

THE
POLITICS OF ARISTOTLE

JOWETT

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HENRY FROWDE



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THE
POLITICS OF ARISTOTLE

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

*WITH INTRODUCTION, MARGINAL ANALYSIS
ESSAYS, NOTES AND INDICES*

BY

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VOL. I

CONTAINING THE INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION

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TO THE

REV. WILLIAM ROGERS,

RECTOR OF BISHOPSGATE,

WHO BY

THE KINDNESS OF HIS HEART,

AND THE FORCE OF HIS CHARACTER,

HAS GIVEN A NEW LIFE TO EDUCATION

IN THE CITY OF LONDON,

THIS WORK

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

P R E F A C E.

THE translation of the Politics which is now given to the public was commenced about fifteen years since, with the intention of illustrating the Laws of Plato. A rough draft was made by the translator, which he had the advantage of reading over with Mr. Alfred Robinson, of New College. But finding the work more difficult than he had anticipated, he determined to begin again and re-write the whole. He was insensibly led on to the preparation of a commentary and an analysis. Other subjects of a more general character, which arose out of the study of Aristotle's Politics, naturally took the form of essays¹. These will be published shortly and will complete Vol. II. The translation

¹ The subjects of the Essays will be as follows:—

1. The Life of Aristotle.
2. The Structure and Formation of some of the Aristotelian Writings, to which are added three Appendices:
 - (i) On Books V, VI, VII of the Nicomachean and Eudemian Ethics:
 - (ii) On the Order of the Books of the Politics:
 - (iii) On the Order of the Books of the Metaphysics.
3. On the Style and Language of the Politics.
4. On the Text of the Politics.
5. Aristotle as a Critic of Plato.
6. Aristotle's Contributions to History.
7. Aristotle's Politics.
8. The Spartans and their Institutions.
9. Aristotle as a Political Philosopher.

was printed more than two years ago, and before the appearance of Mr. Welldon's excellent book. The editor has availed himself of the opportunity which the delay afforded to add in the Notes his second thoughts on some doubtful passages.

He has to acknowledge the great assistance which he has received from several friends, especially from Mr. David Ritchie in the composition of the Notes, and from Mr. Evelyn Abbott in the criticism of them. He has also to express his gratitude to his friend and secretary, Mr. Matthew Knight, for the excellent Indices he has prepared both of the Text and Notes, and for many valuable suggestions which occur in different parts of the book. He wishes that Mr. Knight could be induced to bestow on some work of his own the knowledge and thought which he devotes to the writings of another.

The Editor has to apologize for a delay in the fulfilment of his task, which has arisen necessarily out of the pressure of other avocations. He had hoped that his work would have been completed some years ago. An author generally finds that his literary undertakings exceed the measure of time which he has assigned to them; they grow under his hand; the years which he has spent upon them quickly pass, and at last he too often fails of satisfying either himself or the public. When he has nearly finished, if ever, he feels that he is beginning to have a greater command of his subject; but he is obliged to make an end. He may perhaps claim to know better than any one else the deficiencies

of his own performance; but he knows also that he cannot expect to be heard if he attempts to excuse them.

It is a 'regrettable accident' that this book will probably appear about the same time with another edition of the Politics of Aristotle, also to be published at the Clarendon Press, the long expected work of an old friend and pupil, Mr. Newman, Fellow and formerly Tutor of Balliol College, which would not have been delayed until now, if the 'bridle of Theages' (Plato, Rep. vi. 496 B) had not retarded the progress of the author. Those who remember the enthusiasm which was aroused by his brilliant lectures on this and other subjects a quarter of a century ago will take a great interest in the result of his labours. I gladly welcome the *ὀψίγονον τέκος* and offer hearty wishes for the success of the work.

The editor of a Greek or Latin classic generally owes a large debt to his predecessors. In some one of them he will probably find the collation of the text ready to his hand, or at least carried to such an extent that to pursue the enquiry further would lead to no adequate result. The difficult passages have already been translated by them many times over, and the use of words and idioms has been minutely analyzed by them. There are innumerable parallels and illustrations, relevant and also irrelevant, which have been collected by their industry. The new Editor freely appropriates the materials which they have accumulated; nor can he greatly

add to them. He is no longer the pioneer; he enters into the labours of others, and is responsible for the use which he makes of them. The field in which he has to work is limited; the least of the kingdoms into which physical science is subdivided is greater and more extended. It is an ancient branch of knowledge on which he is employed; a mine out of which, with care, some good pieces of ore may still be extracted, but which does not yield the same rich profits as formerly. And he is in danger of finding that 'what is new is not true, and that what is true is not new.' He knows how often conjectures which cannot be disproved have taken the place of real knowledge. He can only hope that the constant study of his author, the interpretation of him from his own writings, the dismissal of all prejudices and preconceptions may throw some fresh light upon the page. It will not always be easy for him to determine what he has thought out for himself and what he has derived from others, and still less to distinguish what in former editors is their own and what they in turn have derived from their predecessors. No one who has spent many years in the study of an author can remember whether a thought occurred to him spontaneously or was suggested by the remark of another. There is therefore the more reason that he should make his acknowledgments to those who have preceded him.

The writer of these volumes is under great obligations to Schlosser, whose good sense and manly criticism are of great value in the interpretation of

the Politics ; he is also much indebted to Schneider, who is a sound scholar and a distinguished critic both of Aristotle and Plato ; as well as to A. Stahr and Bernays who have made accurate and finished translations, Stahr of the whole work, Bernays of the three first books ; above all to the learning of Susemihl, who is not only the author of a new translation, but has also made a fuller collection of all the materials necessary either for the study of the text or the illustration of the subject than any previous editor ; lastly to Immanuel Bekker, the father of modern textual criticism, who has not left much to be improved in the text of Aristotle. The commentary of Goettling has likewise a good deal of merit. I am indebted for a few references to Mr. Eaton's edition of the Politics, and to Mr. Congreve for several excellent English expressions, and still more for his full and valuable indices.

The editor, like many of his predecessors, has been led to the conclusion that the Politics of Aristotle exist only in a questionable and imperfect shape. He cannot say that the work is well arranged or free from confusion of thought or irregularities of style and language. To assume a perfection or completeness which does not exist would contradict facts which are obvious on the surface. The worst kind of inaccuracy is pretended accuracy. No progress can be made in the study of Aristotle by an art of interpretation which aims only at reconciling an author with himself. Neither is there any use in seeking to reconstruct the Politics in another

form; no analysis of them will enable us to arrive at the secret of their composition. We cannot rehabilitate them by a transposition of sentences, or by a change in the order of the books; we must take them as they are. Real uncertainties are better than imaginary certainties. Yet the uncertainty in this instance is one of which the human mind is peculiarly impatient. For amid so much repetition and confusion great truths are constantly appearing which reflect the mind of the master. But to separate these by any precise line, to say 'here are the genuine words of Aristotle,' 'this the later addition,' is beyond the art of the critic. The student of Aristotle will do better to fix his mind on the thoughts which have had so vast an influence, and have so greatly contributed to the progress of mankind, and not to enquire too curiously into the form of the writing which contains them.

BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD:

Sept. 8, 1885.

NOTE.

THE text of the Politics from which the Translation has been made, and to which the Notes refer, is that of Bekker's First Edition. The variations from this Text are indicated at the foot of the page in the Translation.

An Essay on the Text will be found in the Second Part of the Second Volume hereafter to be published.

ERRATA IN TRANSLATION

MENTIONED IN THE NOTES.

- Page 77 (iii. 5, § 9), *for* 'to deceive the inhabitants' *read* 'that the privileged class may deceive their fellow citizens'
- Page 141 (iii. 15, § 6), *for* 'A king must legislate' *read* 'There must be a legislator, whether you call him king or not'
- Page 149 (v. 3, § 7) *for* 'having been cut to pieces' *read* 'after their army had been cut to pieces'
- Ib. (ib. § 9) *for* 'Oreum' *read* 'Oreus'

INTRODUCTION.

THE writings of Aristotle are almost entirely wanting in the charm of style, and several of them cannot even be said to have the merit of clearness. In the *Politics* we are often unable to follow the drift of the argument; the frequent digressions and conflicting points of view which arise are troublesome and perplexing to us. We do not understand why the writer should again and again have repeated himself; why he should have made promises which he never fulfills; why he should be always referring to what has preceded, or to what follows. He sometimes crosses over from his own line of argument to that of his opponent; and then returns again without indicating that he has made a change of front. There are words and clauses which seem to be out of place; or at any rate not to be duly subordinated to the rest of the passage. No other work of genius is so irregular in structure as some of the Aristotelian writings. And yet this defect of form has not prevented their exercising the greatest influence on philosophy and literature; the half-understood words of Aristotle have become laws of thought to other ages.

With the causes of these peculiarities we are not at present concerned. The style of Aristotle runs up into the more general question of the manner in which his writings were compiled or have been transmitted to us. Are they the work of one or of many? Do they proceed from the hand or mind of a single writer, or are they the accumulations of the Peripatetic school? This is a question, like the controversy about the Homeric poems, which cannot be precisely answered. The original form of some of the Aristotelian writings will never be restored. We can hardly tell how or where they came into existence: how much is to be attributed to Aristotle, how much to his editors or followers,—whether

his first followers, such as Eudemus, or later editors, such as the Alexandrians, or Andronicus of Rhodes, or Tyrannion, the friend of Cicero. We cannot by the transposition of sentences make them clearer, nor by verbal conjecture remove small flaws in the reasoning, or inconsistencies in the use of words. The best manuscripts of the *Ethics* and *Politics*, though not of first-rate authority, are not much worse than the primary manuscripts of other Greek authors. The disease, if it is to be so regarded, lies deeper, and enters into the constitution of the work. The existing form of the Aristotelian writings is at least as old as the first or second century *b. c.*; it is in the main the Aristotle of Cicero, though he was also acquainted with other works passing under the name of Aristotle, such as the *Dialogues*, which are preserved to us only in fragments. If we go back in thought from that date to the time when they were first written down by the hand of Aristotle, or at which they passed from being a tradition of the school into a roll or book, we are unable to say in what manner or out of what elements, written or oral, they grew up or were compiled. We only know that several of them are unlike any other Greek book which has come down to us from antiquity. The long list of works attributed to Aristotle in the *Catalogues* also shows that the Aristotelian literature in the Alexandrian age was of an indefinite character, and admitted of being added to and altered.

But although we cannot rehabilitate or restore to their original state the *Politics* or the *Nicomachean Ethics* or the *Metaphysics*, we may throw them into a form which will make them easier and more intelligible to the modern reader. We may 1) present the argument stripped of digressions and additions; 2) we may bring out the important and throw into the background the unimportant points; 3) we may distinguish the two sides of the discussion, where they are not distinguished by the author; 4) we may supply missing links, and omit clumsy insertions; 5) we may take the general meaning without insisting too minutely on the connection. We cannot presume to say how Aristotle should or might have written; nor can we dream of reconstructing an original text which probably had no existence. But we may leave out the interlineations; we may make a difficult book easier;

we may give the impression of the whole in a smaller compass. We may be allowed, without violating any principle of criticism, to imagine how Aristotle would have rewritten or rearranged his subject, had our modern copies of the Politics fallen into his hands.

Many things become clearer to us when we are familiar with them. A sense of unity and power will often arise in the mind after long study of a writing which at first seemed poor and disappointing. Through the distinctions and other mannerisms of his school, the original thinker shines forth to any one who is capable of recognising him. Great ideas or forms of thought indicate a mind superior in power to the average understanding of the commentator or interpreter. We cannot be sure that any single sentence of the Politics proceeded from the pen of Aristotle, but this is no reason for doubting the genuineness of his works, if we take the term in a somewhat wider sense; for they all bear the impress of his personality. That which distinguishes him from Plato and the Neo-Platonists, from Isocrates and the rhetoricians, from the Stoics and Epicureans, from all Scholiasts and Commentators, is not the less certain because his writings have come down to us in a somewhat questionable shape. Even if they are the traditions of a school, the mind of the founder is reflected in them. The aim of the interpreter should be to simplify, to disentangle, to find the thought in the imperfect expression of it; as far as possible, to separate the earlier from the later elements, the true from the false Aristotle. The last, however, is a work of great nicety, in which we can only proceed on grounds of internal evidence and therefore cannot hope to attain any precise result. There may be said to be a *petitio principii* even in making the attempt, for we can only judge of the genuine Aristotle from writings of which the genuineness is assumed.

Any mere translation of Aristotle's Politics will be, in many passages, necessarily obscure, because the connexion of ideas is not adequately represented by the sequence of words. If it were possible to present the course of thought in a perfectly smooth and continuous form, such an attempt would be too great a departure from the Greek. It is hoped that the Analysis or short paraphrase

which follows may assist the student in grasping the general meaning before he enters on a minute study of the text; and that the reflections which are interspersed may enable him to read Aristotle in the light of recent criticism and history, and to take a modern interest in it, without confusing the ancient and modern worlds of thought. (Compare, in vol. ii, Essays on the Style of Aristotle, and on the Structure of certain of the Aristotelian writings.)

BOOK I.

A criticism on Plato,—the origin of the household, village, state,—the nature of property and more especially of property in slaves,—the art of household management, and its relation to the art of money-making,—literature of the subject,—some further questions concerning the relations of master and slave, husband and wife, parent and child.

The great charm of the writings of Plato and Aristotle is that they are original. They contain the first thoughts of men respecting problems which will always continue to interest them. Their thoughts have become a part of our thoughts, and enter imperceptibly into the speculations of modern writers on the same subjects, but with a difference. The Ionian and Eleatic philosophers who preceded them were eclipsed in the brightness of their successors; they had not yet reached the stage of ethics or politics, and were little known to the ancients themselves. The ethical teaching of Socrates has been preserved and not been preserved; that is to say, it does not exist in any definite form or system. To us, therefore, Plato and Aristotle are the beginnings of philosophy. In reading them the reflection is often forced upon us: 'How little have we added except what has been gained by a greater experience of history!' Some things have come down to us with

' Better opinion, better confirmation :'

they have acquired authority from age and use. But there are other truths of ancient political philosophy which we have forgotten, or

which have degenerated into truisms. Like the memories of childhood they are easily revived, and there is no form in which they so naturally come back to us as that in which they were first presented to mankind.

For example, during the last century enlightened philosophers have been fond of repeating that the state is only a machine for the protection of life and property. But the ancients taught a nobler lesson, that ethics and politics are inseparable; that we must not do evil in order to gain power; and that the justice of the state and the justice of the individual are the same. The older lesson has survived; the newer is seen to have only a partial and relative truth. So for the liberty, equality, and fraternity of the French revolution we are beginning to substitute the idea of law and order; we acknowledge that the best form of government is that which is most permanent, and that the freedom of the individual when carried to an extreme is suicidal. But these are truths which may be found in Aristotle's *Politics*. Thus to the old we revert for some of our latest political lessons. The idealism of Plato is always returning upon us, as a dream of the future; the *Politics* of Aristotle continue to have a practical relation to our own times.

But while we are struck with the general similarity, we are almost equally struck by the different mode in which the thoughts of ancient and modern times are expressed. To go no further than the first book of the *Politics*, the method of Aristotle in his enquiry into the origin of the state is analytical rather than historical; that is to say, he builds up the state out of its elements, but does not enquire what history or pre-historic monuments tell about primitive man. He is very much under the influence of logical forms, such as means and ends, final causes, categories of quantity and quality, the antithesis of custom and nature, and other verbal oppositions, which not only express, but also dominate his meaning. The antagonism to Plato is constantly reappearing, and may be traced where the name of Plato is not mentioned; the rivalry of the two schools never dies out. The sciences are not yet accurately divided; and hence some questions, which present no difficulty to us, such as the relation of the art of house-

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