into the intellectual region, you will hit the tendency of my own surmises¹⁸, since you desire to be told what they are, though indeed, God only knows whether they are correct. But be that as it may, the view which I take of the subject is to the following effect. In the world of knowledge, the essential Form of Good is the limit of our inquiries, and can barely be perceived, but when perceived, we cannot help concluding that it is in every case the source of all that is bright and beautiful—in the visible world giving birth to light and its master, and in the intellectual world dispensing, immediately and with full authority, truth and reason; and that whosoever would act wisely, either in private or in public, must set this Form of Good before his eyes.

To the best of my power, said he, I quite agree with you.

That being the case, I continued, pray agree with me on another point, and do not be surprised that those who have climbed so high are unwilling to take a part in the affairs of men, because their souls are ever loath¹⁹ to desert that upper region. For how could it be otherwise, if the preceding simile is indeed a correct representation of their case?

True, it could scarcely be otherwise.

Well, do you think it a marvelous thing that a person who has just quitted the contemplation of divine objects for the study of human infirmities²⁰, should betray awkwardness, and appear very ridiculous, when with his sight still dazed and before he has become sufficiently habituated to the darkness that reigns around, he finds himself compelled to contend in courts of law, or elsewhere, about the shadows of justice, or images which throw the shadows, and to enter the lists in questions involving the arbitrary²¹ suppositions entertained by those who have never yet had a glimpse of the essential features of justice?

No, it is anything but marvelous.

...

Hence, if this be true, we cannot avoid adopting the belief that the real nature of education is at variance with the account given of it by certain of its professors, who pretend, I believe, to infuse²² into the mind a knowledge of which it was destitute²³, just as sight might be instilled²⁴ into blinded eyes.

True; such are their pretensions²⁵.

Whereas our present argument shows us that there is a faculty residing in the soul of each person, and an instrument enabling each of us to learn; and that just as we might suppose it to be impossible to turn the eye round from darkness to light without turning the whole body, so must this faculty, or this instrument, be wheeled round, in company with the entire soul, from the perishing²⁶ world, until it be enabled to endure the contemplation of the real world and the brightest part thereof, which according to us is the form of good. Am I not right?

You are.

Hence, I continued, this very process of revolution must give rise to an art teaching in what way the change will most easily and most effectually be brought about. Its object will not be to generate in the person the power of seeing. On the contrary, it assumes that he possesses it, though he is turned in a wrong direction and does not look towards the right quarter; and its aim is to remedy this defect.

So it would appear.

Hence, while on the one hand the other so-called virtues of the soul seem to resemble those of the body, inasmuch²⁷ as they really do not pre-exist in the soul, but are formed in it in the course of time by habit and exercise, the virtue of wisdom, on the other hand, does most certainly appertain²⁸, as it would appear, to a more divine substance which never loses its energy, but by change of position becomes useful and serviceable, or else remains useless and injurious²⁹. For you must, ere³⁰ this, have noticed how keen-sighted are the puny³¹ souls of those who have the reputation of being clever but vicious³², and how sharply they see through the things to which they are directed, thus proving that their powers of vision are by no means feeble, though they have been compelled to become the servants of wickedness, so that the more sharply they see, the more numerous are the evils which they work.

Yes, indeed it is the case.

But, I proceeded, if from earliest childhood these characters had been shorn³³ and stripped³⁴ of those leaden³⁵, earth-born weights which grow and cling to the pleasures of eating, and gluttonous³⁶ enjoyments of a similar nature, and keep the eye of the soul turned upon the things below—if, I repeat, they had been released from these snares³⁷, and turned round to look at objects that are true, then these very same souls of these very same men would have had as keen an eye for such pursuits as they actually have for those in which they are now engaged.

Yes, probably it would be so.

Once more: is it not also probable, or rather is it not a necessary corollary³⁸ to our previous remarks, that neither those who are uneducated and ignorant of truth, nor those who are suffered to linger over their education all their life, can ever be competent overseers³⁹ of a state—the former because they have no single mark in life which they are to constitute the end and aim of all their conduct both in private and in public, the latter because they will not act without compulsion, fancying that while yet alive they have been translated to the islands of the blest⁴⁰.

That is true.

It is therefore our task, I continued, to constrain the noblest characters in our colony to arrive at that science which we formerly pronounced the highest, and to set eyes upon the good, and to mount that ascent we spoke of; and when they have mounted and looked long enough, we must take care to refuse them that liberty which is at present permitted them.

Pray what is that?

The liberty of staying where they are, and refusing to descend again to those prisoners, or partake of their toils and honours, be they mean or be they exalted.

Then are we to do them a wrong, and make them live a life that is worse than the one within their reach?

You have again forgotten, my friend, that law does not ask itself how some one class in a state is to live extraordinarily well. On the contrary, it tries to bring about this result in the entire state; for which purpose it links the citizens together by persuasion and by constraint, makes them share with one another the benefit which each individual can contribute to the common weal⁴¹, and does actually create men of this exalted character in the state, not with the intension of letting them go each on his own way, but with the intension of turning them to account in its plans for the consolidation⁴² of the state.

True, he replied, I had forgotten.

注释:

1. cavernous *a.*

洞穴的; 陷的

2. shackle *v.*

给……上手铐(脚镣); 束缚

3. conjuror *n.*

魔术师; 行咒法者

4. wrought *a.* 制造的; 精制的, 制作精密的
5. overtop *vt.* 高于, 胜过
6. fetter *n.* 脚镣; [pl.] 束缚, 囚禁
7. splendour *n.* 光辉; 壮丽; 显赫
8. phantom *n.* 幽灵; 幻想
9. vex *vt.* 激怒; 使苦恼; 使麻烦
10. discern *vt.* 辨认, 识别; 理解, 了解
11. contemplate *v.* 注视; 沉思
12. alien *a.* 外国的; 不同的; 背道而驰
13. commendation *n.* 赞扬; 推荐; 奖状
14. divine *v.* 预言, 推测
15. covet *v.* 垂涎, 贪图; 觊觎
16. drudge *v. & n.* 做苦力; 做苦力者
17. wight *n. & a.* <古> 人, 人类; <废> 勇敢的, 勇猛的
18. surmise *v. & n.* 臆测; 猜测; 推测
19. loath *a.* 厌恶的, 不情愿的
20. infirmity *n.* 弱点, 缺点; 虚弱; 疾病
21. arbitrary *a.* 专断的; 反复无常的
22. infuse *v.* 注入; 泡制; 使充满
23. destitute *a.* 缺乏的; 穷困的; 没有的
24. instill *vt.* 逐渐的灌输; 一点一点地滴入
25. pretension *n.* 权力; 要求
26. perishing *a.* 令人难受的; 讨厌的
27. inasmuch *adv.* (与 as 连用, 起连接词作用) 因为, 由于
28. appertain *vi.* 与……有关, 属于; 从属; 关系
29. injurious *a.* 有害的; 不公平的; 诽谤的; 伤害的
30. ere *prep. & conj.* 前于; 在……之前
31. puny *a.* 微不足道的, 次要的, 弱小的
32. vicious *a.* 恶意的; 邪恶的; 有缺点的; 污秽的
33. shorn *v.* (shear 的过去分词) 修剪, 剥夺, 削减
34. strip *vt.* 剥去, 挤干, 拆卸
35. leaden *a.* 铅制的, 沉重的, 迟钝的
36. gluttonous *a.* 贪吃的, 暴食的, 入迷(狂热)的
37. snare *n. & v.* 陷阱, 圈套; 捕捉, 诱惑
38. corollary *n.* 推论, 必然的结果
39. overseer *n.* 监督者, 监工; 教区贫民救济委员会
40. blest *a.* 神圣的, 受上帝祝福的
41. weal *n.* 社会福利, 公益; 鞭痕, 条痕
42. consolidation *n.* 团结, 统一, 联合

Politics

Aristotle

作者及作品简介

亚里士多德（Aristotle，公元前 384—前 322），古希腊哲学家、思想家、科学家和教育家。

公元前 367 年，亚里士多德到雅典，先后从师于艾索克拉底、柏拉图，在阿卡德米学园学习和工作了 20 年，被誉为“学园的精英”。公元前 343 年，他受聘担任马其顿王子亚历山大的老师。公元前 336 年，亚历山大继承王位。翌年，亚里士多德重返雅典，在吕克昂体育馆创办学园，从事讲学、科学研究和著述 13 年，直至终老。亚里士多德的研究涉及哲学、政治、经济、伦理、逻辑、心理、物理、生物、生理、历史、修辞、美学、医学等领域，取得了开创性的成果，成为近代欧洲许多门类的自然科学、社会学科的创始人和奠基者。

《政治学》（*Politics*）写于公元前 326 年，是一部政治理论著作，却也集中反映了亚里士多德的教育思想。面对当时希腊奴隶制城邦严重的政治、经济和精神危机，亚里士多德从城邦的经济基础到上层建筑提出了一整套改革方案，以期建立一种具有“优良政体”的“理想城邦”，恢复奴隶制全盛时期的繁荣。该书第一卷论述政治团体的形成及其基本单位——家庭；第二卷对柏拉图在《理想国》和《法律篇》中所设计的政体和当时的三种典型政体（斯巴达、克里特和迦太基）进行批评；第三卷阐述政治理论；第四卷是对各种政体的各种类型的分析批评；第五卷论政体变更的原因及方式；第六卷论建立稳定不变的政体的方法；最后两卷主要论述理想的城邦及其教育制度，就实施公民教育的一般原则和规划问题提出了一些有意义的观点。

亚里士多德在《政治学》中第一次把政治学与哲学、伦理学及其他学科区分开来，使之成为一门独立的社会学科。他在国家学说方面提出的一系列概念和原理为后世的政论家们所承袭和发展，其中的教育思想不仅推动了西方古代教育理论的发展，而且对文艺复兴以来欧美各国的教育理论和实践都产生了一定的影响，有些观点至今仍值得参考借鉴。

名家评论

马克思、恩格斯：亚里士多德是“古代最伟大的思想家”，古希腊哲学家中“最博学的人物”。

作品选读

Chapter 13, Book VII

A city can be virtuous¹ only when the citizens who have a share in the government are virtuous, and in our state all the citizens share in the government; let us then inquire how a man becomes virtuous. For even if we could suppose the citizen body to be virtuous, without each of them being so, yet the latter would be better, for in the virtue of each the virtue of all is involved.

There are three things that make men good and virtuous; these are nature, habit and rational principle. In the first place, every one must be born a man and not some other animal; so, too, he must have a certain character, both of body and soul. But some qualities there is no use in having at birth, for they are altered by habit, and there are some gifts which by nature are made to be turned by habit to good or bad. Animals lead for the most part a life of nature, although in lesser particulars some are influenced by habit as well. Man has rational principle, in addition, and man only. Wherefore nature, habit, rational principle must be in harmony with one another; for they do not always agree; men do many things against habit and nature, if rational principle persuades them that they ought. We have already determined what natures are likely to be most easily molded by the hands of the legislator. All else is the work of education; we learn some things by habit and some by instruction.

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Now the soul of man is divided into two parts, one of which has a rational principle in itself, and the other, not having a rational principle in itself, is able to obey such a principle. And we call a man in any way good because he has the virtues of these two parts. In which of them the end is more likely to be found is no matter of doubt to those who adopt our division; for in the world both of nature and of art the inferior always exists for the sake of the better or superior, and the better or superior is that which has a rational principle. This principle, too, in our ordinary way of speaking, is divided into two kinds, for there is a practical and a speculative² principle. This part, then, must evidently be similarly divided. And there must be a corresponding division of actions; the actions of the naturally better part are to be preferred by those who have it in their power to attain to two out of the three or to all, for that is always to every one the most eligible which is the highest attainable by him.

The whole of life is further divided into two parts, business and leisure, war and peace, and of actions some aim at what is necessary and useful, and some at what is honourable. And the preference given to one or the other class of actions must necessarily be like the preference given to one or other part of the soul and its actions over the other; there must be war for the sake of peace, business for the sake of leisure, things useful and necessary for the sake of things honourable. All these points the statesman should keep in view when he frames his laws; he should consider the parts of the soul and their functions, and above all the better and the end; he

should also remember the diversities of human lives and actions. For men must be able to engage in business and go to war, but leisure and peace are better; they must do what is necessary and indeed what is useful, but what is honourable is better. On such principles children and persons of every age that requires education should be trained.

Chapter 15

We have already determined that nature and habit and rational principle are required, and, of these, the proper *nature* of the citizens has also been defined by us. But we have still to consider whether the training of early life is to be that of rational principle or habit, for these two must accord, and when in accord they will then form the best of harmonies. The rational principle may be mistaken and fail in attaining the highest ideal of life, and there may be a like evil influence of habit. Thus much is clear in the first place, that, as in all other things, birth implies an antecedent³ beginning, and that there are beginnings whose end is relative to a further end. Now, in men rational principle and mind are the end towards which nature strives, so that the birth and moral discipline of the citizens ought to be ordered with a view to them. In the second place, as the soul and body are two, we see also that there are two parts of the soul, the rational and the irrational, and two corresponding states—reason and appetite⁴. And as the body is prior in order of generation to the soul, so the irrational is prior to the rational. The proof is that anger and wishing and desire are implanted⁵ in children from their very birth, but reason and understanding are developed as they grow older. Wherefore, the care of the body ought to precede that of the soul, and training of the appetitive⁶ part should follow: none the less our care of it must be for the sake of the reason, and our care of the body for the sake of the soul.

Chapter 1, Book VIII

No one will doubt that the legislator should direct his attention above all to the education of youth; for the neglect of education does harm to the constitution. The citizen should be moulded to suit the form of government under which he lives. For each government has a peculiar character which originally formed and which continues to preserve it. The character of democracy creates democracy; and the character of oligarchy⁷ creates oligarchy; and always the better the character, the better the government.

Again, for the exercise of any faculty or art a previous training and habituation are required; clearly therefore for the practice of virtue. And since the whole city has one end, it is manifest that education should be one and the same for all, and that it should be public, and not private—not as at present, when every one looks after his own children separately, and gives them separate instruction of the sort which he thinks best; The training in things which are of common interest should be the same for all. Neither must we suppose that any one of the citizens belongs to himself, for they all belong to the state, and are each of them a part of the state and the care of each part is inseparable from the care of the whole. In this particular as in some others the

Lacedaemonians⁸ are to be praised, for they take the greatest pains about their children, and make education the business of the state.

Chapter 2

That education should be regulated by law and should be an affair of state is not to be denied, but what should be the character of this public education, and how young persons should be educated, are questions that remains to be considered. As things are, there is disagreement about the subjects. For mankind are by no means agreed about the things to be taught, whether we look to virtue or the best life. Neither is it clear whether education is more concerned with intellectual or with moral virtue. The existing practice is perplexing; no one knows on what principle we should proceed—should the useful in life, or should virtue, or should the higher knowledge, be the aim of our training; all three opinions have been entertained. Again, about the means there is no agreement; for different persons, starting with different ideas about the nature of virtue, naturally disagree about the practice of it.

There can be no doubt that children should be taught those useful things which are really necessary, but not all useful things; for occupations are divided into liberal and illiberal; and to young children should be imparted⁹ only such kinds of knowledge as will be useful to them without vulgarizing¹⁰ them. And any occupation, art or science, which makes the body or soul or mind of the freeman less fit for the practice or exercise of virtue, is vulgar¹¹; wherefore we call those arts vulgar which tend to deform¹² the body, and likewise all paid employments, for they absorb and degrade the mind. There are also some liberal arts quite proper for a freeman to acquire, but only in a certain degree, and if he attends to them too closely, in order to attain perfection in them, the same evil effects will follow. The object also which a man sets before him makes a great difference; if he does or learns anything for his own sake or for the sake of his friends, or with a view to excellence, the action will not appear illiberal; but if done for the sake of others, the very same action will be thought menial¹³ and servile¹⁴. The received subjects of instruction, as I have already remarked, are partly of a liberal and partly of an illiberal character.

Chapter 3

The customary branches of education are in number four; they are—reading and writing, gymnastic exercises, music, to which is sometimes added drawing. Of these, reading and writing and drawing are regarded as useful for the purposes of life in a variety of ways, and gymnastic exercises are thought to infuse¹⁵ courage. Concerning music a doubt may be raised—in our own day most men cultivate it for the sake of pleasure, but originally it was included in education, because nature herself, as has been often said, requires that we should be able, not only to work well, but to use leisure well; for, as I must repeat once again, the first principle of all actions is leisure. Both are required, but leisure is better than occupation and is its end; and therefore the question must be asked, what ought we to do when at leisure? Clearly we ought not to be