LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA

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Edited by Aubrey Stewart

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PREFACE

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Seneca, the favourite classic of the early fathers of the church and of the Middle Ages, whom Jerome, Tertullian, and Augustine speak of as "Seneca noster," who was believed to have corresponded with St. Paul, and upon whom [Footnote: On the "De Clementia," an odd subject for the man who burned Servetus alive for differing with him.] Calvin wrote a commentary, seems almost forgotten in modern times. Perhaps some of his popularity may have been due to his being supposed to be the author of those tragedies which the world has long ceased to read, but which delighted a period that preferred Euripides to Aeschylus: while casuists must have found congenial matter in an author whose fantastic cases of conscience are often worthy of Sanchez or Escobar. Yet Seneca's morality is always pure, and from him we gain, albeit at second hand, an insight into the doctrines of the Greek philosophers, Zeno, Epicurus, Chrysippus, &c., whose precepts and system of religious thought had in

cultivated Roman society taken the place of the old worship of Jupiter and Quirinus.

Since Lodge's edition (fol. 1614), no complete translation of Seneca has been published in England, though Sir Roger L'Estrange wrote paraphrases of several Dialogues, which seem to have been enormously popular, running through more than sixteen editions. I think we may conjecture that Shakespeare had seen Lodge's translation, from several allusions to philosophy, to that impossible conception "the wise man," and especially from a passage in "All's Well that ends Well," which seems to breathe the very spirit of "De Beneficiis."

"'Tis pity—
That wishing well had not a body in it
Which might be felt: that we, the poorer born,
Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes,
Might with effects of them follow our friends
And show what we alone must think; which never
Returns us thanks."

"All's Well that ends Well," Act i. sc. 1.

Though, if this will not fit the supposed date of that play, he may have taken the idea from "The Woorke of Lucius Annaeus Seneca concerning Benefyting, that is too say, the dooing, receyving, and requyting of good turnes, translated out of Latin by A. Golding. J. Day, London, 1578." And even during the Restoration, Pepys's ideal of virtuous and lettered seclusion is a country house in whose garden he might sit on summer afternoons with his friend, Sir W. Coventry, "it maybe, to read a chapter of Seneca." In sharp contrast to this is Vahlen's preface to the minor Dialogues, which he edited after the death of his friend Koch, who had begun

that work, in which he remarks that "he has read much of this writer, in order to perfect his knowledge of Latin, for otherwise he neither admires his artificial subtleties of thought, nor his childish mannerisms of style" (Vahlen, preface, p. v., ed. 1879, Jena).

Yet by the student of the history of Rome under the Caesars, Seneca is not to be neglected, because, whatever may be thought of the intrinsic merit of his speculations, he represents, more perhaps even than Tacitus, the intellectual characteristics of his age, and the tone of society in Rome—nor could we well spare the gossiping stories which we find imbedded in his graver dissertations. The following extract from Dean Merivale's "History of the Romans under the Empire" will show the estimate of him which has been formed by that accomplished writer:—

"At Rome, we, have no reason, to suppose that Christianity was only the refuge of the afflicted and miserable; rather, if we may lay any stress on the documents above referred to, it was first embraced by persons in a certain grade of comfort and respectability; by persons approaching to what we should call the MIDDLE CLASSES in their condition, their education, and their moral views. Of this class Seneca himself was the idol, the oracle; he was, so to speak, the favourite preacher of the more intelligent and humane disciples of nature and virtue. Now the writings of Seneca show, in their way, a real anxiety among this class to raise the moral tone of mankind around them; a spirit of reform, a zeal for the conversion of souls, which, though it never rose, indeed, under the teaching of the philosophers, to boiling heat, still simmered with genial

warmth on the surface of society. Far different as was their social standing-point, far different as were the foundations and the presumed sanctions of their teaching respectively, Seneca and St. Paul were both moral reformers; both, be it said with reverence, were fellow-workers in the cause of humanity, though the Christian could look beyond the proximate aims of morality and prepare men for a final development on which the Stoic could not venture to gaze. Hence there is so much in their principles, so much even in their language, which agrees together, so that the one has been thought, though it must be allowed without adequate reason, to have borrowed directly from the other. [Footnote: It is hardly necessary to refer to the pretended letters between St. Paul and Seneca. Besides the evidence from style, some of the dates they contain are quite sufficient to condemn them as clumsy forgeries. They are mentioned, but with no expression of belief in their genuineness, by Jerome and Augustine. See Jones, "On the Canon," ii. 80.]

"But the philosopher, be it remembered, discoursed to a large and not inattentive audience, and surely the soil was not all unfruitful on which his seed was scattered when he proclaimed that God dwells not in temples of wood and stone, nor wants the ministrations of human hands; [Footnote: Sen., Ep. 95, and in Lactantius, Inst. vi.] that He has no delight in the blood of victims:[Footnote: Ep. 116: "Colitur Deus non tauris sed pia et recta voluntate."] that He is near to all His creatures:[Footnote: Ep. 41, 73.] that His Spirit resides in men's hearts:[Footnote: Ep. 46: "Sacer intra nos spiritus sedet."] that all men are truly His offspring: [Footnote: "De Prov," i.] that we are members of one body,

which is God or Nature;[Footnote: Ep. 93, 95: "Membra sumus magni corporis."] that men must believe in God before they can approach Him:[Footnote: Ep. 95: "Primus Deorum cultus est Deos credere."] that the true service of God is to be like unto Him:[Footnote: Ep. 95: "Satis coluit quisquis imitatus est."] that all men have sinned, and none performed all the works of the law:[Footnote: Sen. de Ira. i. 14; ii. 27: "Quis est iste qui se profitetur omnibus legibus innocentem?"] that God is no respecter of nations, ranks, or conditions, but all, barbarian and Roman, bond and free, are alike under His all-seeing Providence.[Footnote: "De Benef.," iii. 18: "Virtus omnes admittit, libertinos, servos, reges." These and many other passages are collected by Champagny, ii. 546, after Fabricius and others, and compared with well-known texts of Scripture. The version of the Vulgate shows a great deal of verbal correspondence. M. Troplong remarks, after De Maistre, that Seneca has written a fine book on Providence, for which there was not even a name at Rome in the time of Cicero.—"L'Influence du Christianisme," &c., i., ch. 4.]

"St. Paul enjoined submission and obedience even to the tyranny of Nero, and Seneca fosters no ideas subversive of political subjection. Endurance is the paramount virtue of the Stoic. To forms of government the wise man was wholly indifferent; they were among the external circumstances above which his spirit soared in serene self-contemplation. We trace in Seneca no yearning for a restoration of political freedom, nor does he even point to the senate, after the manner of the patriots of the day, as a legitimate check to the autocracy of the despot. The only mode, in his view, of

tempering tyranny is to educate the tyrant himself in virtue. His was the self-denial of the Christians, but without their anticipated compensation. It seems impossible to doubt that in his highest flights of rhetoric—and no man ever recommended the unattainable with a finer grace—Seneca must have felt that he was labouring to build up a house without foundations; that his system, as Caius said of his style, was sand without lime. He was surely not unconscious of the inconsistency of his own position, as a public man and a minister, with the theories to which he had wedded himself; and of the impossibility of preserving in it the purity of his character as a philosopher or a man. He was aware that in the existing state of society at Rome, wealth was necessary to men high in station; wealth alone could retain influence, and a poor minister became at once contemptible. The distributor of the Imperial favours must have his banquets, his receptions, his slaves and freedmen; he must possess the means of attracting if not of bribing; he must not seem too virtuous, too austere, among an evil generation; in order to do good at all he must swim with the stream, however polluted it might be. All this inconsistency Seneca must have contemplated without blenching; and there is something touching in the serenity he preserved amidst the conflict that must have perpetually raged between his natural sense and his acquired principles. Both Cicero and Seneca were men of many weaknesses, and we remark them the more because both were pretenders to unusual strength of character; but while Cicero lapsed into political errors, Seneca cannot be absolved of actual crime. Nevertheless, if we may compare the greatest masters of

Roman wisdom together, the Stoic will appear, I think, the more earnest of the two, the more anxious to do his duty for its own sake, the more sensible of the claims of mankind upon him for such precepts of virtuous living as he had to give. In an age of unbelief and compromise he taught that Truth was positive and Virtue objective. He conceived, what never entered Cicero's mind, the idea of improving his fellow-creatures; he had, what Cicero had not, a heart for conversion to Christianity."

To this eloquent account of Seneca's position and of the tendency of his writings I have nothing to add. The main particulars of his life, his Spanish extraction (like that of Lacan and Martial), his father's treatises on Rhetoric, his mother Helvia, his brothers, his wealth, his exile in Corsica, his outrageous flattery of Claudius and his satiric poem on his death—"The Vision of Judgment," Merivale calls it, after Lord Byron—his position as Nero's tutor, and his death, worthy at once of a Roman and a Stoic, by the orders of that tyrant, may be read of in "The History of the Romans under the Empire," or in the article "Seneca" in the "Dictionary of Classical Biography," and need not be reproduced here: but I cannot resist pointing out how entirely Grote's view of the "Sophists" as a sort of established clergy, and Seneca's account of the various sects of philosophers as representing the religious thought of the time, is illustrated by his anecdote of Julia Augusta, the mother of Tiberius, better known to English readers as Livia the wife of Augustus, who in her first agony of grief at the loss of her first husband applied to his Greek philosopher, Areus, as to a kind of

domestic chaplain, for spiritual consolation. ("Ad Marciam de Consolatione," ch. iv.)

I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the Rev. J. E. B. Mayor, Professor of Latin in the University of Cambridge, for his kindness in finding time among his many and important literary labours for reading and correcting the proofs of this work.

The text which I have followed for De Beneficiis is that of Gertz, Berlin (1876.).

AUBREY STEWART

London, March, 1887.

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ON BENEFITS.

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DEDICATED TO AEBUTIUS LIBERALIS.

BOOK I.

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I.

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Among the numerous faults of those who pass their lives recklessly and without due reflexion, my good friend Liberalis, I should say that there is hardly any one so hurtful to society as this, that we neither know how to bestow or how to receive a benefit. It follows from this that benefits are badly invested, and become bad debts: in these cases it is too late to complain of their not being returned, for they were thrown away when we bestowed them. Nor need we wonder that while the greatest vices are common, none is more common than ingratitude: for this I see is brought about by various causes. The first of these is, that we do not choose worthy persons upon whom to bestow our bounty, but although when we are about to lend money we first make a careful enquiry into the means and habits of life of our debtor, and avoid sowing seed in a worn-out or unfruitful soil, yet without any discrimination we scatter our benefits at random rather than bestow them. It is hard to say whether it is more dishonourable for the receiver to disown a benefit, or for the giver to demand a return of it: for a benefit is a loan, the repayment of which depends merely upon the good feeling of the debtor. To misuse a benefit like a spendthrift is most shameful, because we do not need our wealth but only our intention to set us free from the obligation of it; for a benefit is repaid by being

acknowledged. Yet while they are to blame who do not even show so much gratitude as to acknowledge their debt, we ourselves are to blame no less. We find many men ungrateful, yet we make more men so, because at one time we harshly and reproachfully demand some return for our bounty, at another we are fickle and regret what we have given, at another we are peevish and apt to find fault with trifles. By acting thus we destroy all sense of gratitude, not only after we have given anything, but while we are in the act of giving it. Who has ever thought it enough to be asked for anything in an off-hand manner, or to be asked only once? Who, when he suspected that he was going to be asked for any thing, has not frowned, turned away his face, pretended to be busy, or purposely talked without ceasing, in order not to give his suitor a chance of preferring his request, and avoided by various tricks having to help his friend in his pressing need? and when driven into a corner, has not either put the matter off, that is, given a cowardly refusal, or promised his help ungraciously, with a wry face, and with unkind words, of which he seemed to grudge the utterance. Yet no one is glad to owe what he has not so much received from his benefactor, as wrung out of him. Who can be grateful for what has been disdainfully flung to him, or angrily cast at him, or been given him out of weariness, to avoid further trouble? No one need expect any return from those whom he has tired out with delays, or sickened with expectation. A benefit is received in the same temper in which it is given, and ought not, therefore, to be given carelessly, for a man thanks himself for that which he receives without the knowledge of the giver. Neither ought

we to give after long delay, because in all good offices the will of the giver counts for much, and he who gives tardily must long have been unwilling to give at all. Nor, assuredly, ought we to give in offensive manner, because human nature is so constituted that insults sink deeper than kindnesses; the remembrance of the latter soon passes away, while that of the former is treasured in the memory; so what can a man expect who insults while he obliges? All the gratitude which he deserves is to be forgiven for helping us. On the other hand, the number of the ungrateful ought not to deter us from earning men's gratitude; for, in the first place, their number is increased by our own acts. Secondly, the sacrilege and indifference to religion of some men does not prevent even the immortal gods from continuing to shower their benefits upon us: for they act according to their divine nature and help all alike, among them even those who so ill appreciate their bounty. Let us take them for our guides as far as the weakness of our mortal nature permits; let us bestow benefits, not put them out at interest. The man who while he gives thinks of what he will get in return, deserves to be deceived. But what if the benefit turns out ill? Why, our wives and our children often disappoint our hopes, yet we marry—and bring up children, and are so obstinate in the face of experience that we fight after we have been beaten, and put to sea after we have been shipwrecked. How much more constancy ought we to show in bestowing benefits! If a man does not bestow benefits because he has not received any, he must have bestowed them in order to receive them in return, and he justifies ingratitude, whose disgrace lies in not returning

benefits when able to do so. How many are there who are unworthy of the light of day? and nevertheless the sun rises. How many complain because they have been born? yet Nature is ever renewing our race, and even suffers men to live who wish that they had never lived. It is the property of a great and good mind to covet, not the fruit of good deeds, but good deeds themselves, and to seek for a good man even after having met with bad men. If there were no rogues, what glory would there be in doing good to many? As it is, virtue consists in bestowing benefits for which we are not certain of meeting with any return, but whose fruit is at once enjoyed by noble minds. So little influence ought this to have in restraining us from doing good actions, that even though I were denied the hope of meeting with a grateful man, yet the fear of not having my benefits returned would not prevent my bestowing them, because he who does not give, forestalls the vice of him who is ungrateful. I will explain what I mean. He who does not repay a benefit, sins more, but he who does not bestow one, sins earlier.

"If thou at random dost thy bounties waste,
Much must be lost, for one that's rightly placed."

II. In the former verse you may blame two things, for one should not cast them at random, and it is not right to waste anything, much less benefits; for unless they be given with judgement, they cease to be benefits, and, may be called by any other name you please. The meaning of the latter verse is admirable, that one benefit rightly bestowed makes amends for the loss of many that have been lost. See, I pray you, whether it be not truer and more worthy of the glory of the giver, that we should encourage him to give, even

though none of his gifts should be worthily placed. "Much must be lost." Nothing is lost because he who loses had counted the cost before. The book-keeping of benefits is simple: it is all expenditure; if any one returns it, that is clear gain; if he does not return it, it is not lost, I gave it for the sake of giving. No one writes down his gifts in a ledger, or like a grasping creditor demands repayment to the day and hour. A good man never thinks of such matters, unless reminded of them by some one returning his gifts; otherwise they become like debts owing to him. It is a base usury to regard a benefit as an investment. Whatever may have been the result of your former benefits, persevere in bestowing others upon other men; they will be all the better placed in the hands of the ungrateful, whom shame, or a favourable opportunity, or imitation of others may some day cause to be grateful. Do not grow weary, perform your duty, and act as becomes a good man. Help one man with money, another with credit, another with your favour; this man with good advice, that one with sound maxims. Even wild beasts feel kindness, nor is there any animal so savage that good treatment will not tame it and win love from it. The mouths of lions are handled by their keepers with impunity; to obtain their food fierce elephants become as docile as slaves: so that constant unceasing kindness wins the hearts even of creatures who, by their nature, cannot comprehend or weigh the value of a benefit. Is a man ungrateful for one benefit? perhaps he will not be so after receiving a second. Has he forgotten two kindnesses? perhaps by a third he may be brought to remember the former ones also.

III. He who is quick to believe that he has thrown away his benefits, does really throw them away; but he who presses on and adds new benefits to his former ones, forces out gratitude even from a hard and forgetful breast. In the face of many kindnesses, your friend will not dare to raise his eyes; let him see you whithersoever he turns himself to escape from his remembrance of you; encircle him with your benefits. As for the power and property of these, I will explain it to you if first you will allow me to glance at a matter which does not belong to our subject, as to why the Graces are three in number, why they are sisters, why hand in hand, and why they are smiling and young, with a loose and transparent dress. Some writers think that there is one who bestows a benefit, one who receives it, and a third who returns it; others say that they represent the three sorts of benefactors, those who bestow, those who repay, and those who both receive and repay them. But take whichever you please to be true; what will this knowledge profit us? What is the meaning of this dance of sisters in a circle, hand in hand? It means that the course of a benefit is from hand to hand, back to the giver; that the beauty of the whole chain is lost if a single link fails, and that it is fairest when it proceeds in unbroken regular order. In the dance there is one, esteemed beyond the others, who represents the givers of benefits. Their faces are cheerful, as those of men who give or receive benefits are wont to be. They are young, because the memory of benefits ought not to grow old. They are virgins, because benefits are pure and untainted, and held holy by all; in benefits there should be no strict or binding conditions, therefore the Graces wear

loose flowing tunics, which are transparent, because benefits love to be seen. People who are not under the influence of Greek literature may say that all this is a matter of course; but there can be no one who would think that the names which Hesiod has given them bear upon our subject. He named the eldest Aglaia, the middle one Euphrosyne, the third Thalia. Every one, according to his own ideas, twists the meaning of these names, trying to reconcile them with some system, though Hesiod merely gave his maidens their names from his own fancy. So Homer altered the name of one of them, naming her Pasithea, and betrothed her to a husband, in order that you may know that they are not vestal virgins. [Footnote: i.e. not vowed to chastity.]

I could find another poet, in whose writings they are girded, and wear thick or embroidered Phrygian robes. Mercury stands with them for the same reason, not because argument or eloquence commends benefits, but because the painter chose to do so. Also Chrysippus, that man of piercing intellect who saw to the very bottom of truth, who speaks only to the point, and makes use of no more words than are necessary to express his meaning, fills his whole treatise with these puerilities, insomuch that he says but very little about the duties of giving, receiving, and returning a benefit, and has not so much inserted fables among these subjects, as he has inserted these subjects among a mass of fables. For, not to mention what Hecaton borrows from him, Chrysippus tells us that the three Graces are the daughters of Jupiter and Eurynome, that they are younger than the Hours, and rather more beautiful, and that on that account they are assigned as companions to Venus.

He also thinks that the name of their mother bears upon the subject, and that she is named Eurynome because to distribute benefits requires a wide inheritance; as if the mother usually received her name after her daughters, or as if the names given by poets were true. In truth, just as with a 'nomenclator' audacity supplies the place of memory, and he invents a name for every one whose name he cannot recollect, so the poets think that it is of no importance to speak the truth, but are either forced by the exigencies of metre, or attracted by sweetness of sound, into calling every one by whatever name runs neatly into verse. Nor do they suffer for it if they introduce another name into the list, for the next poet makes them bear what name he pleases. That you may know that this is so, for instance Thalia, our present subject of discourse, is one of the Graces in Hesiod's poems, while in those of Homer she is one of the Muses.

IV. But lest I should do the very thing which I am blaming, I will pass over all these matters, which are so far from the subject that they are not even connected with it. Only do you protect me, if any one attacks me for putting down Chrysippus, who, by Hercules, was a great man, but yet a Greek, whose intellect, too sharply pointed, is often bent and turned back upon itself; even when it seems to be in earnest it only pricks, but does not pierce. Here, however, what occasion is there for subtlety? We are to speak of benefits, and to define a matter which is the chief bond of human society; we are to lay down a rule of life, such that neither careless openhandedness may commend itself to us under the guise of goodness of heart, and yet that our circumspection, while it moderates, may not quench our

generosity, a quality in which we ought neither to exceed nor to fall short. Men must be taught to be willing to give, willing to receive, willing to return; and to place before themselves the high aim, not merely of equalling, but even of surpassing those to whom they are indebted, both in good offices and in good feeling; because the man whose duty it is to repay, can never do so unless he out-does his benefactor; [Footnote: That is, he never comes up to his benefactor unless he leaves him behind: he can only make a dead heat of it by getting a start.] the one class must be taught to look for no return, the other to feel deeper gratitude. In this noblest of contests to outdo benefits by benefits, Chrysippus encourages us by bidding us beware lest, as the Graces are the daughters of Jupiter, to act ungratefully may not be a sin against them, and may not wrong those beauteous maidens. Do thou teach me how I may bestow more good things, and be more grateful to those who have earned my gratitude, and how the minds of both parties may vie with one another, the giver in forgetting, the receiver in remembering his debt. As for those other follies, let them be left to the poets, whose purpose is merely to charm the ear and to weave a pleasing story; but let those who wish to purify men's minds, to retain honour in their dealings, and to imprint on their minds gratitude for kindnesses, let them speak in sober earnest and act with all their strength; unless you imagine, perchance, that by such flippant and mythical talk, and such old wives' reasoning, it is possible for us to prevent that most ruinous consummation, the repudiation of benefits.

V. However, while I pass over what is futile and irrelevant I must point out that the first thing which we have to learn is, what we owe in return for a benefit received. One man says that he owes the money which he has received, another that he owes a consulship, a priesthood, a province, and so on. These, however, are but the outward signs of kindnesses, not the kindnesses themselves. A benefit is not to be felt and handled, it is a thing which exists only in the mind. There is a great difference between the subject-matter of a benefit, and the benefit itself. Wherefore neither gold, nor silver, nor any of those things which are most highly esteemed, are benefits, but the benefit lies in the goodwill of him who gives them. The ignorant take notice only of that which comes before their eyes, and which can be owned and passed from hand to hand, while they disregard that which gives these things their value. The things which we hold in our hands, which we see with our eyes, and which our avarice hugs, are transitory, they may be taken from us by ill luck or by violence; but a kindness lasts even after the loss of that by means of which it was bestowed; for it is a good deed, which no violence can undo. For instance, suppose that I ransomed a friend from pirates, but another pirate has caught him and thrown him into prison. The pirate has not robbed him of my benefit, but has only robbed him of the enjoyment of it. Or suppose that I have saved a man's children from a shipwreck or a fire, and that afterwards disease or accident has carried them off; even when they are no more, the kindness which was done by means of them remains. All those things, therefore, which improperly assume the name of benefits, are means

by which kindly feeling manifests itself. In other cases also, we find a distinction between the visible symbol and the matter itself, as when a general bestows collars of gold, or civic or mural crowns upon any one. What value has the crown in itself? or the purple-bordered robe? or the fasces? or the judgment-seat and car of triumph? None of these things is in itself an honour, but is an emblem of honour. In like manner, that which is seen is not a benefit—it is but the trace and mark of a benefit.

VI. What, then, is a benefit? It is the art of doing a kindness which both bestows pleasure and gains it by bestowing it, and which does its office by natural and spontaneous impulse. It is not, therefore, the thing which is done or given, but the spirit in which it is done or given, that must be considered, because a benefit exists, not in that which is done or given, but in the mind of the doer or giver. How great the distinction between them is, you may perceive from this, that while a benefit is necessarily good, yet that which is done or given is neither good nor bad. The spirit in which they are given can exalt small things, can glorify mean ones, and can discredit great and precious ones; the objects themselves which are sought after have a neutral nature, neither good nor bad; all depends upon the direction given them by the guiding spirit from which things receive their shape. That which is paid or handed over is not the benefit itself, just as the honour which we pay to the gods lies not in the victims themselves, although they be fat and glittering with gold, [Footnote: Alluding to the practice of gilding the horns of the victims.] but in the pure and holy feelings of the worshippers.

Thus good men are religious, though their offering be meal and their vessels of earthenware; whilst bad men will not escape from their impiety, though they pour the blood of many victims upon the altars.

VII. If benefits consisted of things, and not of the wish to benefit, then the more things we received the greater the benefit would be. But this is not true, for sometimes we feel more gratitude to one who gives us trifles nobly, who, like Virgil's poor old soldier, "holds himself as rich as kings," if he has given us ever so little with a good will a man who forgets his own need when he sees mine, who has not only a wish but a longing to help, who thinks that he receives a benefit when he bestows one, who gives as though he would receive no return, receives a repayment as though he had originally given nothing, and who watches for and seizes an opportunity of being useful. On the other hand, as I said before, those gifts which are hardly wrung from the giver, or which drop unheeded from his hands, claim no gratitude from us, however great they may appear and may be. We prize much more what comes from a willing hand, than what comes from a full one. This man has given me but little, yet more he could not afford, while what that one has given is much indeed, but he hesitated, he put it off, he grumbled when he gave it, he gave it haughtily, or he proclaimed it aloud, and did it to please others, not to please the person to whom he gave it; he offered it to his own pride, not to me.

VIII. As the pupils of Socrates, each in proportion to his means, gave him large presents, Aeschines, a poor pupil, said, "I can find nothing to give you which is worthy of you; I

feel my poverty in this respect alone. Therefore I present you with the only thing I possess, myself. I pray that you may take this my present, such as it is, in good part, and may remember that the others, although they gave you much, yet left for themselves more than they gave." Socrates answered, "Surely you have bestowed a great present upon me, unless perchance you set a small value upon yourself. I will accordingly take pains to restore you to yourself a better man than when I received you." By this present Aeschines outdid Alcibiades, whose mind was as great as his Wealth, and all the splendour of the most wealthy youths of Athens.

IX. You see how the mind even in the straitest circumstances finds the means of generosity. Aeschines seems to me to have said, "Fortune, it is in vain that you have made me poor; in spite of this I will find a worthy present for this man. Since I can give him nothing of yours, I will give him something of my own." Nor need you suppose that he held himself cheap; he made himself his own price. By a stroke of genius this youth discovered a means of presenting Socrates to himself. We must not consider how great presents are, but in what spirit they are given.

A rich man is well spoken of if he is clever enough to render himself easy of access to men of immoderate ambition, and although he intends to do nothing to help them, yet encourages their unconscionable hopes; but he is thought the worse of if he be sharp of tongue, sour in appearance, and displays his wealth in an invidious fashion. For men respect and yet loathe a fortunate man, and hate