

Imagines

EIKONEΣ

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BOOK I

προοίμιον ἢ λαλία

Whosoever scorns painting is unjust to truth; and he is also unjust to all the wisdom that has been bestowed upon poets – for poets and painters make equal contribution to our knowledge of the deeds and the looks of heroes – and he withholds his praise from symmetry of proportion, whereby art partakes of reason. For one who wishes a clever theory, the invention of painting belongs to the gods – witness on earth all the designs with which the Seasons paint the meadows, and the manifestations we see in the heavens – but for one who is merely seeking the origin of art, imitation is an invention most ancient and most akin to nature; and wise men invented it, calling it now painting, now plastic art.

There are many forms of plastic art – plastic art proper, or modeling, and imitation in bronze, and the work of those who carve Lygdian or Parian marble, and ivory carving, and, by Zeus, the art of gem-cutting is also plastic art – while painting is imitation by the use of colours; and not only does it employ colour, but this second form of art cleverly accomplishes more with this one means than the other form with its many means. For it both reproduces light and shade and also permits the observer to recognize the look, now of the man who is mad, now of the man who is sorrowing or rejoicing. The varying nature of bright eyes the plastic artist does not bring out at all in his work; but the “grey eye,” the “blue eye,” and “black eye” are known to painting; and it knows chestnut and red and yellow hair, and the colour of garments and of armour, chambers too and houses and groves and mountains and springs and the air that envelops them all.

Now the story of the men who have won mastery in the science of painting, and of the states and kings that have been

passionately devoted to it, has been told by other writers, notably Aristodemus of Caria, whom I visited for four years in order to study painting; and he painted in the technique of Eumelus, but with much more charm.

The present discussion, however, is not to deal with painters nor yet with their lives; rather we propose to describe examples of paintings in the form of addresses which we have composed for the young, that by this means they may learn to interpret paintings and to appreciate what is esteemed in them.

The occasion of these discourses of mine was as follows: It was the time of the public games at Naples, a city in Italy settled by men of the Greek race and people of culture, and therefore Greek in their enthusiasm for discussion. And as I did not wish to deliver my addresses in public, the young men kept coming to the house of my host and importuning me. I was lodging outside the walls in a suburb facing the sea, where there was a portico built on four, I think, or possibly five terraces, open to the west wind and looking out on the Tyrrhenian sea. It was resplendent with all the marbles favoured by luxury, but it was particularly splendid by reason of the panel-paintings set in the walls, paintings which I though had been collected with real judgment, for they exhibited the skill of very many painters. The idea had already occurred to me that I ought to speak in praise of the paintings, when the son of my host, quite a young boy, only ten years old but already an ardent listener and eager to learn, kept watching me as I went from one to another and asking me to interpret them. So in order that he might not think me ill-bred, "Very well," I said, "we will make them the subject of a discourse as soon as the young men come." And when they came, I said, "Let me put the boy in front and address to him my effort at interpretation; but do you follow,

not only agreeing but also asking questions if anything I say is not clear.”

SCAMANDER

Have you noticed, my boy, that the painting here is based on Homer, or have you failed to do so because you are lost in wonder as to how in the world the fire could live in the midst of water? Well then, let us try to get at the meaning of it. Turn your eyes away from the painting itself so as to look only at the events on which it is based. Surely you are familiar with the passage in the Iliad where Homer makes Achilles rise up to avenge Patroclus, and the gods are moved to make battle with each other. Now of this battle of the gods the painting ignores all the rest, but it tells how Hephaestus fell upon Scamander with might and main. Now look again at the painting; it is all from Homer. Here is the lofty citadel, and here the battlements of Ilium; here is the great plain, large enough for marshalling the forces of Asia against the forces of Europe; here fire rolls mightily like a flood over the plain and mightily it creeps along the banks of the River so that no trees are left there. The fire which envelops Hephaestus flows out on the surface of the water and the River is suffering and in person begs Hephaestus for mercy. But the River is not painted with long hair, for the hair has been burnt off; nor is Hephaestus painted as lame, for he is running; and the flames of the fire are not ruddy nor yet of the usual appearance, but they shine like gold and sunbeams. In this Homer is no longer followed.

COMUS

The spirit Comus (Revelry), to whom men owe their revelling, is stationed at the doors of a chamber – golden doors, I think they are; but to make them out is a slow matter, for the time

is supposed to be at night. Yet night is not represented as a person, but rather it is suggested by what is going on; and the splendid entrance indicates a very wealthy pair just married who are lying on a couch. And Comus has come, a youth to join the youths, delicate and yet full grown, flushed with wine and, though erect, he is asleep under the influence of drink. As he sleeps the face falls forward on the breast so that the throat is not visible, and he holds his left hand up to his ear. The hand itself, which has apparently grasped the ear, is relaxed and limp, as is usual at the beginning of slumber, when sleep gently invites us and the mind passes over into forgetfulness of its thoughts; and for the same reason the torch seems to be falling from his right hand as sleep relaxes it. And for fear lest the flames of the torch come too near his leg, Comus bends his lower left leg over towards the right and holds the torch out on his left side, keeping his right hand at a distance by means of the projecting knee in order that he may avoid the breath of the torch.

While painters ought usually to represent the faces of those who are in the bloom of youth, and without these the paintings are dull and meaningless, this Comus has little need of a face at all, since his head is bent forward and the face is in shadow. The moral, I think, is that persons of his age should not go revelling, except with heads veiled. The rest of the body is sharply defined, for the torch shines on every part of it and brings it into the light. The crown of roses should be praised, not much for its truth of representation – since it is no difficult achievement, for instance with yellow and dark blue pigments, to imitate the semblance of flowers – but one must praise the tender and delicate quality of the crown. I praise, too, the dewy look of the roses, and assert that they are painted fragrance and all.

And what else is there of the revel? Well, what but the revellers? Do you not hear the castanets and the flute's shrill note and the disorderly singing? The torches give a faint light, enough for the revellers to see what is close in front of them, but not enough for us to see them. Peals of laughter rise, and women rush along with men, wearing men's sandals and garments girt in strange fashion; for the revel permits women to masquerade as men, and men to "put on women's garb" and to ape the walk of women. Their crowns are no longer fresh but, crushed down on the head on account of the wild running of the dancers, they have lost their joyous look; for the free spirit of the flowers deprecates the touch of the hand as causing them to wither before their time. The painting also represents in a way the din which the revel most requires; the right hand with bent fingers strikes the hollowed palm of the left hand, in order that the hands beaten like cymbals may resound in unison.

FABLES

The Fables are gathering about Aesop, being fond of him because he devotes himself to them. For while Homer also cared for fable, and Hesiod, and Archilochus too in his verses to Lycambes, Aesop has treated all sides of human life in his fables, and has made his animals speak in order to point a moral. For he checks greed and rebukes insolence and deceit, and in all this some animal is his mouthpiece - a lion or a fox or a horse, by Zeus, and not even the tortoise is dumb - that through them children may learn the business of life. So the Fables, honoured because of Aesop, gather at the doors of the wise man to bind fillets about his head and to crown him with a victor's crown of wild olive. And Aesop, methinks, is weaving some fable; at any rate his smile and his eyes fixed on the ground indicate this. The painter knows that for the composition of fables relaxation of the spirit is needed. And

the painting is clever in representing the persons of the Fables. For it combines animals with men to make a chorus about Aesop, composed of the actors in his fables; and the fox is painted as leader of the chorus, wince Aesop uses him as a slave in developing most of his themes, as comedy uses Davus.

MENOECEUS

This is the siege of Thebes, for the wall has seven gates; and the army is the army of Polyneices, the son of Oedipus, for the companies are seven in number. Amphiaraüs approaches them with face despondent and fully aware of the fate in store for them; and while the other captains are afraid – that is why they are lifting their hands to Zeus in prayer – Capaneus gazes on the walls, resolving in his mind how the battlements may be taken with scaling ladders. As yet, however, there is no shooting from the battlements, since the Thebans apparently hesitate to begin the combat.

The clever artifice of the painter is delightful. Encompassing the walls with armed men, he depicts them so that some are seen in full figure, others with the legs hidden, others from the waist up, then only the busts of some, heads only, helmets only, and finally just spear-points. This, my boy, is perspective; sine the problem is to deceive the eyes as they travel back along with the proper receding planes of the picture.

Nor are the Thebans without their prophet, for Teiresias is uttering an oracle pertaining to Menoeceus the son of Creon, how that by his death at the dragon's hole the city should thenceforth be free. And he is dying, his father being all unaware of his fate, an object of pity indeed because of his youth, but really fortunate because of his bravery. For look at the painter's work! He paints a youth not pale, nor the child of

luxury, but courageous and breathing of the palaestra, as it were the choicest of the "honey-coloured" youth whom the son of Ariston praises; and he equips him with a chest deeply tanned, strong sides and a well-proportioned hip and thigh; there is strength both in the promise of his shoulders and in his supple neck; he has long hair also, but not the long hair of luxury. There he stands at the dragon's hole, drawing out the sword which has already been thrust into his side. Let us catch the blood, my boy, holding under it a fold of our garments; for it is flowing out, and the soul is already about to take its leave, and in a moment you will hear its gibbering cry. For souls also have their love for beautiful bodies and therefore are loath to part from them. As his blood runs slowly out, he sinks to his knees and welcomes death with eye beautiful and sweet and as it were inviting sleep.

DWARFS

About the Nile the Dwarfs are sporting, children no taller than their name implies; and Nile delights in them for many reason, but particularly because they herald his coming in great floods for the Egyptians. At any rate they draw near and come to him seemingly out of the water, infants dainty and smiling, and I think they are not without the gift of speech also. Some sit on his shoulders, some cling to his curling locks, some are asleep on his arms, and some romp on his breast. And he yields them flowers, some from his lap and some from his arms, that they may weave them into crowns and, sacred and fragrant themselves, may have a bed of flowers to sleep upon. And the children climb up one on another with sistras in their hands, instruments the sound of which is familiar to that river. Crocodiles, however, and hippopotami, which some artists associate with the Nile in their paintings, are now lying aloof in its deep eddies so as not to frighten the children. But that the river is the Nile is

indicated, my boy, by symbols of agriculture and navigation, and for the following reason: At its flood the Nile makes Egypt open to boats; then, when it has been drunk up by the fields, it gives the people a fertile land to till; and in Ethiopia, where it takes its rise, a divinity is set over it as its steward, and he it is who sends forth its water at the right seasons. This divinity has been painted so as to seem heaven-high, and he plants his foot on the sources, his head bent forward like Poseidon. Toward him the river is looking, and it prays that its infants may be many.

CUPIDS [EROTES]

See, Cupids are gathering apples; and if there are many of them, do not be surprised. For they are the children of the Nymphs and govern all mortal kind, and they are many because of the many things men love; and they say that it is heavenly love which manages the affairs of the gods in heaven. Do you catch aught of the fragrance hovering over the garden, or are your senses dull? But listen carefully; for along with my description of the garden the fragrance of the apples also will come to you.

Here run straight rows of trees with space left free between them to walk in, and tender grass borders the paths, fit to be a couch for one to lie upon. One the ends of the branches apples golden and red and yellow invite the whole swarm of Cupids to harvest them. The Cupids' quivers are studded with gold, and golden also are the darts in them; but bare of these and untrammelled the whole band flits about, for they have hung their quivers on the apple trees; and in the grass lie their brodered mantles, and countless are the colours thereof. Neither do the Cupids wear crowns on their heads, for their hair suffices. Their wings, dark blue and purple and in some cases golden, all but beat the very air and make

harmonious music. Ah, the baskets into which they gather the apples! What abundance of sardonyx, of emeralds, adorns them, and the pearls are true pearls; but the workmanship must be attributed to Hephaestus! But the Cupids need no ladders wrought by him to reach the trees, for aloft they fly even to where the apples hang.

Not to speak of the Cupids that are dancing or running about or sleeping, or how they enjoy eating the apples, let us see what is the meaning of these others. For here are four of them, the most beautiful of all, withdrawn from the rest; two of them are throwing an apple back and forth, and the second pair are engaged in archery, one shooting at his companion and the latter shooting back. Nor is there any trace of hostility in their faces; rather they offer their breasts to each other, in order that the missiles may pierce them there, no doubt. It is a beautiful riddle; come, let us see if perchance I can guess the painter's meaning. This is friendship, my boy, and yearning of one for the other. For the Cupids who play ball with the apple are beginning to fall in love, and so the one kisses the apple before he throws it, and the other holds out his hands to catch it, evidently intending to kiss it in his turn if he catches it and then to throw it back; but the pair of archers are confirming a love that is already present. In a word, the first pair in their play are intent on falling in love, while the second pair are shooting arrows that they may not cease from desire.

As for the Cupids further away, surrounded by many spectators, they have come at each other with spirit and are engaged in a sort of wrestling-match. I will describe the wrestling also, since you earnestly desire it. One has caught his opponent by lighting on his back, and seizes his throat to choke him, and grips him with his legs; the other does not yield, but struggles upright and tries to loosen the hand that

chokes him by bending back one of the fingers till the other no longer hold or keep their grip. In pain the Cupid whose finger is being bent back bites the ear of the opponent. The Cupids who are spectators are angry with him for this as unfair and contrary to the rules of wrestling, and pelt him with apples.

And let not the hare yonder escape us, but let us join the Cupids in hunting it down. The creature was sitting under the trees and feeding on the apples that fell to the ground but leaving many half-eaten; but the Cupids hunt it from place to place and make it dash headlong, one by clapping his hands, another by screaming, another by waving his cloak; some fly above it with shouts, others on foot press hard after it, and one of these makes a rush in order to hurl himself upon it. The creature changes its course and another Cupid schemes to catch it by the leg, but it slips away from him just as it is caught. So the Cupids, laughing, have thrown themselves on the ground, one on his side, one on his face, others on their backs, all in attitudes of disappointment. But there is no shooting of arrows at the hare, since they are trying to catch it alive as an offering most pleasing to Aphrodite. For you know, I imagine, what is said of the hare, that it possesses the gift of Aphrodite to an unusual degree. At any rate it is said of the female that while she suckles the young she has borne, she bears another litter to share the same milk; forthwith she conceives again, nor is there any time at all when she is not carrying young. As for the male, he not only begets offspring in the way natural to males, but also himself bears young, contrary to nature. And perverted lovers have found in the hare a certain power to produce love, attempting to secure the objects of their affection by a compelling magic art.

But let us leave these matters to men who are wicked and do not deserve to have their love returned, and do you look,

please, at Aphrodite. But where is she and in what part of the orchard yonder? Do you see the overarching rock from beneath which springs water of the deepest blue, fresh and good to drink, which is distributed in channels to irrigate the apple trees? Be sure that Aphrodite is there, where the Nymphs, I doubt not, have established a shrine to her, because she has made them mothers of Cupids and therefore blest in their children. The silver mirror, that gilded sandal, the golden brooches, all these have been hung there not without purpose. They proclaim that they belong to Aphrodite, and her name is inscribed on them, and they are said to be gifts of the Nymphs. And the Cupids bring first-fruits of the apples, and gathering around they pray to her that their orchard may prosper.

MEMNON

This is the army of Memnon; their arms have been laid aside, and they are laying out the body of their chief for mourning; he has been struck in the breast, I think, by the ashen spear. For when I find a broad plain and tents and an entrenched camp and a city fenced in with walls, I feel sure that these are Ethiopians and that this city is Troy and that it is Memnon, the son of Eos, who is being mourned. When he came to the defence of Troy, the son of Peleus, they say, slew him, mighty though he was and likely to be no whit inferior to his opponent. Notice to what huge length he lies on the ground, and how long is the crop of curls, which he grew, no doubt, that he might dedicate them to the Nile; for while the mouth of the Nile belongs to Egypt, the sources of it belong to Ethiopia. See his form, how strong it is, even though the light has gone from his eyes; see his downy beard, how it matches his age with that of his youthful slayer. You would not say that Memnon's skin is really black, for the black of it shows a trace of ruddiness.

As for the deities of the sky, Eos mourning over her son causes the Sun to be downcast and begs Night to come prematurely and check the hostile army, that she may be able to steal away her son, no doubt with the consent of Zeus. And look! Memnon has been stolen away and is at the edge of the painting. Where is he? In what part of the earth? No tomb of Memnon is anywhere to be seen but in Ethiopia he himself has been transformed into a statue of black marble. The attitude is that of a seated person, but the figure is that of Memnon yonder, if I mistake not, and the ray of the sun falls on the statue. For the sun, striking the lips of Memnon as a plectrum strikes the lyre, seems to summon a voice from them, and by this speech-producing artifice consoles the Goddess of the Day.

AMYMONE

Poseidon's journey over the sea I think you have come upon in Homeros, when he sets forth from Aegae to join the Achaeans, and the sea is calm, escorting him with its sea horses and its sea-monsters; for in Homer they follow Poseidon and fawn upon him as they do here in the painting. There, I imagine, your thought is of dry-land horses - for Homer maintains that they are "bronze-hoofed," "swiftly-flying," and "smitten by the lash" - but here it is hippocamps that draw the chariot, creatures with web-footed hoofs, good swimmers, blue-eyed, and, by Zeus, in all respects like dolphins. There in Homer Poseidon seems to be angry, and vexed with Zeus for turning back the Greek forces and for directing the contest to their disadvantage; while here he is painted as radiant, of joyous look, and deeply stirred by love. For the sight of Amymone, the daughter of Danaus, as she visits the waters of Inachus, has overmastered the god and he sets out to pursue the girl, who does not yet know that she is loved. At any rate the fright of the maiden, her trembling, and the golden pitcher falling

from her hands make it evident that Amymone is astounded and at a loss to know with what purpose Poseidon so precipitately leaves the sea; and her natural pallor, is illumined by the gold of the pitcher, as its brightness is reflected in the water. Let us withdraw, my boy, and leave the maiden; for already a wave is arching over the nuptials, and, though the water is still bright and pellucid in appearance, Poseidon will presently paint it a purple hue.

A MARSH

The earth is wet and bears reeds and rushes, which the fertile marsh causes to grow "unsown and untilled," and tamarisk and sedge are depicted; for these are marsh-plants. The place is encompassed by mountains heaven high, not all of one type; for some that are covered with pine trees suggest a light soil, others luxuriant with cypress trees proclaim that their soil is of clay, and yonder fir trees - what else do they mean than that the mountain is storm-swept and rugged? For firs do not like rich soil nor do they care for warmth; accordingly their place is at a distance from the plains, since they grow more readily in the mountains because of the wind. And springs are breaking forth from the mountain sides; as they flow down and mingle their waters below, the plain becomes a marsh; not, however, a disordered marsh or the kind that is befouled with mud; but the course of its waters is directed in the painting just as if nature, wise in all things, directed it, and the stream winds in many a tortuous meander, abounding in parsley and suited for the voyaging of water-fowl. For you see the ducks, I am sure, how they glide along the water-course blowing jets of water from their bills. And what of the tribe of geese? Indeed, they too are painted in accordance with their nature, as resting on the water and sailing on it. And those long-legged birds with huge beaks, you doubtless recognize as foreign, the birds delicately coloured each with different

plumage. Their attitudes also are various; one stands on a rock resting first one foot and then the other, one dries its feathers, one preens them, another has snatched some prey from the water, and yet another has bent its head to the land so as to feed on something there.

No wonder that the swans are ridden by Cupids; for these gods are mischievous and prone to sport with birds, so let us not pass by without noticing either their riding or the waters in which this scene lies. Here indeed is the most beautiful water of the marsh, issuing direct from a spring, and it forms a swimming-pool of exceeding beauty. In the midst of the pool amaranth flowers are nodding this way and that, sweet clusters that pelt the water with their blossoms. It is among these clusters that the Cupids are riding sacred birds with golden bridles, one giving free rein, another drawing in, another turning, another driving around the goal-post. Just imagine that you hear them urging on their swans, and threatening and jeering at one another – for this is all to be seen in their faces. One is trying to give his neighbour a fall, another has done it, still another is glad enough to have fallen from his bird that he may take a bath in the race-course. One the banks round about stand more musical swans, singing the Orthian strain, I think, as befits the contestants. The winged youth you see is an indication that a song is being sung, for he is the wind Zephyrus and he gives the swans the keynote of their song. He is painted as a tender and graceful boy in token of the nature of the south-west wind, and the wings of the swans are unfolded that the breezes may strike them.

Behold, a river also issues from the marsh, a broad rippling stream, and goatherds and shepherds are crossing it on a bridge. If you were to praise the painter for his goats, because he has painted them skipping about and prone to mischief, or for his sheep because their gait is leisurely as if their fleeces

were a burden, or if we were to dwell on the pipes or on those who play them – the way they blow with puckered lips – we should praise an insignificant feature of the painting and one that has to do solely with imitation; but we should not be praising its cleverness or the sense of fitness it shows, though these, I believe, are the most important elements of art. Wherein, then lies its cleverness? The painter has thrown a bridge of date palms across the river, and there is a very pretty reason for this; for knowing that palms are said to be male and female, and having heard about their marriage, that the male trees take their brides by bending over towards the female trees and embracing them with their branches, he has painted a palm of one sex on one bank and one of the other sex on the other bank. Thereupon the male tree falls in love and bends over and stretches out over the river; and since it is unable to reach the female tree, which is still at a distance, it lies prone and renders menial service by bridging the water, and it is a safe bridge for men to cross on because of the roughness of its bark.

AMPHION

The clever device of the lyre, it is said, was invented by Hermes, who constructed it of two horns and a crossbar and a tortoise-shell; and he presented it first to Apollo and the Muses, then to Amphion of Thebes. And Amphion, inasmuch as the Thebes of his day was not yet a walled city, has directed his music to the stones, and the stones run together when they hear him. This is the subject of the painting.

Look carefully at the lyre first, to see if it is painted faithfully. The horn is the horn “of a leaping goat,” as the poets say, and it is used by the musician for his lyre and by the bowman for his bow. The horns, you observe, are black and jagged and formidable for attack. All the wood required for the lyre is of

boxwood, firm and free from knots - there is no ivory anywhere about the lyre, for men did not yet know wither the elephant or the use they were to make of its tusks. The tortoise-shell is black, but its portrayal is accurate and true to nature in that the surface is covered with irregular circles which touch each other and have yellow eyes; and the lower ends of the strings below the bridge lie close to the shell and are attached to knobs, while between the bridge and the crossbar the strings seem to be without support, this arrangement of the strings being apparently best adapted for keeping them stretched taut on the lyre.

And what is Amphion saying? Certainly he keeps his mind intent on the harp, and shows his teeth a little, just enough for a singer. No doubt he is singing a hymn to Earth because she, creator and mother of all things, is giving him his walls, which already are rising of their own accord. His hair is lovely and truthfully depicted, falling as it does in disorder on his forehead and mingling with the downy beard beside the ear, and showing a glint of gold; but it is lovelier still where it is held by the headband - the headband "wrought by the Graces, a most lovely ornament," as the poets of the Secret Verses say - and quite in keeping with the lyre. My own opinion is that Hermes gave Amphion both these gifts, both the lyre and the headband, because he was overcome by love for him. And the chlamys he wears, perhaps that also came from Hermes; for its colour does not remain the same but changes and takes on all the hues of the rainbow. Amphion is seated on a low mound, beating time with his foot and smiting the strings with his right hand. His left hand is playing, too, with fingers extended straight, a conception which I should have thought only plastic art would venture. Well, how about the stones? They all run together toward the singing, they listen, and they become a wall. At one point the wall is finished, at another it is rising, at still another the foundation is just laid. The stones

are eager in rivalry, and happy, and devoted slaves of music; and the wall has seven gates, as the strings of the lyre are seven.

PHAETHON

Golden are the tears of the daughters of Helius. The story is that they are shed for Phaëthon; for in his passion for driving this son of Helius ventured to mount his father's chariot, but because he did not keep a firm rein he came to grief and fell into the Eridanus – wise men interpret the story as indicating a superabundance of the fiery element in nature, but for poets and painters it is simply a chariot and horses – and at his fall the heavens are confounded. Look! Night is driving Day from the noonday sky, and the sun's orb as it plunges toward the earth draws in its train the stars. The Horae abandon their posts at the gates and flee toward the gloom that rises to meet them, while the horses have thrown off their yoke and rush madly on. Despairing, the Earth raises her hands in supplication, as the furious fire draws near her. Now the youth is thrown from the chariot and is falling headlong – for his hair is on fire and his breast smouldering with the heat; his fall will end in the river Eridanus and will furnish this stream with a mythical tale. For swans scattered about, breathing sweet notes, will hymn the youth; and flocks of swans rising aloft will sing the story to Caÿster and Ister; nor will any place fail to hear the strange story. And they will have Zephyrus, nimble god of wayside shrines, to accompany their song, for it is said that Zephyrus has made a compact with the swans to join them in the music of the dirge. This agreement is even now being carried out, for look! The wind is playing on the swans as on musical instruments.

As for the women on the bank, not yet completely transformed into trees, men say that the daughters of Helius

on account of their brother's mishap changed their nature and became trees, and that they shed tears. The painting recognizes the story, for it puts roots at the extremities of their toes, while some, over here, are trees to the waist, and branches have supplanted the arms of others. Behold the hair, it is nothing but poplar leaves! Behold the tears, they are golden! While the welling tide of tears in their eyes gleams in the bright pupils and seems to attract rays of light, and the tears on the cheeks glisten amid the cheek's ruddy glow, yet the drops tricking down their breasts have already turned into gold. The river also laments, emerging from its eddying stream, and offers it bosom to receive Phaëthon – for the attitude is of one ready to receive – and soon it will harvest the tears of the daughters of Helios; for the breezes and the chills which it exhales will turn into stone the tear-drops of the poplar trees, and it will catch them as they fall and conduct them through its bright waters to the barbarians by Oceanus.

BOSPHOROS

[The women on the bank] are shouting, and they seem to urge the horses not to throw their young riders nor yet to spurn the bit, but to catch the game and trample it underfoot; and these, I think, hear and do as they are bidden. And when the youths have finished the hunt and have eaten their meal, a boat carries them across from Europe to Asia, about four stades – for this space intervenes between the countries – and they row themselves across.

See, they throw out a rope, and a house is receiving them, a charming house just showing chambers and halls for men and indications of windows, and it is surrounded by a wall with parapets for defence. The most beautiful feature of it is a semi-circular stoa following the curve of the sea, of yellowish

colour by reason of the stone of which it is built. The stone is formed in springs; for a warm stream flowing out below the mountains of Lower Phrygia and entering the quarries submerges some of the rocks and makes the outcroppings of the stone full of water so that it assumes various colours. For the stream is foul where it is sluggish and produces a yellowish colour; but where the water is pure a stone of crystal clearness is formed, and it gives to the rock various colours as it is absorbed in the many seams.

The lofty promontory gives a suggestion of the following tale: A boy and girl, both beautiful and under the tutelage of the same teacher, burned with love for each other; and since they were not free to embrace each other, they determined to die at this very rock, and leaped into the sea in their first and last embrace. Eros on the rock stretches out his hand toward the sea, the painter's symbolic suggestion of the tale.

In the house close by a woman lives alone; she has been driven out of the city by the importunity of her suitors; for they meant to carry her off, and pursued her unsparingly with their attentions and tempted her with gifts. But she, I think, by her haughty bearing spurred them on, and coming hither in secret she inhabits this secure house. For see how secure it is: a cliff juts out into the sea, its receding base bathed by the waves, and, projecting overhead, it bears this house out in the sea, a house beneath which the sea seems darker blue as the eyes are turned down towards it, and the land has all the characteristics of a ship except that it is motionless. Even though she has reached this fortified spot her lovers do not give her up, but they come sailing, one in a dark-prowed boat, one in a golden-prowed, others in all sorts of variegated craft, a revel band pursuing her, all beautiful and crowned with garlands. And one plays the flute, another evidently applauds, another seems to be singing; and they throw her crowns and

kisses. And they are not rowing any longer, but they check their motion and come to rest at the promontory. The woman gazes at the scene from her house as from a look-out tower and laughs down at the reveling crowd, vaunting herself that she is compelling her lovers not merely to sail but also to swim to her.

As you go on to other parts of the painting, you will meet with flocks, and hear herds of cattle lowing, and the music of the shepherd's pipes will echo in your ears; and you will meet with hunters and farmers and rivers and pools and springs – for the painting gives the very image of things that are, of things that are taking place, and in some cases of the way in which they take place, not slighting the truth by reason of the number of objects shown, but defining the real nature of each thing just as if the painter were representing some one thing alone – till we come to a shrine. You see the temple yonder, I am sure, the columns that surround it, and the beacon light at the entrance which is hung up to warn from danger the ships that sail out from the Euxine Sea.

13 BOSPHORUS

“Why do you not go on to another painting? This one of the Bosphorus has been studied enough for me.” What do you mean? I have yet to speak of the fishermen, as I promised when I began. Not to dilate on small matters, but only on points worth discussing, let us omit any account of those who fish with a rod or use a basket cunningly or perchance draw up a net or thrust a trident – for you will hear little about such, and they will seem to you mere embellishments of the painting – but let us look at the men who are trying to capture tunny-fish, for these are worth discussing because the hunt is on so large a scale. For tunny-fish come to the outer sea from the Euxine, where they are born and where they feed on fish and sediment and vegetable matter which the Ister and

Maeotis bring to it, rivers which make the water of the Euxine sweeter and more drinkable than that of any other sea. And they swim like a phalanx of soldiers, eight rows deep and sixteen and twice sixteen, and they drop down in the water, one swimming over another so that the depth of the school equals the width. Now the ways of catching them are countless; sharp iron spears may be used on them or drugs may be sprinkled over them, or a small net is enough for a fisherman who is satisfied with some small portion of the school. But the best means of taking them is this: a look-out is stationed on a high tree, a man quick at counting and keen of vision. For it is his task to fix his eyes on the sea and to look as far as he can; and if perchance he sees the fish approaching, then he must shout as loud as he can to those in the boats and must tell the number of the fish, how many thousands there are; and the boatmen compassing them about with a deep-laid net that can be drawn together make a splendid catch, enough to enrich the captain of the hunt.

Now look at the painting and you will see just this going on. The look-out gazes at the sea and turns his eyes in one direction and another to get the number; and in the bright gleam of the sea the colours of the fish vary, those near the surface seem to be black, those just below are not so black, those lower still begin to elude the sense of sight, then they seem shadowy, and finally they look just like the water; for as the vision penetrates deeper and deeper its power of discerning objects in the water is blunted. The group of fishermen is charming, and they are brown of complexion from exposure to the sun. One binds his oar in its place, another rows with swelling muscle, another cheers his neighbour on, another strikes a man who is not rowing. A shout rises from the fishermen now that the fish are ready in the net. Some they have caught, some they are catching. And at a loss what to do with so many they even open the net and

let some of the fish swim away and escape: so proud are they of their catch.

SEMELE

Brontè, stern of face, and Astrapè flashing light from her eyes, and raging fire from heaven that has laid hold of a king's house, suggest the following tale, if it is one you know. A cloud of fire encompassing Thebes breaks into the dwelling of Cadmus as Zeus comes wooing Semele; and Semele apparently is destroyed, but Dionysus is born, by Zeus, so I believe, in the presence of the fire. And the form of Semele is dimly seen as she goes to the heavens, where the Muses will hymn her praises: but Dionysus leaps forth as his mother's womb is rent apart and he makes the flame look dim, so brilliantly does he shine like a radiant star. The flame, dividing, dimly outlines a cave for Dionysus more charming than any in Assyria and Lydia; for sprays of ivy grow luxuriantly about it and clusters of ivy berries and now grape-vines and stalks of thyrsus which spring up from the willing earth, so that some grow in the very fire. We must not be surprised if in honour of Dionysus the Fire is crowned by the Earth, for the Earth will take part with the Fire in the Bacchic revel and will make it possible for the revelers to take wine from springs and to draw milk from clods of earth or from a rock as from living breasts. Listen to Pan, how he seems to be hymning Dionysus on the crests of Cithaeron, as he dances an Evian fling. And Cithaeron in the form of a man laments the woes soon to occur on his slopes, and he wears an ivy crown aslant on his head - for he accepts the crown most unwillingly - and Megaera causes a fir to shoot up beside him and brings to light a spring of water, in token, I fancy, of the blood of Actaeon and of Pentheus.

ARIADNE

That Theseus treated Ariadne unjustly – though some say not with unjust intent, but under the compulsion of Dionysus – when he abandoned her while asleep on the island of Dia, you must have heard from your nurse; for those women are skilled in telling such tales and they weep over them whenever they will. I do not need to say that it is Theseus you see there on the ship and Dionysus yonder on the land, nor will I assume you to be ignorant and call your attention to the woman on the rocks, lying there in gentle slumber.

Nor yet is it enough to praise the painter for things for which someone else too might be praised; for it is easy for anyone to paint Ariadne as beautiful and Theseus as beautiful; and there are countless characteristics of Dionysus for those who wish to represent him in painting or sculpture, by depicting which even approximately the artist has captured the god. For instance, the ivy clusters forming a crown are the clear mark of Dionysus, even if the workmanship is poor; and a horn just springing from the temples reveals Dionysus, and a leopard, though but just visible, is a symbol of the god; but this Dionysus the painter has characterized by love alone. Flowered garments and thyrsi and fawn-skins have been cast aside as out of place for the moment, and the Bacchantes are not clashing their cymbals now, nor are the Satyrs playing the flute, nay, even Pan checks his wild dance that he may not disturb the maiden's sleep. Having arrayed himself in fine purple and wreathed his head with roses, Dionysus comes to the side of Ariadne, "drunk with love" as the Teian poet says of those who are overmastered by love. As for Theseus, he is indeed in love, but with the smoke rising from Athens, and he no longer knows Ariadne, and never knew her, and I am sure that he has even forgotten the labyrinth and could not tell on what possible errand he sailed to Crete, so singly is his gaze fixed on what lies ahead of his prow. And look at Ariadne, or rather at her sleep; for her bosom is bare to the waist, and her

neck is bent back and her delicate throat, and all her right armpit is visible, but the left hand rests on her mantle that a gust of wind may not expose her. How fair a sight, Dionysus, and how sweet her breath! Whether its fragrance is of apples or of grapes, you can tell after you have kissed her!

PASIPHAË

Pasiphaë is in love with the bull and begs Daedalus to devise some lure for the creature; and he is fashioning a hollow cow like a cow of the herd to which the bull is accustomed. What their union brought forth is shown by the form of the Minotaur, strangely composite in its nature. Their union is not depicted here, but this is the workshop of Daedalus; and about it are statues, some with forms blocked out, others in a quite complete state in that they are already stepping forward and give promise of walking about. Before the time of Daedalus, you know, the art of making statues had not yet conceived such a thing. Daedalus himself is of the Attic type in that his face suggests great wisdom and that the look of the eye is so intelligent; and his very dress also follows the Attic style; for he wears this dull coarse mantle and also he is painted without sandals, in a manner peculiarly affected by the Athenians. He sits before the framework of the cow and he uses Cupids [Erotes] as his assistants in the device so as to connect with it something of Aphrodite. Of the Cupids, my boy, those are visible who turn the drill, and those by Zeus that smooth with the adze portions of the cow which are not yet accurately finished, and those that measure off the symmetrical proportions on which craftsmanship depends. But the Cupids that work with the saw surpass all conception and all skill in drawing and colour. For look! The saw has attacked the wood and is already passing through it, and these Cupids keep it going, one on the ground, another on the staging, both straightening up and bending forward in turn.

Let us consider this movement to be alternate; one has bent low as if about to rise up, his companion has risen erect as if about to bend over; the one on the ground draws his breath into his chest, and the one who is aloft fills his lungs down to his belly as he presses both hands down on the saw.

Pasiphaë outside the workshop in the cattlefold gazes on the bull, thinking to draw him to her by her beauty and by her robe, which is divinely resplendent and more beautiful than any rainbow. She has a helpless look – for she knows what the creature is that she loves – and she is eager to embrace it, but takes no notice of her and gazes at its own cow. The bull is depicting with proud mien, the leader of the herd, with splendid horns, white, already experienced in love, its dewlap low and its neck massive, and it gazes fondly at the cow; but the cow in the herd, ranging free and all white but for a black head, disdains the bull. For its purpose suggests a leap, as of a girl who avoids the importunity of a lover.

HIPPODAMEIA

Here is consternation over Oenomaüs the Arcadian; these are men who shout a warning for him – for perhaps you can hear them – and the scene is Arcadia and a portion of the Peloponnesus. The chariot lies shattered through a trick of Myrtilus. It is a four-horse chariot; for though men were not yet bold enough to use the quadriga in war, yet in the games it was known and prized, and the Lydians also, a people most devoted to horses, drove four abreast in the time of Pelops and already used chariots, and at a later time devised the chariot with four poles and, it is said, were the first to drive eight horses abreast.

Look, my boy, at the horses of Oenomaüs, how fierce they are and keen to run, full of rage and covered with foam – you will find such horses especially among the Arcadians – and how

black they are, harnessed as they were for a monstrous and accursed deed. But look at the horse of Pelops, how white they are, obedient to the rein, comrades as they are of Persuasion, neighing gently and as if aware of the coming victory. And look at Oenomaüs, how like he is to the Thracian Diomedes as he lies there, a barbarian and savage of aspect. But as to Pelops, on the other hand, you will not, I think, be inclined to doubt that Poseidon once on a time fell in love with him for his beauty when he was wine-pourer for the gods on Mount Sipylus, and because of his love set him, though still a youth, upon this chariot. The chariot runs over the sea as easily as on land, and not even a drop of water ever splashes on its axle, but the sea, firm as the earth itself, supports the horses. As for the race, Pelops and Hippodameia are the victors, both standing on the chariot and there joining hands; but they are so conquered by each other that they are on the point of embracing one another. He is dressed in the delicate Lydian manner, and is of such youth and beauty as you noticed a moment ago when he was begging Poseidon for his horses; and she is dressed in a wedding garment and has just unveiled her cheek, now that she has won the right to a husband's embrace. Even the Alpheius leaps from his eddy to pluck a crown of wild olive for Pelops as he drives along the bank of the river.

The mounds along the race-course mark the graves of the suitors by whose death Oenomaüs postponed his daughter's marriage, thirteen youths in all. But the earth now causes flowers to spring up on their graves, that they too may share the semblance of being crowned on the occasion of Oenomaüs' punishment.

BACCHANTES

Here are also painted, my boy, scenes from Mount Cithaeron – choruses of Bacchantes, and rocks flowing with wine, and nectar dripping from clusters of grapes, and the earth enriching the broken soil with milk. Lo! ivy creeps over the ground, serpents stand erect, and thyrsus trees are dripping, I think, with honey. This fir you see lying on the ground is a great deed of women inspired by Dionysus; it fell as it shook off Pentheus in the form of a lion into the hands of the Bacchantes. They rend in pieces their prey – that mother of his and his mother's sisters, they tearing off his arms while she is dragging her son by the hair. You would even say they were raising the shout of victory, so like the Bacchic cry is their panting. Dionysus himself stands where he can watch them, puffing out his cheek with passion and applying the Bacchic goad to the women. At any rate they do not see what they are doing, and in the supplication of Pentheus they say they hear a lion's roaring.

That is what is taking place on the mountain; but here in the foreground we now see Thebes and the palace of Cadmus and lamentation over the prey, while the relatives try to fit the corpse together that it may perhaps be rescued for burial. There lies the head of Pentheus, no longer a dubious thing, but such as to excite the pity even of Dionysus – very youthful, with delicate chin and locks of reddish hue, not wreathed with ivy or bryony or sprays of vine, nor are they tossed in wild disorder by flute or Bacchic frenzy. From those locks he derived his vigour, and he imparted vigour to them; but this itself was his madness, that he would not join Dionysus in madness.

Pitiful also we must consider the state of the women. For of what things were they unaware on Cithaeron and of what things do they here have knowledge! Not only has their madness left them, but also the strength they possessed in the

Bacchic revel. On Cithaeron you see how, inspired by the conflict, they rush headlong, rousing the echoes on the mountain side, but here they stand still and have come to a realization of what they did in their revels; sinking to the ground one rests her head on her knees, another on her shoulder, while Agave is eager to embrace her son but shrinks from touching him. Her son's blood is smeared on her hands and on her cheek and on her naked breast.

Harmonia and Cadmus are there, but not as they were before; for already they have become serpents from the thighs down and already scales are forming on them. Their feet are gone, their hips are gone, and the change of form is creeping upward. In astonishment they embrace each other as though holding on to what is left of the body, that this at least may not escape them.

THE TYRRHENIAN PIRATES

A mission ship and a pirate's ship. Dionysus steers the former, on board the latter are Tyrrhenians, pirates who ravage their own sea. The one is a sacred ship; in it Dionysus revels and the Bacchantes cry out in response to him, and orgiastic music resounds over the sea, which yields its broad surface to Dionysus as readily as does the land of the Lydians; on the other ship they go mad and forget to row and already the hands of many of them are gone. What does the painting mean? Tyrrhenian sailors, my boy, are lying in wait for Dionysus, as word has come to them that he is effeminate and a vagabond and a mine of gold so far as his ship is concerned, because of the wealth it carries, and that he is accompanied only by Lydian women and Satyrs and fluteplayers, and an aged narthex-bearer, and Maronian wine, and by Maron himself. Hearing that Pans sail with him in the form of goats, they planned to carry off the Bacchantes for themselves and

to turn over to the Pans she-goats, such as are raised in the land of the Tyrrhenians. Now the pirate ship sails with warlike mien; for it is equipped with prow-beams and beak, and on board are grappling-irons and spears and poles armed with scythes. And, in order that it may strike terror into those they meet and may look to them like some sort of monster, it is painted with bright colours, and it seems to see with grim eyes set into its prow, and the stern curves up in a thin crescent like the end of a fish's tail. As for the ship of Dionysus, it has a weird appearance in other respects, and it looks as if it were covered with scales at the stern, for cymbals are attached to it in rows, so that, even if the Satyrs are overcome by wine and fall asleep, Dionysus may not be without noise on his voyage; and its prow is drawn out in the semblance of a golden leopardess. Dionysus is devoted to this animal because it is the most exciteable of animals and leaps lightly like a Bacchante. At any rate you see the very creature before you; it sails with Dionysus and leaps against the Tyrrhenians without waiting for his bidding. And the thyrsus here has grown in the midst of the ship and serves as a mast, and sails dyed purple are attached to it, gleaming as they belly out in the wind, and woven in them are golden Bacchantes on Mount Tmolus and Dionysiac scenes from Lydia. That the ship seems to be embowered with vine and ivy and that clusters of grapes swing above it is indeed a marvel, but more marvelous is the fountain of wine, for the hollow ship pours forth the wine and lets it drain away.

But let us turn to the Tyrrhenians while they still remain; for under the maddening power of Dionysus the forms of dolphins are creeping over the Tyrrhenians – not at all the dolphins we know, however, nor yet those native to the sea. One of the men has dark sides, one a slippery breast, on the back of one a fin is growing, one is growing a tail, the head of one is gone but that of another is left, the hand of one is melting away,

while another laments over his vanishing feet.

Dionysus on the prow of his ship laughs at the scene and shouts orders to the Tyrrhenians as fishes in shape instead of men, and as good in character instead of bad. Soon, at any rate, Palaemon will ride on a dolphin's back, not awake, but lying prone upon it sound asleep; and the Arion at Taenarum makes it clear that dolphins are the companions of men, and fond of song, and worthy to take the field against pirates in defence of men and the art of music.

SATYRS

The place is Celaenae, if one may judge by the springs and the cave; but Marsyas has gone away either to watch his sheep or because the contest is over. Do not praise the water; for, though it looks sweet and placid, you will find Olympus sweeter. He sleeps after having played his flute, a tender youth lying on tender flowers, whilst the moisture on his forehead mingles with the dew of the meadow; and Zephyrus summons him by breathing on his hair, and he breathes in response to the wind, drawing the air from his lungs. Reeds already yielding music lie beside Olympus, and also the iron tools with which the holes are bored in the pipes. A band of Satyrs gaze lovingly upon the youth, ruddy grinning creatures, one desiring to touch his breast, another to embrace his neck, another eager to pluck a kiss; they scatter flowers over him and worship him as if he were a divine image; and the cleverest of them draws out the tongue of the second pipe which is still warm and eats it, thinking he is thus kissing Olympus, and he says he tasted the boy's breath.

OLYMPUS

For whom are you playing the flute, Olympus? And what need is there of music in a desert place? No shepherd is here with

you, nor goatherd, nor yet are you playing for Nymphs, who would dance beautifully to your flute; and I do not understand just why you take delight in the pool of water by the rock and gaze into it. What interest have you in it? It does not murmur for you like a brook and sing an accompaniment to your flute, nor do we need its water to measure off the day for you, we who would fain prolong your music even into the night. If it is beauty you are investigating, pay no heed to the water; for we are more competent than it to tell all your charms. Your eye is bright, and many a provoking glance comes from it to the flute; your brow overarching the eye indicates the meaning of the tune you play; your cheek seems to quiver and as it were to dance to the melody; your breath does not puff out your cheeks because it is all in the flute; your hair is not unkempt, nor does it lie smooth, made sleek with unguents as in a city youth, but it is so dry that it is fluffy, yet without giving the impression of squalid dryness by reason of the bright fresh sprays of pine upon it. Beautiful is such a crown and well adapted to adorn beautiful youths; but let flowers grow for maidens and let them produce their rosy colour for women. Your breast, I should say, is filled not merely with breath for the flute, but also with thoughts of music and meditation on the tunes you will play. As far as the breast the water pictures you, as you bend down over it from the rock; but if it pictured you full length, it would not have shown you as comely from the breast down; for reflections in the water are but on the surface, imperfect because stature is foreshortened in them. The fact that your reflection is broken by ripples may be due to your flute breathing upon the water of the fountain, or all that we see may be due to Zephyrus, who inspires you in playing the flute, the flute in breathing its strain, and the spring in being moved by the flute-playing.

MIDAS

The Satyr is asleep; let us speak of him with bated breath, lest he wake and spoil the scene before us. Midas has captured him with wine in Phrygia on the very mountain-side, as you see, by filling with wine the spring beside which he lies disgorging the wine in his sleep.

Charming is the vehemence of satyrs when they dance, and charming their ribaldry when they laugh; they are given to live, noble creatures that they are, and they subdue the Lydian women to their will by their artful flatteries. And this too is true of them: they are represented in paintings as hardy, hot-blooded beings, with prominent ears, lean about the loins, altogether mischievous, and having the tails of horses.

The Satyr caught by Midas is here depicted as satyrs in general are, but he is asleep as a result of the wine, breathing heavily like a drunken man. He has drunk up the whole spring more easily than another would have taken a cupful, and the Nymphs dance, mocking the Satyr for having fallen asleep. How dainty is Midas and how he takes his ease! He is careful of his head-dress and his curling locks, and he carries a thyrsus and wears a robe woven with gold. See the long ears, which give his seemingly attractive eyes a sleepy look and turn their charm into dullness; for the painting purposely hints that this story has already been divulged and published abroad among men by the pen, since the earth could not keep secret what it heard.

NARCISSUS

The pool paints Narcissus, and the painting represents both the pool and the whole story of Narcissus. A youth just returned from the hunt stands over a pool, drawing from within himself a kind of yearning and falling in love with his own beauty; and, as you see, he sheds a radiance into the

water. The cave is sacred to Acheloüs and the Nymphs, and the scene is painted realistically. For the statues are of a crude art and made from a local stone; some of them are worn away by time, others have been mutilated by children of cowherds or shepherds while still young and unaware of the presence of the god. Nor is the pool without some connection with the Bacchic rites of Dionysus, since he had made it known to the Nymphs of the wine-press; at any rate it is roofed over with vine and ivy and beautiful creeping plants, and it abounds in clusters of grapes and the trees that furnish the thyrsi, and tuneful birds disport themselves above it, each with its own note, and white flowers grow about the pool, not yet in blossom but just springing up in honour of the youth. The painting has such regard for realism that it even shows drops of dew dripping from the flowers and a bee settling on the flowers - whether a real bee has been deceived by the painted flowers or whether we are to be deceived into thinking that a painted bee is real, I do not know. But let that pass. As for you, however, Narcissus, it is no painting that has deceived you, nor are you engrossed in a thing of pigments or wax; but you do not realize that the water represents you exactly as you are when you gaze upon it, nor do you see through the artifice of the pool, though to do so you have only to nod your head or change your expression or slightly move your hand, instead of standing in the same attitude; but acting as though you had met a companion, you wait for some move on his part. Do you then expect the pool to enter into conversation with you? Nay, this youth does not hear anything we say, but he is immersed eyes and ears alike, in the water and we must interpret the painting for ourselves.

The youth, standing erect, is at rest; he has his legs crossed and supports one hand on the spear which is planted on his left, while his right hand is pressed against his hip so as to support his body and to produce the type of figure in which

the buttocks are pushed out because of the inward bend on the left side. The arm shows an open space at the point where the elbow bends, a wrinkle where the wrist is twisted, and it casts a shadow as it ends in the palm of the hand, and the lines of the shadow are slanting because the fingers are bent in. Whether the panting of his breast remains from his hunting or is already the painting of love I do not know. The eye, surely, is that of a man deeply in love, for its natural brightness and intensity are softened by a longing that settles upon it, and he perhaps thinks that he is loved in return, since the reflection gazes at him in just the way that he looks at it. There would be much to say about his hair if we found him while hunting. For there are innumerable tossings of the hair in running, especially when it is blown by a wind; but even as it is the subject should not be passed over in silence. For it is very abundant and of a golden hue; and some it clings to the neck, some is parted by the ears, some tumbles over the forehead, and some falls in ripples to the beard. Both the Narcissi are exactly alike in form and each repeats the traits of the other, except that one stands out in the open air while the other is immersed in the pool. For the youth stands over the youth who stands in the water, or rather who gazes intently at him and seems to be athirst for his beauty.

HYACINTHUS

Read the hyacinth, for there is writing on it which says it sprang from the earth in honour of a beautiful youth; and it laments him at the beginning of spring, doubtless because it was born from him when he died. Let not the meadow delay you with the flower, for it grows here also, not different from the flower which springs from the earth. The painting tells us that the hair of the youth is "hyacinthine," and that his blood, taking on life in the earth, has given the flower its own crimson colour. It flows from the head itself where the discus

struck it. Terrible was the failure to hit the mark and incredible is the story told of Apollo; but since we are not here to criticize the myths and are not ready to refuse them credence, but are merely spectators of the paintings, let us examine the painting and in the first place the stand set for throwing the discus.

A raised thrower's stand has been set apart, so small as to suffice for only one person to stand on, and then only when it supports the posterior portions and the right leg of the thrower, causing the anterior portions to bend forward and the left leg to be relieved of weight; for this leg must be straightened and advanced along with the right arm. As for the attitude of the man holding the discus, he must turn his head to the right and bend himself over so far that he can look down at his side, and he must hurl the discus by drawing himself up and putting his whole right side into the throw. Such, no doubt, was the way Apollo threw the discus, for he could not have cast it in any other way; and now that the discus has struck the youth, he lies there on the discus itself - a Laconian youth, straight of leg, not unpractised in running, the muscles of his arm already developed, the fine lines of the bones indicated under the flesh; but Apollo with averted face is still on the thrower's stand and he gazes down at the ground. You will say he is fixed there, such consternation has fallen upon him. A lout is Zephyrus, who was angry with Apollo and caused the discus to strike the youth, and the scene seems a laughing matter to the wind and he taunts the god from his look-out. You can see him, I think, with his winged temples and his delicate form; and he wears a crown of all kinds of flowers, and will soon weave the hyacinth in among them.

ANDRIANS

The stream of wine which is on the island of Andros, and the Andrians who have become drunken from the river, are the subject of this painting. For by act of Dionysus the earth of the Andrians is so charged with wine that it bursts forth and send up for them a river; if you have water in mind, the quantity is not great, but if wine, it is a great river – yes, divine! For he who draws from it may well disdain both Nile and Ister and may say of them that they also would be more highly esteemed if they were small, provided their streams were like this one.

These things, methinks, the men, crowned with ivy and bryony, are singing to their wives and children, some dancing on either bank, some reclining. And very likely this also is the theme of their song – that while the Acheloüs bears reeds, and the Peneius waters Tempe, and the Pactolus . . . flowers, this river makes men rich and powerful in the assembly, and helpful to their friends, and beautiful and, instead of short, four cubits tall; for when a man has drunk his fill of it he can assemble all of these qualities and in his thought make them his own. They sing, I feel sure, that this river alone is not disturbed by the feet of cattle or of horses, but is a draught drawn from Dionysus, and is drunk unpolluted, flowing for men alone. This is what you should imagine you hear and what some of them really are singing, though their voices are thick with wine.

Consider, however, what is to be seen in the painting: The river lies on a couch of grape-clusters, pouring out its stream, a river undiluted and of agitated appearance; thyrsi grow about it like reeds about bodies of water, and if one goes alone past the land and these drinking groups on it, he comes at length on Tritons at the river's mouth, who are dipping up the wine in sea-shells. Some of it they drink, some they flow out in streams, and of the Tritons some are drunken and

dancing. Dionysus also sails to the revels of Andros and, his ship now moored in the harbour, he leads a mixed throng of Satyrs and Bacchantes and all the Seileni. He leads Laughter (Gelon) and Revel (Comus), two spirits most gay and most fond of the drinking-bout, that with the greatest delight he may reap the river's harvest.

BIRTH OF HERMES

The mere babe still in swaddling clothes, the one who is driving the cattle into the cleft of the earth, who furthermore is stealing Apollo's weapons - this is Hermes. Very delightful are the thefts of the god; for the story is that Hermes, when Maia bore him, loved thievery and was skilled in it, though it was by no means through poverty that the god did such things, but out of pure delight and in a spirit of fun. If you wish to follow his course step by step, see how the painting depicts it. He is born on the crest of Olympus, at the very top, the abode of the gods. There, as Homer says, one feels no rain and hears no wind, nor is it ever beaten by snow, it is so high; but it is absolutely divine and free from the ills that pertain to the mountains which belong to men. There the Horae care for Hermes at his birth. The painter has depicted these also, each according to her time, and they wrap him in swaddling clothes, sprinkling over him the most beautiful flowers, that he may have swaddling clothes not without distinction. While they turn to the mother of Hermes lying on her couch of travail, he slips out of his swaddling clothes and begins to walk at once and descends from Olympus. The mountain rejoices in him - for its smile is like that of a man - and you are to assume that Olympus rejoices because Hermes was born there.

Now what of the theft? Cattle grazing on the foothills of Olympus, yonder cattle with golden horns and whiter than

snow – for they are sacred to Apollo – he leads over a winding course into a cleft of the earth, not that they may perish, but that they may disappear for one day, until their loss vexes Apollo; and then he, as though he had had no part in the affair, slips back into his swaddling clothes. Apollo comes to Maia to demand back the cattle, but she does not believe him and thinks the god is talking nonsense. Would you learn what he is saying? For, from his expression he seems to me to be giving utterance, not merely to sounds, but to words; he looks as though he were about to say to Maia, “Your son whom you bore yesterday wrongs me; for the cattle in which I delight he has thrust into the earth, nor do I know where in the earth. Verily he shall perish and shall be thrust down deeper than the cattle.” But she merely marvels, and does not believe what he says. While they are still disputing with one another Hermes takes his stand behind Apollo, and leaping lightly on his back, he quietly unfastens Apollo’s bow and pilfers it unnoticed, but after he has pilfered it, he does not escape detection. Therein lies the cleverness of the painter; for he melts the wrath of Apollo and represents him as delighted. But his laughter is restrained, hovering as it were over his face, as amusement conquers wrath.

AMPHIARAÛS

The two-horse chariot – for the four-horse chariot was not yet in use by the heroes except by Hector the Bold – is bearing Amphiaraüs on his way back from Thebes at the time when the earth is said to have opened to receive him, in order that he may prophesy in Attica and utter true answers, a sage among men most sage. Of those seven who sought to gain the kingdom for the Theban Polyneices none returned save Adrastus and Amphiaraüs; the rest the Cadmeian soil received. These were slain by spears and stones and battle-axes, all but Capaneus, who, it is said, was struck down

by a thunderbolt after he had first, as I recall, struck at Zeus with a boastful taunt.

Now those others belong to another tale, but the painting bids you look at Amphiaraüs alone as in his flight he sinks beneath the earth, fillets and laurel and all. His horses are white, the whirling of his chariot wheels shows urgent haste, the panting breath of the horses issues from every nostril, the earth is bespattered with foam, the horses' manes are all awry, and fine dust settling on their bodies wet with sweat makes them less beautiful but more true to life. Amphiaraüs otherwise is in full armour, but he has left off his helmet, thus dedicating his head to Apollo, for his look is holy and oracular. The painting depicts also Oropus as a youth among bright-eyed women, nymphs of the sea, and it depicts also the place used by Amphiaraüs for meditation, a cleft holy and divine. Truth clad all in white is there and the gate of dreams – for those who consult the oracle must sleep – and the god of dreams himself is depicted in relaxed attitude, wearing a white garment over a black one, I think representing his nocturnal and diurnal work. And in his hands he carries a horn, showing that he brings up his dreams through the gate of truth.

HUNTERS

Do not rush past us, ye hunters, nor urge on your steeds till we can track down what your purpose is and what the game is you are hunting. For you claim to be pursuing a “fierce wild boar,” and I see the devastation wrought by the creature – it has burrowed under the olive trees, cut down the vines, and has left neither fig tree nor apple tree or apple branch, but has torn them all out of the earth, partly by digging them up, partly by hurling itself upon them, and partly by rubbing against them. I see the creature, its mane bristling, its eyes flashing fire, and it is gnashing its tusks at you, brave youths;

for such wild animals are quick to bear the hunter's din from a very great distance. But my own opinion is that, as you were hunting the beauty of yonder youth, you have been captured by him and are eager to run into danger for him. For why so near? Why do you touch him? Why have you turned toward him? Why do you jostle each other with your horses?

How I have been deceived! I was deluded by the painting into thinking that the figures were not painted but were real beings, moving and loving - at any rate I shout at them as though they could hear and I imagine that I hear some response - and you did not utter a single word to turn me back from my mistake, being as much overcome as I was and unable to free yourself from the deception and the stupefaction induced by it. So let us look at the details of the painting; for it really is a painting before which we stand.

About the lad are gathered beautiful youths, who engage in beautiful pursuits, such as are becoming to men of noble parentage. One shows in his face a touch of the palaestra, another shows grace, another urbanity, and the fourth, you will say, has just raised his head from a book. The horses they ride are no two alike, white and chestnut and black and bay, horses with silver bits, dappled horses with golden trappings - these pigments, it is said, the barbarians living by Oceanus compound of red-hot bronze, and they combine, and grow hard, and preserve what is painted with them - nor have the youths the same clothing or equipment. One lightly armed horseman wears his tunic girt up, a good javelin thrower I suppose, another has his breast protected with armour, threatening fight with the wild beast, another has his shins protected, another his legs. That youth rides on a white horse which, as you see, has a black head, and a white medallion is fashioned on his forehead in imitation of the full moon; and it has golden trappings, and bridle of Median scarlet; for his

colour flashes on the gold with the effect of fiery-red jewels. The youth's garment is a chlamys bellying out in the wind; in colour it is the sea-purple which the Phoenicians love, and it should be prized above other purple dyes; for though it seems to be dark it gains a peculiar beauty from the sun and is infused with the brilliancy of the sun's warmth. And from shame of exposing himself unclad to those about him he wears a sleeved chiton of purple which reaches half-way down his thighs and likewise half-way to his elbows. He smiles, and his eye flashes, and he wears his hair long, but not long enough to shade his eyes when the wind shall throw it into disorder. Doubtless many a one will praise his cheeks and the proportions of his nose and each several feature of his face, but I admire his spiritedness; for as a hunter he is vigorous and is proud of his horse, and he is conscious of the fact that he is beloved. Mules and a muleteer bring their luggage, snares and nets and boar-spears and javelins and lances with toothed blades; masters of hounds accompany the expedition and trackers and all breeds of dogs, not alone the keen-scented and swift of foot, but also the high-spirited dogs, for courage also was required to confront the wild beast. And so the painting shows Locrian, Laconian, Indian, and Cretan dogs, some sportive and baying, . . . and some attentive; and they all follow the trail with grinning muzzles. And the hunters as they advance will hymn Artemis Agrotera; for yonder is a temple to her, and a statue worn smooth with age, and heads of boars and bears; and wild animals sacred to her graze there, fawns and wolves and hares, all tame and without fear of man. After a prayer the hunters continue the hunt.

The boar cannot bring himself to keep out of sight, but leaps from the thicket and rushes at the horsemen; at first it confuses them by its sudden onset, then it is overcome by their missiles, though it is not mortally wounded, partly

because it is on its guard against their thrusts and partly because it is not hit by bold hunters; but, weakened by a superficial wound in the thigh, it runs through the woods till it finds refuge in a deep marsh and a pool adjoining the marsh. So with shouting the rest follow it to the edge of the marsh, but the youth keeps on after the creature into the pool and these four dogs with him; the creature tries to wound his horse, but bending well over on his horse and leaning to the right he delivers with the full force of his arm a blow that hits the boar just where the shoulder-blade joins the neck. Thereupon the dogs drag the boar to the ground, and the lovers on the bank shout as if in rivalry to see who will outshout his neighbour; and one is thrown from his horse which he excited beyond control instead of holding it I check; and he weaves for the youth a crown of flowers from the meadow in the marsh. The lad is still in the pool, still in the attitude in which he hurled his javelin, while the youths stand in astonishment and gaze at him as though he were a pictures.

PERSEUS

No, this is not the Red Sea nor are these inhabitants of India, but Ethiopians and a Greek man in Ethiopia. And of the exploit which I think the man undertook voluntarily for love, my boy, you must have heard – the exploit of Perseus who, they say, slew in Ethiopia a monster from the sea of Atlas, which was making its way against herds and the people of this land. Now the painter glorifies this tale and shows his pity for Andromeda in that she was given over to the monster. The contest is already finished and the monster lies stretched out on the strand, weltering in streams of blood – the reason the sea is red – while Eros frees Andromeda from her bonds. Eros is painted with wings as usual, but here, as it not usual, he is a young man, panting and still showing the effects of his toil;

for before the deed Perseus put up a prayer to Eros that he should come and with him swoop down upon the creature, and Eros came, for he heard the Greek's prayer. The maiden is charming in that she is fair of skin though in Ethiopia, and charming is the very beauty of her form; she would surpass a Lydian girl in daintiness, an Attic girl in stateliness, a Spartan in sturdiness. Her beauty is enhanced by the circumstances of the moment; for she seems to be incredulous, her joy is mingled with fear, and as she gazes at Perseus she begins to send a smile towards him. He, not far from the maiden, lies in the sweet fragrant grass, dripping sweat on the ground and keeping the Gorgon's head hidden lest people see it and be turned to stone. Many cow-herds come offering him milk and wine to drink, charming Ethiopians with their strange colouring and their grim smiles; and they show that they are pleased, and most of them look alike, Perseus welcomes their gifts and, supporting himself on his left elbow, he lifts his chest, filled with breath through panting, and keeps his gaze upon the maiden, and lets the wind blow out his chlamys, which is purple and spattered with drops of blood and with the flecks which the creature breathed upon it in the struggle. Let the children of Pelops perish when it comes to a comparison with the shoulder of Perseus! for beautiful as he is and ruddy of face, his bloom has been enhanced by his toil and his veins are swollen, as is wont to happen when the breath comes quickly. Much gratitude does he win from the maiden.

PELOPS

A delicate garment of Lydian fashion, a lad with beard just beginning to grow, Poseidon smiling at him and honouring the lad with a gift of horses – all this shows that it is Pelops the Lydian who has come to the sea in order to invoke Poseidon's aid against Oenomaüs; since Oenomaüs accepts no son-in-law,

but slaying the suitors of Hippodameia he takes pride in their severed members as hunters who have captures game take pride in the heads of bears or lions. And in answer to Pelops' prayer a golden chariot ahs come out of the sea, but the horses are of mainland breed, and able to speed over the Aegean with dry axle and light hoof. The task will go off well for Pelops, but let us examine the task of the painter.

It requires no small effort, in my opinion to compose four horses together and not to confuse their several legs one with another, to impart to them high spirits controlled by the bridle, and to hold them still, one at the very moment when he does not want to stand still, another when he wants to paw the ground, a third when he [wants to lift up his head], while the fourth takes delight in the beauty of Pelops and his nostrils are distended as though he were neighing. This too is a clever touch: Poseidon loves the lad and brings him to the cauldron and to Clotho, after which Pelops' shoulder seemed to shine; and he did not try to divert him from the marriage, since the lad is eager for it, but being content even to touch his hand, he clasps the right hand of Pelops while he counsels him about the race; and already Pelops proudly "breathes Alpheius," and his look follows the steeds. Charming is his glance and elated because he is proud of the diadem, from which the hair of the lad trickling down like golden sprays of water follows the lines of his forehead, and joins the bright down on his cheeks, and though it falls this way and that, yet it lies gracefully. The hip and breast, and the other parts of the naked body of Pelops which might be mentioned, the painting conceals; a garment covers his arms and even his lower legs. For the Lydians and the upper barbarians, encasing their beauty in such garments, pride themselves on these weavings, when they might pride themselves on their natural form. While the rest of his figure is out of sight and covered, the garment by his left shoulder is artfully neglected

in order that its gleam may not be hidden; for the night draws on, and the lad glows with the radiance of his shoulder as does the night with that of the evening star.

XENIA

It is a good thing to gather figs and also not to pass over in silence the figs in this picture. Purple figs dripping with juice are heaped on vine-leaves; and they are depicted with breaks in the skin, some just cracking open to disgorge their honey, some split apart, they are so ripe. Near them lies a branch, not bare, by Zeus, or empty of fruit, but under the shade of its leaves are figs, some still green and “untimely,” some with wrinkled skin over-ripe, and some about to turn, disclosing the shining juice, while on the tip of the branch a sparrow buries its bill in what seems the very sweetest of the figs. All the ground is strewn with chestnuts, some of which are rubbed free of the burr, others lie quite shut up, and others how the burr breaking at the lines of division. See, too, the pears on pears, apples on apples, both heaps of them and piles of ten, all fragrant and golden. You will say that their redness has not been put on from outside, but has bloomed from within. Here are gifts of the cherry tree, here is fruit in clusters heaped in a basket, and the basket is woven, not from alien twigs, but from branches of the plant itself. And if you look at the vine-sprays woven together and at the clusters hanging from them and how the grapes stand out one by one, you will certainly hymn Dionysus and speak of the vine as “Queenly giver of grapes.” You would say that even the grapes in the painting are good to eat and full of winey juice. And the most charming point of all this is: on a leafy branch is yellow honey already within the comb and ripe to stream forth if the comb is pressed; and on another leaf is cheese new curdled and quivering; and there are bowls of milk not merely white but gleaming, for the cream floating upon it makes it

seem to gleam.

BOOK II

BOOK II.

SINGERS

An Aphrodite, made of ivory, delicate maidens are hymning in delicate myrtle groves. The chorister who leads them is skilled in her art, and not yet past her youth; for a certain beauty rests even on her first wrinkle, which, though it brings with it the gravity of age, yet tempers this with what remains of her prime. The type of the goddess is that of Aphrodite goddess of Modesty, unclothed and decorous, and the material is ivory, closely joined. However, the goddess is unwilling to seem painted, but she stands out as though one could take hold of her.

Do you wish us to pour a libation of discourse on the altar? For of frankincense and cinnamon and myrrh it has enough already, and it seems to me to give out also a fragrance as of Sappho. Accordingly the artistry of the painting must be praised, first, because the artist, in making the border of precious stones, has used not colours but light to depict them, putting a radiance in them like the pupil in an eye, and, secondly, because he even makes us hear the hymn. For the maidens are singing, are singing, and the chorister frowns at one who is off the key, clapping her hands and trying earnestly to bring her into tune . . . For as to their garments, they are simple and such as not to impede their movements if they should play – for instance, the close-fitting girdle, the chiton that leaves the arm free, and the way they enjoy treading with naked feet on the tender grass and drawing refreshment from the dew; and the flowered decoration of their garments, and the colours used on them – the way they

harmonize the one with the other - are represented with wonderful truth; for painters who fail to make the details consistent with one another do not depict the truth in their paintings. As to the figures of the maidens, if we were to leave the decision regarding them to Paris or any other judge, I believe he would be at a loss how to vote, so close is the rivalry among them in rosy arms and flashing eyes and fair cheeks and in "honeyed voices," to use the charming expression of Sappho.

Eros, tilting up the centre of his bow, lightly strikes the string for them and the bow-string resounds with a full harmony and asserts that it possesses all the notes of a lyre; and swift are the eyes of the god as they recall, I fancy, some particular measure. What, then, is the song they are singing? For indeed something of the subject has been expressed in the painting; they are telling how Aphrodite was born from the sea through an emanation of Uranus. Upon which one of the islands she came ashore they do not yet tell, though doubtless they will name Paphos; but they are singing clearly enough of her birth, for by looking upward they indicate that she is from Heaven (Uranus), and by slightly moving their upturned hands they show that she has come from the sea, and their smile is an intimation of the sea's calm.

THE EDUCATION OF ACHILLES

A fawn and a hare - these are the spoils of hunting of Achilles as he is now, the Achilles who at Ilium will capture cities and horses and the ranks of men, and rivers will do battle with him when he refuses to let them flow, and as reward of those exploits he will bear away Briseïs and the seven maidens from Lesbos and gold and tripods and authority over the Achaeans; but the exploits here depicted, done at Cheiron's home, seem to deserve apples and honey as rewards, and you are content

with small gifts, Achilles, you who one day will disdain whole cities and marriage with Agamemnon's daughter. Nay, the Achilles who fights at the trench, who puts the Trojans to rout merely by his shouting, and who slays men right and left, and reddens the water of the Scamander, and also his immortal horses, and his dragging of Hector's body around the walls, and his lamentation on the breast of Patroclus - all this has been depicted by Homer, and he depicts him also as singing and praying and receiving Priam under his roof.

This Achilles, however, a child not yet conscious of valour, whom Cheiron still nourishes upon milk and marrow and honey, he has offered to the painter as a delicate, sport-loving child and already light of foot. For the boy's leg is straight and his arms come down to his knees (for such arms are excellent assistants in the race); his hair is charming and loose; for Zephyrus in sport seems to shift it about, so that as it falls, now here, now there, the boy's appearance may be changed. Already the boy has a frowning brow and an air of spirited haughtiness, but these are made gentle by a guileless look and by gracious cheeks that send for a tender smile. The cloak he wears is probably his mother's gift; for it is beautiful and its colour is sea-purple with red glints shading into a dark blue. Cheiron flatters him by saying that he catches hares like a lion and vies with fawns in running; at any rate, he has just caught a fawn and comes to Cheiron to claim his reward, and Cheiron, delighting to be asked, stands with fore-legs bent so as to be on a level with the boy and offers him apples fair and fragrant from the fold of his garment - for their very fragrance seems to be depicted - and with his hand he offers him a honeycomb dripping with honey, thanks to the diligent foraging of the bees. For when bees find good meadows and become big with honey, the combs get filled to overflowing and their cells pour it forth. Now Cheiron is painted in every aspect like a centaur; yet to combine a horse and human body

is no wondrous deed, but to gloss over the juncture and make the two into one whole and, by Zeus, cause on to end and the other to begin in such wise as to elude the eye of the observer who should try to detect where the human body ends, this seems to me to demand an excellent painter. That the expression seen in the eye of Cheiron is gentle is the result of his justice, but the lyre also does its part, through whose music he has become cultured; but now there is also something of cozening in his look, no doubt because Cheiron knows that this soothes children and nurtures them better than milk.

This is the scene at the entrance of the cave; and the boy out on the plain, the one who is sporting on the back of the centaur as if it were a horse, is still the same boy; for Cheiron is teaching Achilles to ride horseback and to use him exactly as a horse, and he measures his gait to what the boy can endure, and turning around he smiles at the boy when he laughs aloud with enjoyment, and all but says to him, "Lo, my hoofs paw the ground for you without use of spur; lo, I even urge you on; the horse is indeed a spirited animal and gives no ground for laughter. For although you have been taught by me thus gently the art of horsemanship, divine boy, and are suited to such a horse as I, some day you shall ride on Xanthos and Balios; and you shall take many cities and slay many men, you merely running and they trying to escape you." Such is Cheiron's prophecy for the boy, a prophecy fair and auspicious and quite unlike that of Xanthos.

FEMALE CENTAURS

You used to think that the race of centaurs sprang from trees and rocks or, by Zeus, just from mares - the mares which, men say, the son of Ixion covered, the man by whom the centaurs though single creatures came to have their double

nature. But after all they had, as we see, mothers of the same stock and wives next and colts as their offspring and a most delightful home; for I think you would not grow weary of Pelion and the life there and its wind-nurtured growth of ash which furnishes spear-shafts that are straight and at the same time do not break at the spearhead. And its caves are most beautiful and the springs and the female centaurs beside them, like Naiads if we overlook the horse part of them, or like Amazons if we consider them along with their horse bodies; for the delicacy of their female form gains in strength when the horse is seen in union with it. Of the baby centaurs here some lie wrapped in swaddling clothes, some have discarded their swaddling clothes, some seem to be crying, some are happy and smile as they suck flowing breasts, some gambol beneath their mothers while others embrace them when they kneel down, and one is throwing a stone at his mother, for already he grows wanton. The bodies of the infants have not yet taken on their definite shape, seeing that abundant milk is still their nourishment, but some that already are leaping about show a little shagginess, and have sprouted mane and hoofs, though these are still tender.

How beautiful the female centaurs are, even where they are horses; for some grow out of white mares, others are attached to chestnut mares, and the coat's of others are dappled, but they glisten like those of horses that are well cared for. There is also a white female centaur that grows out of a black mare, and the very opposition of the colours helps to produce the united beauty of the whole.

HIPPOLYTUS

The wild best is the curse of Theseus; swift as dolphins it has rushed at the horses of Hippolytus in the form of a white bull, and it has come from the sea against the youth quite unjustly.

For his stepmother Phaedra concocted a story against him that was not true, to the effect that Hippolytus loved her, - but it was really herself that was in love with the youth - and Theseus, deceived by the tale, calls down upon his son the curse which we see here depicted.

The horses, as you see, scorning the yoke toss their manes unchecked, not stamping their feet like well bred and intelligent creatures, but overcome with panic and terror, and spattering the plain with foam, one while fleeing has turned its head toward the beast, another has leaped up at it, another looks at it askance, while the onrush of the fourth carries him into the sea as though he had forgotten both himself and dry land; and with erect nostrils they neigh shrilly, unless you fail to hear the painting. Of the wheels of the chariot one has been torn from its spokes as the chariot has tipped over upon it, the other has left its axle and goes rolling off by itself, its momentum still turning it. The horses of the attendants also are frightened and in some cases throw off their riders, while as for those who grasp them firmly about the neck, to what goal are they now carrying them?

And thou, O youth that lovest chastity, thou hast suffered injustice at the hands of thy step-mother, and worse injustice at the hands of thy father, so that the painting itself mourns thee, having composed a sort of poetic lament in thine honour. Indeed yon mountain-peaks over which thou didst hunt with Artemis take the form of mourning women that tear their cheeks, and the meadows in the form of beautiful youths, meadows which thou didst call "undefiled," cause their flowers to wither for thee, and nymphs thy nurses emerging from yonder springs tear their hair and pour streams of water from their bosoms. Neither did thy courage protect thee nor yet thy strong arm, but of thy members some have been torn off and others crushed, and thy hair has been

defiled with dirt; they breast is still breathing as though it would not let go of the soul, and thine eye gazes at all thy wounds. Ah, thy beauty! How proof it is against wounds no one would have dreamed. For not even now does it quit the body; nay, a charm lingers even on thy wounds.

RHODOGOUNE

The blood and also the bronze weapons and the purple garments lend a certain glamour to the battles-scene, and a pleasing feature of the painting is the men who have fallen in different postures, and horses running wildly in terror, and the pollution of the water of the river by which these events occur, and the captives, and the trophy commemorating the victory over them. Rhodogoune and the Persians are conquering the Armenians who broke the treaty, on the occasion when Rhodogoune is said to have won the battle, not even having allowed herself to tarry long enough to fasten up the right side of her hair. Is she not elated and proud of the victory and conscious that she will be celebrated for her exploit with lyre and flute and wherever there are Greeks? Her horse also is in the painting, a black Nisaeon mare with white legs; its breast also is white, its breath comes from white nostrils and its forehead is marked with white in a perfect circle. Nay, Rhodogoune has bestowed upon the mare precious stones and necklaces and every dainty ornament, that it may delight in them and champ its bit delicately; and Rhodogoune is resplendent with scarlet raiment, all except her face; she wears a charming girdle which permits her robe to fall only to her knee, and charming trousers in which designs are woven; her chiton is fastened with brooches set at intervals from shoulder to elbow, the arm showing between the fastenings, though the shoulder is covered; the dress is not that of an Amazon. One should also admire the shield, of moderate size but large enough to cover the breast. And at

this point one should examine carefully the effectiveness of the painting; for the left hand extends beyond the handle of the shield and grasps the spear, holding the shield away from the breast; and though the rim is held out straight, the outside of the shield is also visible – is it not resplendent and as it were animate with life? – while the inside, where the arm is, is of a purple hue and the forearm shines against this background.

It seems, my boy, that you have a feeling for the beauty in this figure and desire to hear something on this point also, so listen. Rhodogoune is pouring a libation for her victory over the Armenians, and the artist's conception is of a woman praying. She prays to conquer men, even as she has now conquered them; for I do not think she loves to be loved. The part of her hair that is fastened up is arranged with modesty that tempers her high spirit, while that which hangs loose gives her vigour and the look of a bacchant. Yellow, even yellower than gold, is her disarranged hair; while the hair on the other side differs also somewhat in hue because of its orderly arrangement. The way her eyebrows begin at the same point and rise together from the nose is charming; but more charming still is the curve they make; for the brows ought not only to be set above the eyes but should also be set in an arch around them. As for the cheek, it receives the yearning that emanates from the eyes, yet it delights in merriment – for it is mostly in the cheek that mirth is shown – and the colour of the eyes varies from grey to black; the joy they show is due to the occasion, their beauty is a gift of nature, while their haughtiness arises from her authority as ruler. The mouth is delicately formed and filled with "love's harvest," most sweet to kiss, most difficult to describe. But you may observe, my boy, all you need to be told: the lips are full of colour and even the mouth is well proportioned and it utters its prayer before the trophy of victory; if we care to

listen attentively, perhaps it will speak in Greek.

ARRICHION

You have come to the Olympic games themselves and to the noblest of the contests held at Olympia; for this is the pancratiun of men. Arrichion is being crowned for winning this event, having died just after his victory, and the Judge of the Games yonder is crowning him – let him be called “the strict judge,” both because he sedulously strives for the truth and because he is indeed depicted like the Olympic judges. The land furnishes a stadium in a simple glen of sufficient extent, from which issues the stream of the Alpheius, a light stream – that, you know, is why it alone of rivers flows on top of the sea; and about it grow wild olive trees of green-grey colour, beautiful and curly like parsley leaves.

Now after we have observed the stadium, we will turn our attention to various other points, and in particular let us take note of the deed of Arrichion before it is ended. For he seems to have conquered not his antagonist alone, but also all the Greeks; at any rate the spectators jump up from their seats and shout, some wave their hands, some their garments, some leap from the ground, and some grapple with their neighbours for joy; for these really amazing deeds make it impossible for the spectators to contain themselves. Is anyone so without feeling as not to applaud this athlete? For after he had already achieved a great deed by winning two victories in the Olympic games, a yet greater deed is here depicted, in that, having won this victory at the cost of his life, he is being conducted to the realms of the blessed with the very dust of victory still upon him. Let not this be regarded as mere chance, since he planned most shrewdly for the victory.

And as to the wrestling? Those who engage in the pancratiun, my boy, employ a wrestling that is hazardous; for they must

needs meet blows on the face that are not safe for the wrestler, and must clinch in struggles that one can only win by pretending to fall, and they need skill that they may choke an adversary in different ways at different times, and the same contestants are both wrestling with the ankle and twisting the opponent's arm, to say nothing of dealing a blow and leaping upon the adversary; for these things are all permissible in the pancratium – anything except biting and gouging. The Lacedaemonians, indeed, allow even these, because, I suppose, they are training themselves for battle, but the contests of Elis exclude them, though they do permit choking. Accordingly the antagonist of Arrichion, having already clinched him around the middle, thought to kill him; already he had wound his forearm about the other's throat to shut off the breathing, while, pressing his legs on the groins and winding his feet one inside each knee of his adversary, he forestalled Arrichion's resistance by choking him till the sleep of death thus induced began to creep over his senses. But in relaxing the tension of his legs he failed to forestall the scheme of Arrichion; for the latter kicked back with the sole of his right foot (as the result of which his right side was imperiled since now his knee was hanging unsupported), then with his groin he holds his adversary tight till he can no longer resist, and, throwing his weight down toward the left while he locks the latter's foot tightly inside his own knee, by this violent outward thrust he wrenches the ankle from its socket. Arrichion's soul, though it makes him feeble as it leaves his body, yet gives him strength to achieve that for which he strives.

The one who is choking Arrichion is painted to look like a corpse, and as indicating with his hand that he gives up the struggle; but Arrichion is painted as all victors are; for his blood is of rich colour, the perspiration is still fresh on his body and he smiles as do the living when they are conscious

of victory.

ANTILOCHUS

That Achilles loved Antilochus you must have discovered in Homer, seeing Antilochus to be the youngest man in the Greek host and considering the half talent of gold that was given him after the contest. And it is he who brings word to Achilles that Patroclus has fallen, for Menelaüs cleverly devised this as a consolation to accompany the announcement, since Achilles' eyes were thus diverted to his loved one; and Antilochus laments in grief for his friend and restrains his hands lest he takes his own life, while Achilles no doubt rejoices at the touch of the youth's hand and at the tears he sheds.

Now such is the scene in Homer, but the events depicted by the painter are as follows: Memnon coming from Ethiopia slays Antilochus who had thrown himself in front of this father, and he seems to strike terror among the Achaeans - for before Memnon's time black men were but a subject for story - and the Achaeans, gaining possession of the body, lament Antilochus, both the sons of Atreus and the Ithacan and the son of Tydeus and the two heroes of the same name. The Ithacan is made known by his austere and vigilant look, Menelaus by his gentleness, Agamemnon by his god-like mien, while the son of Tydeus is marked by his nobility, and you would recognize the Telamonian Ajax by his grimness and the Locrian by his alertness. And the army mourns the youth, standing about him in lamentation; and, their spears fixed in the ground and their legs crossed, they stand, most of them in their grief bowing their sorrowing heads on their spears. You are not to recognize Achilles by his long hair, for that is gone since the death of Patroclus, but let his beauty make him known to you, and his stature, aye, and the very fact that he

does not wear long hair. He laments, throwing himself on the breast of Antilochus, and he seems to be promising him a funeral pyre and the offerings to be placed upon it and perchance the arms and head of Memnon; for he proposes that Memnon shall pay all the penalties Hector paid, that in this respect also Antilochus may have no less honour than Patroclus had. Memnon, stands, terrible to look upon, in the army of the Ethiopians, holding a spear and wearing a lion's skin and sneering at Achilles. Let us next look at Antilochus. He is in the prime of youth, just beyond the period of downy beard, and his bright hair is his pride. His leg is slender and his body proportioned for running with ease, and his blood shines red, like colour on ivory, where the spear-point penetrated his breast. The youth lies there, not sad of aspect nor yet like a corpse, but still joyous and smiling; for it was with a look of joy on his face (because, I fancy, he had saved his father's life) that Antilochus died from the spear-thrust, and the soul left his countenance, not when he was in pain, but when gladness prevailed.

MELES

The story of Enipeus and of Tyro's love for the river has been told by Homer, and he tells of Poseidon's deception of her and of the splendid colour of the eave beneath which was their couch - but the story here told is a different one, not from Thessaly but Ionian. Critheïs loves the river Meles in Ionia, and it takes the form of a young man and is wholly visible to the spectator, for it empties into the sea in the region where it arises. She drinks the water though she is not thirsty, and takes it in her hands, and keeps up a conversation with it as though the murmur of the water were human speech, and sheds tears of love into the water; and the river, since it loves her in return, delights to mingle her tears with its stream. Now a delightful feature of the painting is the figure of Meles

lying on a bed of crocus and lotus blossoms and delighting in the hyacinth because of its fresh young bloom, and presenting an appearance delicate and youthful and not at all lacking in cleverness – indeed you would say that the eyes of Meles were contemplating some poetic theme. It is a delightful feature also that he does not pour forth turbulent streams at his source, as boorish rivers are usually painted; nay, he but cuts a passage through the earth with the tips of his fingers and holds his hand beneath the water as it trickles noiselessly by; and to us it is clear that, for Critheïs, this is no dream, nor were you writing this love of yours in water; for the river loves you, I know it well, and he is devising a chamber for you both by lifting up a wave beneath which shall be your couch. If you do not believe me, I will tell you the very construction of the chamber; a slight breeze running under a wave causes it to curve over and makes it resonant and also of brilliant hue; for the reflection of the sun lends colour to the uplifted water.

Why do you seize hold of me, my boy? Why do you not let me go on and describe the rest of the painting? If you wish, let us next describe Critheïs, since you say you are pleased when my tale roams freely over such things. Well, let us speak of her; her figure is delicate and truly Ionian, and modesty is manifest upon it, and the colour we see in her cheeks suffices for them; and her hair is caught up under the ear and adorned with a veil of sea-purple. I think the veil is the gift of some Nereid or Naiad, for it is reasonable to assume that these goddesses dance together in honour of the river Meles, since it offers them fountains not far from its mouth. Her glance has something so charming and simple about it, that even tears do not cause it to lose its graciousness. Her neck is all the more lovely for not being adorned, since chains and flashing stones and necklaces lend a not unpleasing brilliance to women of moderate beauty and by Zeus they contribute something of

beauty to them, but they are not becoming to ugly women or to very beautiful women; for they show up the ugliness of the former and detract from the beauty of the latter. Let us examine the hands; the fingers are delicate, of graceful length, and as white as the fore-arm. And you see the forearm, how it appears yet whiter through the white garment; and the firm breasts gleam under the garment.

Why do the Muses come hither? Why are they present at the source of the Meles? When the Athenians set out to colonize Ionia, the Muses in the form of bees guided their feet; for they rejoiced in Ionia, because the waters of Meles are sweeter than the waters of Cephissus and Olmeius. Some day, indeed, you will find them dancing there; but now, by decree of the fates, the Muses are spinning the birth of Homer; and Meles through his son will grant to the Peneius to be "silver-eddied," to the Titaresius to be "nimble" and "swift," and to the Enipeus to be "divine," and to the Axios to be "all-beautiful," and he will also grant to the Xanthus to be born from Zeus, and to Oceanus that all rivers spring from him.

PANTHEIA

The character of Pantheia the beautiful has been described by Xenophon, how she disdained Araspas and would not yield to Cyrus and wished the same earth to cover her and Abradates in the grave; but what her hair was like, what the breadth of her brow, what her glance and the expression of her mouth Xenophon did not describe, though he was particularly clever at telling of such things; but a man not good at writing though very clever at painting, who, though he had never seen Pantheia herself, was nevertheless well acquainted with Xenophon, here paints Pantheia as from her soul he divined her to be.

The walls, my bow, and the burned houses and the fair Lydian women - these let us leave to Persians to ravage and to capture what of them can be captured. And so with Croesus, for whom the pyre was destined, though Xenophon himself does not mention this - hence our painter does not know of him and does not make him a prisoner of Cyrus. But as for Abradates and Pantheia, who died upon his dead body, since this is what the painting aims to depict, let us consider them, the great tragedy they enacted. These two loved each other and the woman had made her own ornaments into armour for him; he was fighting for Cyrus against Croesus on a chariot with four poles and eight horses, . . . still a youth of downy beard, of an age when the poets consider even young trees which have been torn out of the ground to be objects of pity. The wounds, my boy, are such as swordsmen make - for it accords with this style of fighting so to cut down the foe - some of his pure blood stains his armour, some the man himself, and some is sprinkled on the crest which rises hyacinthine red from the golden helmet and sheds splendour on the gold itself. A beautiful burial offering are these arms, for one who had not brought shame upon them nor cast them away in battle; and Cyrus brings many Assyrian and Lydian gifts to a brave man, among other things a chariot load of golden sand from the over-abundant treasures of Croesus; but Pantheia believes that the tomb still lacks the offerings due it unless she gives herself as a funeral sacrifice to Abradates. She has already driven the dagger through her breast, but with such fortitude that she has not uttered even a groan at the thrust. At any rate she lies there, her mouth retaining its natural shapeliness and by Zeus a beauty the bloom of which so rests upon her lips that it shines forth clear, silent though she is. She has not yet drawn out the dagger but still presses on it, holding it by the hilt - a hilt that resembles a golden stalk with emeralds for its branches - but the fingers are more

charming still; she has lost none of her beauty through pain, and indeed she does not seem to suffer pain at all but rather to depart in joy because she sends herself away. And she departs, not like the wife of Protesilaüs, wreathed with the garlands of the Bacchic rites she had been celebrating, nor yet like the wife of Capaneus, decked out as for sacrifice; but she keeps her beauty unadorned and just as it was while Abradates was alive, and takes it thus away with her, letting her thick black hair fall unrestrained over her shoulders and neck, yet just showing her white throat, which she had torn in her grief, though not in a way to disfigure it; indeed the marks made by her finger-nails are more charming than a painting. The flush on her cheeks has not left her even in death; her beauty and modesty have supplied it. Look at the moderately up-curved nostrils that form a base for the nose from which the crescent eyebrows spring like branches, black beneath the white forehead. As for the eyes my boy, let us not consider them for their size, nor ask if they are black, but let us consider the great intelligence there is in them, and by Zeus all the virtues of the soul which they have absorbed; for though their state excites pity, yet they have not lost their look of gladness, and though they are courageous, yet they show the courage of reason rather than of rashness, and though they are aware of death, they have not yet departed from life. Desire, the companion of love, so suffuses the eyes that it seems clearly to drip from them. Love also is represented in the picture, as a part of the narrative of the deed; so also is the Lydian woman, catching the blood, as you see, in a fold of her golden robe.

CASSANDRA

The men who lie here and there in the men's great hall, the blood commingled with the wine, the men who sprawling on the tables breathe out their life, and yonder mixing-bowl that

has been kicked aside by the man who lies gasping beside it, a maiden in the garb of a prophetess who gazes at the axe which is about to descend upon her – thus Clytemnestra welcomes Agamemnon on his return from Troy. And while others are slaying Agamemnon's followers, who are so drunken as to embolden even Aegisthus for the deed, Clytemnestra, enveloping Agamemnon in a device of a mantle from which there is no escape, brings down upon him this two-edged axe by which even great trees are laid low, and the daughter of Priam, esteemed by Agamemnon as of surpassing beauty, who chanted prophecies that were not believed, she slays with the still warm axe. If we examine this scene as a drama, my boy, a great tragedy has been enacted in a brief space of time, but if as a painting, you will see more in it than a drama. For look, here are torches to provide light – evidently these events take place at night – and yonder are mixing-bowls to provide drink, bowls of gold brighter than the torches' flame, and there are tables laden with food, the food on which hero kings were feasting; but all these things are in disorder, for the banqueters in their death throes have kicked some over, others have been shattered, others lies at a distance from the banqueters. And cups, most of them defiled with gore, fall from their hands; nor have the dying men any power to defend themselves, for they are drunken. As for the attitudes of those that have fallen, one has had his throat cut as he is partaking of food or of drink, another as he bent over the mixing-bowl has had his head cut off, another has had his hand lopped off as it carried a beaker, another as he tumbled from his couch drags the table after him, another has fallen "head foremost," as a poet would say, upon his shoulders and head; one has no suspicion of death, and another lacks the strength to flee since drunkenness like a fetter has enchained him. Nor is any one of the fallen pallid of hue, since when men die in their cups the flush does not immediately leave their

faces.

The most prominent place in the scene is occupied by Agamemnon, who lies, not on the plains of Troy nor on the banks of some Scamander, but among boys and women-folk, like "an ox at the crib" - for this means rest after toil and partaking of food - but even more striking in its pathos is the figure of Cassandra - the way Clytemnestra, her eyes crazed, her hair flying, her arm savagely raised, stands over her with the axe, and the way Cassandra herself, tenderly and in a state of inspiration, has tried to throw herself upon Agamemnon as she hurls her fillets from her and as it were casts about him the protection of her prophetic art; and as the axe is now poised above her, she turns her eyes toward it and utters so pathetic a cry that even Agamemnon, with the remnant of life that is in him, pities her, hearing her cry; for he will recount it to Odysseus in Hades in the concourse of souls.

PAN

Pan, the nymphs say, dances badly and goes beyond bounds in his leaping, leaping up and jumping aloft after the manner of sportive goats; and they say that they would teach him a different kind of dancing, or a more delightful character; when he, however, pays no heed to them but, his garment extended, tries to make love to them they set upon him at noon, when Pan is said to abandon the hunt and go to sleep. Formerly he used to sleep relaxed, with peaceful nostril and soothing his angry spirit with slumber, but today he is very angry; for the Nymphs have fallen upon him, and already Pan's hands have been tied behind his back, and he fears for his legs since the Nymphs wish to seize them. Moreover, his beard, which he values most highly, has been shaven off with razors which have been roughly applied to it, and they say

that they will persuade Echo to scorn him and no longer even to answer his call. Here are the Nymphs in a group, but do you look at them by classes; for some are Naiades – these who are shaking drops of dew from their hair; and the lean slenderness of the country nymphs is no white less beautiful than dew; and the flower nymphs have hair that resembles hyacinth flowers.

PINDAR

I suppose you are surprised that these bees are painted with such detail, for the proboscis is clearly to be seen, and feet and wings and the colour of their garb are as they should be, since the painting gives them the many hues with which nature endows them. Why, then, are the clever insects not in their hives? Why are they in a city? They are going on a revel to the doors of Daïphantos – for Pindar has already been born, as you see – in order to mould the babe from earliest childhood that he may even now be inspired with harmony and music; and they are busy with this task. For the child has been laid on laurel branches and sprays of myrtle, since his father conjectured that he was to have a sacred son, inasmuch as cymbals resounded in the house when the child was born, and drums of Rhea were heard, and the Nymphs also, it was said, danced for him, and Pan leaped aloft; nay, they say that when Pindar began to write poetry, Pan neglected his leaping and sang the odes of Pindar.

A carefully wrought statue of Rhea has been set up by the very door, and methinks the statue is clearly of marble, for the painting has taken on a certain harness at this point and what else is it, pray, but carved stone? She brings both the Nymphs of early morning dew and the Nymphs of the springs, and Pan is dancing a certain measure and his expression is radiant and his nostril without a trace of anger. The bees

inside the hose are busily at work over the boy, dropping honey upon him and drawing back their stings for fear of stinging him. From Hymettus doubtless they have come, and from the "gleaming city sung in story"; for I think that this is what they instilled into Pindar.

THE GYRAEAN ROCKS

The rocks rising out of the water and the boiling sea about them, and on the rocks a hero glaring fiercely and with a certain proud defiance toward the sea - the ship of the Locrian has been struck by lightning; and leaping from the ship as it bursts into flame, he struggles with the waves, sometimes breaking his way through them, sometimes drawing them to him, and sometimes sustaining their weight with his breast; but when he reaches the Gyrae - the Gyrae are rocks that stand out in the Aegean gulf - he utters disdainful words against the very gods, whereupon Poseidon himself sets out for the Gyrae, terrible, my boy, tempestuous, his hair standing erect. And yet in former days he fought as an ally of the Locrian against Ilium, when the hero was discreet and forbore to defy the gods - indeed, Poseidon strengthened him with his sceptre; but now, when the god sees him waxing insolent, he raises his trident against the man and the ridge of rock that supports Ajax will be so smitten that it will shake him off, insolence and all.

Such is the story of the painting, but what is shown to the eye is this: the sea is whitened by the waves; the rocks are worn by the constant drenching; flames leap up from the midst of the ship, and as the wind fans the flames the ship still sails on as if using the flames as a sail. Ajax gazes out over the sea like a man emerging from a drunken sleep, seeing neither ship nor land; nor does he even fear the approaching Poseidon, but he looks like a man still tense for the struggle; the strength

has not yet left his arms, and his neck still stands erect even as when he opposed Hector and the Trojans. As for Poseidon, hurling his trident he will dash in pieces the mass of rock along with Ajax himself, but the rest of the Gyrae will remain as long as the sea shall last and will stand unharmed henceforth by Poseidon.

THESSALY

This painting suggests Egypt at first view, but the story it tells is not Egyptian; rather, in my opinion, it deals with the Thessalians. For whereas the land which the Egyptians occupy is a gift of the Nile, the Thessalians in early times were not permitted by the Peneius to have any land at all, since mountains encompassed the level spaces, which the stream continually flooded because it had as yet no outlet. Therefore Poseidon will break through the mountains with his trident and open a gateway for the river. Indeed, this is the work which he has now undertaken, the mighty task of uncovering the plains; his hand is raised to break the mountains apart, but, before the blow has fallen, they separate a sufficient space to let the river through. In the painter's effort to make the action clear, the right side of Poseidon has been at the same time both drawn back and advanced and he threatens to strike his blow, not merely with his hand but with his whole body. He is painted, not dark blue nor yet as a god of the sea, but as a god of the mainland. Accordingly he greets the plains as he sees that they are both broad and level like stretches of the sea. The river also rejoices as one exulting; and, keeping the usual posture of resting on his elbow (since it is not customary for a river to stand erect), he takes up the river Titaresius as being light water and better to drink and promises Poseidon that he will flow out in the course he had made. Thessaly emerges, the water already subsiding; she wears tresses of olive and grain

and grasps a colt that emerges along with her. For the horse also is to be her gift from Poseidon, when the earth shall receive the seed of the god while he sleeps and shall bear a horse.

GLAUCUS PONTIUS

After passing through the Bosphorus and between the Symplegadae the Argo is already cutting its way through the midst of the surging Euxine and Orpheus is beguiling the sea by his singing, moreover the Euxine listens and is calm under the spell of his song. The freight which the ship carries consists of the Dioscuri and Heracles, the sons of Aeacus and of Boreas, and all the offspring of the demigods who flourished at this time; and the keel which had been fitted beneath the ship was wrought of an ancient tree, the tree which Zeus used for his oracular utterances at Dodona. Now the purpose of the voyage was as follows: In Colchis is preserved a golden fleece, the fleece of the ancient ram that ferried Helle with Phrixus across the sky, as the story goes. Jason, my boy, undertakes the task of securing this fleece (a task indeed, for to guard the fleece a dragon of fear-inspiring look and disdainful of sleep holds it encircled in his coils); for this reason he is commander of the ship, since the responsibility for the voyage devolves upon him. And Tiphys, my boy, is pilot of the ship; and he is said to be the first of men to have been bold enough for the art which was still then mistrusted; and Lynceus son of Aphareus is stationed at the prow, a man gifted in seeing far ahead and in peering deep down into the depths, always the first to discern submerged reefs and the first to salute land as it dimly appears on the horizon.

But now, methinks, even the eye of Lynceus is stricken with consternation at the approach of the apparition, which also

causes the fifty sailors to stop their rowing; Heracles, it is true, remains unmoved at the sight, as one who has met with many like monsters, but the rest, I believe, are calling it a wonder. For they see Glaucus Pontius. The story is that he once dwelt in ancient Anthedon and that he ate a certain grass on the seashore, and that when a wave came upon him unawares he was borne away to the haunts of the fishes. Now he is probably uttering some great oracle, for he excels in this art. As to his appearance, the curls of his beard are whet, but white as gushing fountains to the sight; and heavy are the locks of his hair, which conduct on to his shoulders all the water they have taken up from the sea; his eyebrows are shaggy and they are joined together as though they were one. Ah, the arm! how strong it has become through exercise against the sea, continually battling against the waves and making them smooth for his swimming. Ah, the breast! what a shaggy covering of seaweed and tangle is spread over it like a coat of hair; while the belly beneath is undergoing a change and already begins to disappear. That Glaucus is a fish as to the rest of his body is made evident by the tail, which is lifted and bent back toward the waist; and the part of it that is shaped like a crescent is sea-purple in colour. Kingfishers circle about him both singing the deeds of men (for they like Glaucus have been transformed from the men they once were) and at the same time giving to Orpheus a specimen of their own song, by reason of which not even the sea is without music.

PALAEEMON

The people sacrificing at the Isthmus, they would be the people of Corinth; and yonder king of the people, let us consider him to be Sisyphus; and this precinct of Poseidon gently resounding to the murmur of the sea – for the foliage of the pines makes this music – all this, my boy, indicates the

following: Ino throwing herself from the land for her part becomes Leucothea and one of the band of the Nereides, while as for the child, the earth will claim the infant Palaemon. Already the child is putting in towards shore on a dolphin obedient to his will, and the dolphin making its back level bears the sleeping child, slipping noiselessly through the calm water so as not to disturb his sleep. And as he approaches, a sanctuary opens in the Isthmus as the earth is split apart by Poseidon, who, I fancy, announces to Sisyphus here the advent of the child and bids him offer sacrifice to him. Sisyphus is sacrificing yonder black bull which he has no doubt taken from the herd of Poseidon. The meaning of the sacrifice, the garb worn by those who conducted it, the offerings, my boy, and the use of the knife must be reserved for the mysterious rites of Palaemon – for the doctrine is holy and altogether secret, inasmuch as Sisyphus the wise first hallowed it; for that he is a wise man is shown at once, methinks, by the intent look on his face. And as for the face of Poseidon, if he were about to shatter the Gyrean rocks or the Thessalian mountains, he would doubtless been painted as terrible and like one dealing a blow; but since he is receiving Melicertes as his guest in order that he may keep him on land, he smiles as the child makes harbour, and bids the Isthmus spread out its bosom and become the home of Melicertes. The Isthmus, my boy, is painted in the form of divinity reclining at full length upon the ground, and it has been appointed by nature to lie between the Aegean and the Adriatic as though it were a yoke laid upon the two seas. On the right it has a youth, surely the town of Lechaeum, and on the left are girls; these are the two seas, fair and quite calm, which lie alongside the land that represents the Isthmus.

ISLANDS

Would you like, my boy, to have as discourse about those islands just as if from a ship, as though we were sailing in and out among them in the spring-time, when Zephyrus makes the sea glad by breathing his own breeze upon it? But you must be willing to forget the land and to accept this as the sea, not roused and turbulent nor yet flat and calm, but a sea fit for sailing and as it were alive and breathing. Lo, we have embarked; for no doubt you agree? Answer for the boy "I agree, let us go sailing." You perceive that the sea is large, and the islands in it are not, by Zeus, Lesbos, nor yet Imbros or Lemnos, but small islands herding together like hamlets or cattle-folds or, by Zeus, like farm-buildings on the sea-shore.

The first of these is steep and sheer and fortified by a natural wall; it lifts its peak aloft for all-seeing Poseidon; it is watered with running water and furnishes the bees with food of mountain flowers, which the Nereids also doubtless pluck when the sport along the seashore.

The adjoining island, which is flat and covered with a deep soil, is inhabited by both fishermen and farmers, who offer each other a market, the latter bringing of the fruits of their husbandry, the former of the fish they have caught; and they have set up yonder a statue of Poseidon the Farmer with a plough and a yoke, crediting him with the fruits of the earth; but that Poseidon may not seem too much a landsman, the beak of a ship is attached to the plough and he breaks the ground as though sailing through it.

The two islands next to these were formerly both joined in one; but having been broken apart in the middle by the sea its two parts have become separated by the width of a river. This you might know from the painting, my boy; for you doubtless see that the two severed portions of the island are similar, and correspond to each other, and are so shaped that concave parts fit those that project. Europe once suffered the same

experience in the region of the Thessalian Tempe; for when earthquakes laid open that land, they indicated on the fractures the correspondence of the mountains once to the other, and even to-day there are visible cavities where rocks once were, which correspond to the rocks torn from them, and, moreover, traces have not yet disappeared of the heavy forest growth that must have followed the mountain sides when they split apart; for the beds of the trees are still left. So we may consider that some such thing happened to this island; but a bridge has been thrown over the channel, with the result that the two islands look like one; and while ships sail under the bridge, wagons go over it; in fact you doubtless see the men making the passage, that they are both wayfarers and sailors.

The neighbouring island, my boy, we may consider a marvel; for fire smoulders under the whole of it, having worked its way into underground passages and cavities of the island, through which as though ducts the flames break forth and produce terrific torrents from which pour mighty rivers of fire that run in billows to the sea. If one wishes to speculate about such matters, the island provides natural bitumen and sulphur; and when these are mixed by the sea, the island is fanned into flame by many winds, drawing from the sea that which sets the fuel aflame. But the painting, following the accounts given by the poets, goes farther and ascribes a myth to the island. A giant, namely, was once struck down there, and upon his as he struggled in the death agony the island was placed as a bond to hold him down, and he doest not yet yield but from beneath the earth renews the fight and breathes forth this fire as he utters threats. Yonder figure, they say, would represent Typho in Sicily or Enceladus here in Italy, giants that both continents and island are pressing down, not yet dead indeed but always dying. And you, yourself, my boy, will imagine that you have not been left out

of the contest, when you look at the peak of the mountain; for what you see there are thunderbolts which Zeus is hurling at the giant, and the giant is already giving up the struggle but still trusts in the earth, but the earth has grown weary because Poseidon does not permit her to remain in place. Poseidon has spread a mist over the contest, so that it resembles what has taken place in the past rather than what is taking place now.

This hill encircled by the sea is the home of a serpent, guardian doubtless of some rich treasure that lies hidden under the earth. This creature is said to be devoted to gold and whatever golden thing it sees it loves and cherishes; thus the fleece in Colchis and the apples of the Hesperides, since they seemed to be of gold, two serpents that never slept guarded and claimed as their own. And the serpent of Athena, that even to-day still makes its home on the Acropolis in my opinion has loved the people of the Athenians because of the gold which they make into grasshopper pins for their hair. Here the serpent himself is of gold; and the reason he thrusts his head out of the hole is, I think, that he fears for the safety of the treasure hidden below.

Canopied with ivy and bryony and grape-vines, this next island claims to be dedicated to Dionysus, but adds that Dionysus is now absent, doubtless reveling somewhere on the mainland, having entrusted to Seilenus the sacred objects of the place; these objects are yonder cymbals lying upside down, and golden mixing-bowls overturned, and flutes still warm, and drums lying silent; the west wind seems to lift the fawn-skins from the ground; and there are serpents, some of which are twined about the thyrsi and others, in a drunken sleep, are at the disposal of the Bacchantes for use as girdles. Of the clusters of grapes some are ripe to bursting, some are turning dark, some are still green, and some appear to be

budding, since Dionysus has cunningly fixed the seasons of the vines so that he may gather a continuous harvest. The clusters are so abundant that they both hang from the rocks and are suspended over the sea, and birds of both the sea and the land fly up to pluck them; for Dionysus provides the vine for all birds alike except the owl, and this bird alone he drives away from the clusters because it gives man a prejudice against wine. For if an infant child that has never tasted wine should eat the eggs of an owl, he hates wine all his life and would refuse to drink it and would be afraid of drunken men. But you are bold enough, my boy, not to fear even the Seilenus that guards the island, though he is both drunken and is trying to seize a Bacchante. She, however, does not deign to look at him, but since she loves Dionysus she fashions his image in her mind and pictures him and sees him, absent though he is; for though the look of the Bacchante's eyes is wavering, yet assuredly it is not free from dreams of love.

Nature in fashioning yonder mountains has made an island thickly grown and covered with forest, lofty cypress and fir and pine, oaks also and cedar; for the trees are painted each in its characteristic form. The regions on the island where wild beasts abound are tracked by hunters of boar and deer, some equipped with hunting-spears and with bows. Knives and clubs, my boy, are carried by the bold hunters that attack at close quarters; and here nets are spread through the forest, some to surround the animals, some to entrap them, and some to check their running. Some of the animals have been taken, some are struggling, some have overpowered the hunter; every youthful arm is in action, and dogs join men in an outcry, so that you might say that Echo herself joins in the revel of the hunt. Woodsmen cult through the tall tress and trim them; and while one raises his axe, another has driven it home, a third whets his axe which he finds dull from hewing,

another examines his fir tree, judging the tree with a view to a mast for his ship, and still another cuts young and straight trees for oars.

The precipitous rock and the flock of seagulls and the bird in their midst have been painted for some such reason as this: The men are attacking the sea-gulls, but not, by Zeus, for their flesh, which is black and noisome and unpalatable even to a hungry man; but these birds supply to the son of the doctors a stomach of such properties as to assure a good appetite in those who eat it and to make them agile. The birds being drowsy are easily caught by torchlight, for the hunters flash a light upon them at night. But the gulls induce the tern with a part of the food they catch to act as a warden and to keep awake for them. Now though the tern is a sea-bird, yet it is simple-minded, easy-going, and inefficient at catching prey; but in resisting sleep it is strong and in fact sleeps but little. For this reason it lets out the use of its eyes to the gulls. So when the gulls fly away after food, the tern keeps guard around the home rock, and the gulls return towards evening bringing to it a tithe of what they have caught; they at once sleep round about the tern, and it stays awake and is never overcome by sleep except when they are willing. If it senses the approach of any danger it raises a piercing shrill cry, and they rise at the signal and fly away, supporting their warden if ever it grows weary in flight. But in this picture it is standing and watching over the gulls. In that it stands in the midst of the its birds, the tern is like Proteus among his seals, but it is superior to Proteus in that it does not sleep.

On this island, my boy, we have put ashore; and though I do not know what its name is, I at least should call it "golden," had not the poets applies this epithet at random to everything beautiful and marvelous. It is only big enough to have a small palace; for no one will plough here or cultivate the vine; but it

has an abundance of springs, to some of which it furnishes pure cold water and to some water that it has heated. Let us conclude that it is an island so well supplied with water that the water overflows into the sea. As for this surging water, bubbling springs that leap up and bound on high as from a cauldron cause the rippling waves, and this island surrounds the springs. Now the marvel of the source of the springs, whether one should assume that they come from the earth or should locate them in the sea, Proteus here shall decide; for he has come to render judgment on this point. Let us examine the city that has been built upon the island. For in truth there has been built there a likeness of a fair and splendid city no larger than a house, and therein is nurtured a royal child and the city is his plaything. There is a theatre large enough to receive him and his playfellows, and a hippodrome has been constructed of sufficient size for little Melitaeans to run races in; for the boy uses these as horses and they are held together by yoke and chariot, and the drivers will be these apes that the boy regards as his servants. Yonder hare, brought into the house only yesterday, I believe, is fastened with a purple leash like a dog, but it objects to being bound and seeks to slip its bonds with the help of its front feet; and a parrot and a magpie in a woven cage sing like Sirens on the island; the magpie sings what it knows, but the parrot what it has been taught.

CYCLOPS

These men harvesting the fields and gathering the grapes, my boy, neither ploughed the land nor planted the vines; but of its own accord the earth sends forth these its fruits for them; they are in truth Cyclopes, for whom, I know not why, the poets will that the earth shall produce its fruits spontaneously. And the earth has also made a shepherd-folk of them by feeding the blocks, whose milk they regard as both

drink and meat. They know neither assembly nor council nor yet houses, but they inhabit the clefts of the mountain.

Not to mention the others, Polyphemos son of Poseidon, the fiercest of them, lives here; he has a single eyebrow extending above his single eye and a broad nose astride his upper lip, and he feeds upon men after the manner of savage lions. But at the present time he abstains from such food that he may not appear gluttonous or disagreeable; for he loves Galatea, who is sporting here on the sea, and he watches her from the mountain-side. And though his shepherd's pipe is still under his arm and silent, yet he has a pastoral song to sing that tells how white she is and skittish and sweeter than unripe grapes, and how he is raising for Galatea fawns and bear-cubs. All this he sings beneath an evergreen oak, heeding not where his flocks are feeding nor their number nor even, any longer, where the earth is. He is painted a creature of the mountains, fearful to look at, tossing his hair, which stands erect and is as dense as the foliage of a pine tree, showing a set of jagged teeth in his voracious jaw, shaggy all over – breast and belly and limbs even to the nails. He thinks, because he is in love, that his glance is gentle, but it is wild and stealthy still, like that of wild beasts subdued under the force of necessity.

The nymph sports on the peaceful sea, driving a team of four dolphins yoked together and working in harmony; and maiden-daughters of Triton, Galatea's servants, guide them, curving them in if they try to do anything mischievous or contrary to the rein. She holds over her heads against the wind a light scarf of sea-purple to provide a shade for herself and a sail for her chariot, and from it a kind of radiance falls upon her forehead and her head, though no white more charming than the bloom on her cheek; her hair is not tossed by the breeze, for it is so moist that it is proof against the wind. And lo, her right elbow stands out and her white

forearm is bent back, while she rests her fingers on her delicate shoulder, and her arms are gently rounded, and her breasts project, nor yet is beauty lacking in her thigh. Her foot, with the graceful part that ends in it, is painted as on the sea, my boy, and it lightly touches the water as if it were the rudder guiding her chariot. Her eyes are wonderful, for they have a kind of distant look that travels as far as the sea extends.

PHORBAS

This river, my boy, is the Boeotian Cephissus, a stream not unknown to the Muses; and on its bank Phlegyans are encamped, barbarian people who do not yet live in cities. Of the two men boxing you doubtless see that one is Apollo, and the other is Phorbas, whom the Phlegyans have made king because he is tall beyond all of them and the most savage of the race. Apollo is boxing with him for the freedom of the road. For since Phorbas seized control of the road which leads straight to Phocis and Delphi, no one any longer sacrifices at Pytho or conducts paeans in honour of the god, and the tripod's oracles and prophetic sayings and responses have wholly ceased. Phorbas separates himself from the rest of the Phlegyans when he makes his raids; for this oak-tree, my boy, he has taken as his home, and the Phlegyans visit him in these royal quarters in order, forsooth, to obtain justice. Catching those who journey toward the shrine, he sends the old men and children to the central camp of the Phlegyans for them to despoil and hold for ransom; but as for the stronger, he strips for a contest with them and overcomes some in wrestling, outruns others, and defeats others in the pancratium and in throwing the discus; then he cuts off their heads and suspends these on the oak, and beneath this defilement he spends his life. The heads hang dank from the branches, and some you see are withered and others fresh, while others

have shrunken to bare skulls; and they grin and seem to lament as the wind blows on them.

To Phorbas, as he exults over these "Olympian" victories, has come Apollo in the likeness of a youthful boxer. As for the aspect of the god, he is represented as unshorn, my boy, and with his hair fastened up so that he may box with girt-up head; rays of light rise from about his brow and his cheek emits a smile mingled with wrath; keen is the glance of his eyes as it follows his uplifted hands. And the leather thongs are wrapped about his hands, which are more beautiful than if garlands adorned them. Already the god has overcome him in boxing - for the thrust of the right hand shows the hand still in action and not yet discontinuing the posture wherewith he has laid him low - but the Phlegyan is already stretched on the ground, and a poet will tell how much ground he covers; the wound has been inflicted on his temple, and the blood gushes forth from it as from a fountain. He is depicted as savage, and of swinelike features - the kind that will feed upon strangers rather than simply kill them. Fire from heaven rushes down to smite the oak and set it afire, not, however, to obliterate all record of it; for the place where these events occurred, my boy, is still called "Heads of Oak."

ATLAS

With Atlas also did Heracles contend, and that too without a command from Eurystheus, claiming that he could sustain the heavens better than Atlas. For he saw that Atlas was bowed over and crushed by the weight and that he was crouching on one knee alone and barely had strength left to stand, while as for himself, he averred that he could raise the heavens up and after setting them aloft could hold them for a long time. Of course he does not reveal this ambition at all, but merely says that he is sorry for Atlas on account of his labour and would

willingly share his burden with him. And Atlas has so gladly seized upon the offer of Heracles that he implores him to venture the task.

Atlas is represented as exhausted, to judge by all the sweat that trickles from him and to infer from his trembling arm, but Heracles earnestly desires the task. This is shown by the eager look on his face, the club thrown on the ground and the hands that beg for the task. There is no need to admire the shaded parts of Heracles' body because they are vigorously drawn - for the attitudes of recumbent figures or persons standing erect are easily shaded, and their accurate reproduction is not at all a mark of skill - but the shadows on Atlas show a high degree of skill; for the shadows on a crouching figure like his run into one another, and do not darken any of the projecting parts but they produce light on the parts that are hollow and retreating. The belly of Atlas, for instance, one can see although he is bending forward, and one can perceive that he is panting. The bodies in the heavens which he carries are painted in the ether that surrounds the stars; one can recognize a bull, that is the Bull of the heavens, and bears, the kind that are seen here. Of the winds some are represented facing in the same direction and others as facing in the opposite direction, and while some are friendly with each other others seem to keep up their strife in the heavens.

You will uphold these heavenly bodies for the present, Heracles; but before long you will live with them in the sky, drinking, and embracing the beautiful Hebe; for you are to marry the youngest of the gods and the one most revered by them, since it is through her that they also are young.

ANTAEUS

Fine sand, like that found in the famous wrestling places, hard by a fountain of oil, two athletes, one of whom is binding

up his ears and the other removing a lion's skin from his shoulder, funeral mounds and monuments and incised letters - this is Libya, and Antaeus whom Earth bore to do mischief to strangers by practicing, I fancy, a piratical style of wrestling. To the giant who undertook these contests and buried those he slew in the wrestling ground itself, as you see, the painting brings Heracles; he has already secured the golden apples here shown and has won renown for his exploit among the Hesperid Nymphs - to overcome them was not such an amazing feat for Heracles, but rather the serpent. Without even bending the knee, as the saying is, he strips to meet Antaeus, while yet breathing heavily from his journey; his eyes are intent upon some purpose, as if in contemplation of the contest; and he has put a curb upon his anger that it may not carry him beyond the bounds of prudence. But Antaeus, disdainful and puffed with pride, seems to say to Heracles, "Ye children of wretched men," or some such thing, confirming his own courage by his insolence.

If Heracles had been devoted to wrestling, his natural characteristics would not have been different from those represented in the painting; for he is represented as strong, and, in that his body is so symmetrically developed, as abundantly endowed with skill; he might even be a giant and of a stature surpassing man's. He is red-blooded, and his veins seem to be in travail as though some passion had stolen into them. As for Antaeus, I think you must be afraid of him, my boy; for he resembles some wild beast, being almost as broad as he is tall, and his neck is attached to the shoulders in such wise that most of the latter belongs to the neck, and the arm is as big around as are the shoulders. Yonder breast and belly that are "wrought with the hammer" and the fact that the lower leg is not straight but ungainly mark Antaeus as strong, indeed, but muscle-bound and lacking in skill. Furthermore, Antaeus is black, dyed by exposure to the sun.

Such are the qualifications of the two for the wrestling-match. You see them engaged in wrestling, or rather at the conclusion of their bout, and Heracles at the moment of victory. But he lays his opponent low at a distance above the earth, for Earth was helping Antaeus in the struggle by arching herself up and heaving him up to his feet again whenever he was thrust down. So Heracles, at a loss how to deal with Earth, has caught Antaeus by the middle just above the waist, where the ribs are, and set him upright on his thigh, still gripping his arms about him; then pressing his own fore-arm against the pit of Antaeus' stomach, now flabby and panting, he squeezes out his breath and slays him by forcing the points of his ribs into his liver. Doubtless you see Antaeus groaning and looking to Earth, who does not help him, while Heracles is strong and smiles at his achievement. Do not look carelessly at the top of the mountain, but assume that gods have there a place from which to view the contest; for, observe, a golden cloud is painted, which serves, I fancy, as a canopy for them; and here comes Hermes to visit Heracles and crown him because he finds that Heracles plays his part so well in the wrestling-match.

HERACLES AMONG THE PYGMIES

While Heracles is asleep in Libya after conquering Antaeus, the Pygmies set upon him with the avowed intention of avenging Antaeus; for they claim to be brothers of Antaeus, high-spirited fellows, not athletes, indeed, nor his equals at wrestling, but earth-born and quite strong besides, and when they come up out of the earth the sand billows in waves. For the Pygmies dwell in the earth just like ants and store their provisions underground, and the food they eat is not the property of others but their own and raised by themselves. For they sow and reap and ride on a cart drawn by pigmy

horses, and it said that they use an axe on stalks of grain, believing that these are trees. But ah, their boldness! Here they are advancing against Heracles and undertaking to kill him in his sleep; though they would not fear him even if he were awake. Meanwhile he sleeps on the soft sand, since weariness has crept over him in wrestling; and, filled with sleep, his mouth open, he draws full breaths deep in his chest, and Sleep himself stands over him in visible form, making much, I think, of his own part in the fall of Heracles. Antaeus also lies there, but whereas art paints Heracles as alive and warm, it represents Antaeus as dead and withered and abandons him to Earth.

The army of the Pygmies envelops Heracles; while this one phalanx attacks his left hand, these other two companies march against his right hand as being stronger; bowmen and a host of slingers lay siege to his feet, amazed at the size of his shin; as for those who advance against his head, the Pygmy King has assumed the command at this point, which they think will offer the stoutest resistance, and they bring engines of war to bear against it as if it were a citadel – fire for his hair, mattocks for his eyes, doors of a sort for his mouth, and these, I fancy, are gates to fasten on his nose, so that Heracles may not breathe when his head has been captured. All these things are being done, to be sure, around the sleeping Heracles; but lo! he stands erect and laughs at the danger, and sweeping together the hostile forces he puts them in his lion' skin, and I suppose he is carrying them to Eurystheus.

THE MADNESS OF HERACLES

Fight, brave youths, [surround] Heracles, and advance. But heaven grant that he spare the remaining boy, since two already lie dead and his hand is aiming the arrow with the

true aim of a Heracles. Great is your task, no whit less great than the contests in which he himself engaged before his madness. But fear not at all; he is gone from you, for his eyes are directed toward Argos, and he thinks he is slaying the children of Eurystheus; indeed, I heard him in the play of Euripides; he was driving a chariot and applying a goad to his steeds and threatening to destroy utterly the house of Eurystheus; for madness is a deceptive thing and prone to draw one away from what is present to what is not present.

Enough for these youths; but as for you, it is high time for you to occupy yourself with the painting. The chamber which was the object of his attack still holds Megara and the child; sacrificial baskets and lustral basins and barley-grains and firewood and missing bowl, the utensils of Zeus Herkeios, all have been kicked aside, and the bull is standing there; but there have been thrown on the altar, as victims, infants of noble birth, together with their father's lion's skin. One has been hit in the neck and the arrow has gone through the delicate throat, the second lies stretched out full upon his breast and barbs of the arrow have torn through the middle of the spine, the missile having evidently been shot into his side. Their cheeks are drenched with tears, and you should not wonder that they wept beyond the due measure of tears; for tears flow easily with children, whether what they fear be small or great. The frenzies Heracles is surrounded by the whole body of his servants, like a bull that is running riot, surrounded by herdsmen; one tires to bind him, another is struggling to restrain him, another shouts loudly, one clings to his hands, one tries to trip him up, and others leap upon him. He, however, has no consciousness of them, but he tosses those who approach him and tramples on them, dribbling much foam from his mouth and smiling a grim and alien smile, and while keeping his eyes intently fixed on what he is doing, yet letting the thought behind his glance stray

away to the fancies that deceive him. His throat bellows, his neck dilates, and the veins about the neck swell, the veins through which all that feeds the disease flows up to the sovereign parts of the head. The Fury which has gained this mastery over him you have many times seen on the stage, but you cannot see her here; for she has entered into Heracles himself and she dances through his breast and leaps up inside him and muddles his mind. To this point the painting goes, about poets go on to add humiliating details, and they even tell of the binding of Heracles, and that too though they say that Prometheus was freed from bonds by him.

THEIODAMAS

This man is rough and, by Zeus! in a rough land; for this island is Rhodes, the roughest part of which the Lindians inhabit, a land good for yielding grapes and figs but not favourable for ploughing and impossible to drive over. We are to conceive of the man as crabbed, a farm labourer of "premature old age"; he is Theiodamas the Lindian, if perchance you have heard of him. But what boldness! Theiodamas is angry with Heracles, because the latter, meeting him as he ploughed, slew one of the oxen and made a meal of it, being quite accustomed to such a meal. For no doubt you have read about Heracles in Pindar, of the time when he came to the home of Coronus and at a whole ox, not counting even the bones superfluous; and dropping in to visit Theiodamas toward evening he fetched fire - and even dung is good fuel for a fire - and roasting the ox he tries the flesh to see if it is already tender, and all but finds fault with the fire for being so slow.

The painting is so exact that it does not fail to show the very nature of the ground; for where the ground presents even a little of its surface to the plough, it seems anything but poor,

if I understand the picture. Heracles is keeping his thoughts intently on the ox, and pays but scant attention to the curses of Theiodamas, only enough to relax his face into a smile, while the countryman makes after him with stones. The mode of the man's garments is Dorian; his hair is squalid and there is grime on his forehead; while his thigh and his arm are such as the most beloved land grants to its athletes. Such is the deed of Heracles; and this Theiodamas is revered among the Lindians; wherefore they sacrifice a plough-ox to Heracles, and they begin the rites with all the curses which I suppose the countryman then uttered, and Heracles rejoices and gives good things to the Lindians in return for their imprecations.

THE BURIAL OF ABDERUS

Let us not consider the mares of Diomedes to have been a task for Heracles, my boy, since he has already overcome them and crushed them with his club - one of them lies on the ground, another is gasping for breath, a third, you will say, is leaping up, another is falling down; their manes are unkempt, they are shaggy down to their hoofs, and in every way they resemble wild beasts; their stalls are tainted with flesh and bones of the men whom Diomedes used as food for his horses, and the breeder of the mares himself is even more savage of aspect than the mares near whom he has fallen - but you must regard this present labour as the more difficult, since Eros enjoins it upon Heracles in addition to many others, and since the hardship laid upon him was no slight matter. For Heracles is bearing the half-eaten body of Abderus, which he has snatched from the mares; and they devoured him white yet a tender youth and younger than Iphitus, to judge from the portions that are left; for, still beautiful, they are lying on the lion's skin. The tears he shed over them, the embraces he may have given them, the laments he uttered, the burden of grief on his countenance - let such marks of sorrow be assigned to

another lover; for another likewise let the monument placed upon the fair beloved's tomb carry the same tribute of honour; but, not content with the honours paid by most lovers, Heracles erects for Abderus a city, which we call by his name, and games also will be instituted for him, and in his honour contests will be celebrated, boxing and the pancratium and wrestling and all the other contests except horse-racing.

XENIA

This hare in his cage is the prey of the net, and he sits on his haunches moving his forelegs a little and slowly lifting his ears, but he also keeps looking with all his eyes and tries to see behind him as well, so suspicious is he and always cowering with fear; the second hare that hangs on the withered oak tree, his belly laid wide open and his skin stripped off over the hind feet, bears witness to the swiftness of the dog which sits beneath the tree, resting and showing that he alone has caught the prey. As for the ducks near the hare (count them, then), and the geese of the same number as the ducks, it is not necessary to test them by pinching them, for their breasts, where the fat gathers in abundance on water-birds, have been plucked all over. If you care for raised bread of "eight-piece loves," they are here near by in the deep basket. And if you want any relish, you have the loaves themselves - for they have been seasoned with fennel and parsley and also with poppy-seed, the spice that brings sleep - but if you desire a second course, put that off till you have cooks, and partake of the food that needs no fire. Why, then, do you not take the ripe fruit, of which there is a pile here in the other basket? Do you not know that in a little while you will no longer find it so fresh, but already the dew will be gone from it? And do not overlook the desert, if you care at all for medlar fruit and Zeus' acorns, which is the smoothest of

trees bears in a prickly husk that is horrid to peel off. Away with even the honey, since we have here this palathè, or whatever you like to call it, so sweet a dainty it is! And it is wrapped in its own leaves, which lend beauty to the palathè.

I think the painting offers these gifts of hospitality to the master of the farm, and he is taking a bath, having perhaps the look in his eyes of Pramnian or Thasian wines, although he might, if he would, drink the sweet new wine at the table here, and then on his return to the city might smell of pressed grapes and of leisure and might belch in the faces of the city-dwellers.

THE BIRTH OF ATHENA

These, wonder-struck beings are gods and goddesses, for the decree has gone forth that not even the Nymphs may leave the heavens, but that they, as well as the rivers from which they are sprung, must be at hand; and they shudder at the sight of Athena, who at this moment has just burst forth fully armed from the head of Zeus, through the devices of Hephaestus, as the axe tells us. As for the material of her panoply, no one could guess it; for as many as are the colours of the rainbow, which changes its light now to one hue and now another, so many are the colours of her armour. Hephaestus seems at a loss to know by what gift he may gain the favour of the goddess; for his lure is spent in advance because her armour was born with her. Zeus breathes deeply with delight, like men who have undergone a great contest for a great prize, and he looks searchingly for his daughter, feeling pride in his offspring; nor yet is there even on Hera's face any trace of indignation; nay, she rejoices, as though Athena were her daughter also.

Two peoples are already sacrificing to Athena on the acropolis of two cities, the Athenians and the Rhodians, one on the land

and one on the sea, [sea-born] and earth-born men; the former offer fireless sacrifices that are incomplete, but the people of Athens offer fire, as you see yonder, and the savour of burnt flesh. The smoke is represented as fragrant and as rising with the savour of the offerings. Accordingly the goddess has come to the Athenians as to men of superior wisdom who make excellent sacrifices. For the Rhodians, however, as we are told, gold flowed down from heaven and filled their houses and their narrow streets, when Zeus caused a cloud to break over them, because they also gave heed to Athena. The divinity Plutus also stands on their acropolis, and he is represented as a winged being who has descended from the clouds, and as golden because of the substance in which he has been made manifest. Moreover, he is painted as having his sight; for of set purpose he has come to them.

LOOMS

Since you sing the praises of Penelope's loom, having found an excellent painting of it, and you think the loom complete in all its parts – and it is stretched tight with the warp, and lint gathers under the threads, and the shuttle all but sings, while Penelope herself sheds tears so hot that Homer melts snow with them, and she unravels what she has woven, look also at the spider weaving in a picture near by, and see if it does not excel in weaving both Penelope and the Seres too, though the web these people make is exceedingly fine and scarcely visible. Now this doorway belongs to a house by no means prosperous; you will say it has been abandoned by its master, and the court within seems deserted, nor do the columns still support its roof, for they have settled and collapsed; nay, it is inhabited by spiders only, for this creature loves to weave its web in quiet. Look at the threads also; for as the spiders spew out their yarn they let it down to the pavement – and the

painter shows them descending on it and scrambling up and “soaring aloft,” as Hesiod says, and trying to fly – and in the angles they weave their nests, some spread out flat, some hollow; the flat ones are good to summer in, and the hollow sort they weave is useful in winter. Now the painter has been successful in these respects also: that he has wrought the spider itself in so painstaking a fashion, has marked its spots with fidelity to nature and has painted its repulsive fuzzy surface and its savage nature – all this is the mark of a good craftsman and one skilled in depicting the truth. And he has also woven these delicate webs for us. For look! here is a cord forming a square that has been thrown about the corners to be as it were a cable to hold the web, and to this cord is attached a delicate web of many concentric circles, and tight lines, making meshes running from the outside circle to the smallest one, are interwoven at intervals corresponding to the distance between the circles. And the weavers travel across them, drawing tight such of the threads as have become loose. But they win a reward for their weaving and feed on the flies whenever any become enmeshed in the webs. Hence the painter has not omitted their prey either; for one fly is caught by the feet, another by the tip of its wing, the head of another is being eaten, and they squirm in their effort to escape, yet they do not disarrange or break the web.

ANTIGONE

Tydeus and Capaneus and their comrades, and any Hippomedon or Parthenopaeus that may be here, will be buried by the Athenians, when they take up the war to recover their bodies; but Polyneices the son of Oedipus is being buried by his sister Antigone, who steals outside the walls at night, though proclamation has been made that no one shall bury him or commit him to the earth he had tried to enslave. And so we see in the plain corpses upon corpses, and

horses lying as they fell, and the arms of the warriors as they slipped from their hands, and this mire of gore in which they say Enyo delights; while beneath the wall are the bodies of the other captains – they are tall and beyond the normal height of men – and also Capaneus, who is like a giant; for not only is he of huge stature, but also he has been smitten by the thunderbolt of Zeus and is still smouldering. As for the body of Polyneices, tall like his associates, Antigone has lifted it up and will bury it by the tomb of Eteocles, thinking to reconcile her brothers in the only manner that is still possible. What shall we say, my boy, of the merits of the picture? Well, the moon sheds a light that the eyes cannot quite trust, and the maiden, overcome with fear, is on the point of uttering a cry of lamentation as she throws her strong arms about her brother, but nevertheless she masters the cry because, no doubt, she fears the ears of the guards, and though she wants to keep watch in every direction, yet her gaze rests upon her brother as she kneels on the ground.

This shoot of a mulberry, my boy, has sprung up of itself, for the Erinnyes, it is said, caused it to grow on the tomb; and if you pluck its fruit, blood spurts out even to this day. Wonderful also is the fire that has been kindled for the funeral sacrifices; for it does not come together or join its flames into one, but from this point on it turns in different directions, thus indicating the implacable hatred that continues even in the tomb.

EVADNE

The pyre and the victims sacrificed upon it and the corpse, laid on the pyre, which seems too large for that of a man, and the woman who takes so mighty a leap into the flames, make up a picture, my boy, to be interpreted as follows. Capaneus is being buried in Argos by his kinsmen, having been slain at

Thebes by Zeus, as you recall, when he had already mounted the walls. Doubtless you have heard the poets tell how, when he uttered a boast against Zeus, he was struck by a thunderbolt and died before he reached the ground, at the time when the rest of the captains fell beneath the Cadmeia.

Now when the Athenians have secured by their victory the burial of the dead, the body of Capaneus is laid out with the same honours as those of Tydeus and Hippomedon and the rest, but in this one point he was honoured above all the captains and kings: his wife, Evadne, has determined to die for love of him, not by drawing a knife against her throat nor by hanging herself from a noose, modes of death often chosen by women in honour of their husbands, but she throws herself into the fire itself, which cannot believe it possesses the husband unless it has the wife as well. Such is the funeral-offering made to Capaneus; and his wife, like those who deck their victims with wreaths and gold that these may go to the sacrifice resplendent and pleasing to the gods, thus adorning herself and with no piteous look, leaps into the flames, calling her husband, I am sure; for she looks as if she were calling out. And it seems to me that she would even submit her head to the thunderbolt for the sake of Capaneus. But the Cupids, making this task their own, kindle the pyre with their torches and claim that they do not defile their fire, but that they will find it sweeter and more pure, when they have used it in the burial of those who have dealt so well with love.

THEMISTOCLES

A Greek among barbarians, a true man among those who are not men, inasmuch as they are ruined and dissolute, surely an Athenian to judge by his coarse cloak, he addresses some wise discourse to them, I think, trying to change their ways

and make them give up their luxury. Here are Medes and the centre of Babylon, and the royal device – the golden eagle on the shield, – and the king on a golden throne richly spangled like a peacock. The painter does not ask to be praised for his fine representation of tiara and tasseled cloak (kalasiris) or sleeved jacket (kandys) or of the monstrous shapes of animals with which barbarian garments are embroidered; but he should be praised for the gold which he has painted as threads skillfully interwoven in the cloth and preserving the design to which it has been constrained, and, by Zeus, for the faces of the eunuchs. The palace court must also be of gold – indeed, it seems not to be a painting at all; for it is so painted as to seem to be a real building – we catch the fragrance of both frankincense and myrrh – for the barbarians use these to pollute the freedom of the air; and let us infer that one spearman is talking to another about the Greek, marveling at him from a vague knowledge of his great achievements. For I think that Themistocles the son of Neocles has come from Athens to Babylon after the immortal victory at Salamis because he is at a loss to know where in Greece he would be safe, and that he is conversing with the king about the services which he rendered to Xerxes while in command of the Greek forces. He is not perturbed at all by his Median surroundings, but is as bold as though he stood on the Athenian bema; and this language he speaks is not ours, but Themistocles is using the Median tongue, which he took the pains to acquire there. If you doubt this, look at his hearers, how their eyes indicate that they understand him easily, and look also at Themistocles, the posture of whose head is like that of one speaking, but note that there is hesitancy in the thoughtful expression of the eyes, due to his speaking a new language recently learned.

PALAESTRA

The place is Arcadia, the most beautiful part of Arcadia and that in which Zeus takes most delight - we call it Olympia - and as yet there is no prize for wrestling nor even any love of wrestling, but there will be. For Palaestra, the daughter of Hermes, who has just come to womanhood in Arcadia, ahs discovered the art, and the earth seems to rejoice at the discovery, since iron as an instrument of war will be laid aside by men during the truce, and the stadium will seem to them more delightful than armed camps, and with naked bodies they will content with each other. The kinds of wrestling are represented as children. For they leap sportively around Palaestra, bending towards her in one wrestler's posture after another; and they may be sprung from the earth, for the maiden shows by her manly aspect that she would neither marry any man willingly nor bear children. The kinds of wrestling differ from one another; indeed, the best is the one combined with boxing.

The figure of Palaestra, if it be compared with a boy, will be that of a girl; but if it be taken for a girl, it will seem to be a boy. For her hair is too short even to be twisted into a knot; the eye might be that of either sex; and the brow indicates disdain for both lovers and wrestlers; for she claims that she is able to resist both the one and the other and that not even in a wrestling bout could anyone touch her breasts, so much does she excel in the art. And the breasts themselves, as in a boy of tender years, show but slight signs of beginning fullness. She cares for nothing feminine; hence she does not even wish to have white arms, and apparently even disapproves of the Dryads because they stay in the shade to keep their skin fair; nay, as one who lives in the vales of Arcadia, she begs Helius for colour, and he brings it to her like a flower and reddens the girl with moderate heat. It shows the skill of the painter, my boy, that the maiden is sitting, for there are most shadows on seated figures, and the

seated position is distinctly becoming to her; the branch of olive on her bare bosom is also becoming her. Palaestra apparently delights in this tree, since its oil is useful in wrestling and men find great pleasure in it.

DODONA

Here is the golden dove still on the oak, wise in her sayings; here are oracles which are utterances of Zeus; here lies the axe abandoned by the tree-cutter Hellus, from whom are descended the Helloi of Dodona; and fillets are attached to the oak, for like the Pythian tripod it utters oracles. One comes to ask it a question and another to sacrifice, while yonder band from Thebes stands about the oak, claiming as their own the wisdom of the tree; and I think the golden bird has been caught there by decoy. The interpreters of Zeus, whom Homer knew as "men with unwashed feet that couch on the ground," are a folk that live from hand to mouth and have as yet acquired no substance, and they assert that they will never do so, since they think they enjoy the favour of Zeus because they are content with a picked-up livelihood. For these are the priests; and one is charged with hanging the garlands, one with uttering the prayers, a third must attend to the sacrificial cakes, and another to the barley-grains and the basket, another makes a sacrifice, and another will permit no one else to flay the victim. And here are Dodonaean priestesses of stiff and solemn appearance, who seem to breathe out the odour of incense and libations. The very place, my boy, is painted as fragrant with incense and replete with the divine voice; and in it honour is paid to a bronze Echo, whom I think you see placing her hand upon her lips, since a bronze vessel has been dedicated to Zeus at Dodona, that resounds most of the day and is not silent till someone takes hold of it.

HORAE

That the gates of heaven are in charge of the Horae we may leave to the special knowledge and prerogative of Homer, for very likely he became an intimate of the Horae when he inherited the skies; but the subject that is here treated in the painting is easy for a man to understand. For the Horae, coming to earth in their own proper forms, with clasped hands are dancing the year through its course, I think, and the Earth in her wisdom brings forth for them all the fruits of the year. "Tread not on the hyacinth or the rose" I shall not say to the Horae of the spring-time; for when trodden on they seem sweeter and exhale a sweeter fragrance than the Horae themselves. "Walk not on the ploughed fields when soft" I shall not say to the Horae of the winter-time; for if they are trodden on by the Horae they will produce ear of grain. And the golden-haired Horae yonder are walking on the spikes of the ears, but not so as to break or bend them; nay, they are so light that they do not even sway the stalks. It is charming of you, grape-vines, that ye try to lay hold of the Horae of autumn-tide; for you doubtless love the Horae because they make you fair and wine-sweet.

Now these are our harvestings, so to speak, from the painting; but as for the Horae themselves, they are very charming and of marvelous art. How they sing, and how they whirl in the dance! Note too the fact that the back of none of them is turned to us; and note the raised arm, the freedom of flying hair, the cheek warm from the running, and the eyes that join in the dance. Perhaps they permit us to weave a tale about the painter; for it seems to me that he, falling in with the Horae as they danced, were caught up by them into their dance, the goddesses perhaps thus intimating that grace (hora) must attend his painting.