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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bib-sacra\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php)

## ARTICLE II.

THE ANCESTRY AND EDUCATION OF THE ORATOR  
AESCHINES.

BY PROF. JAMES R. BOISE, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN.

THE opinions of modern times respecting Aeschines have been formed chiefly on the representations of his great rival and political enemy, Demosthenes. The biting sarcasm and contemptuous raillery in the Oration on the Crown has been accepted very generally, with slight abatement, as trustworthy history. Thus, the father of Aeschines appears as a slave of the lowest character, and his mother, for the basest and most disgusting conduct, as destitute of all claim to respect; while their son, in poverty the most abject and vices the most degrading, grew up without any of the refining influences of education and good society. Perhaps no orator, of ancient or of modern times, ever had at his command a more inexhaustible fund of the most terrible invective than Demosthenes; and on no other occasion in his life did he draw so largely on this fund as in the last great contest with his mortal enemy. For all this we may not condemn the orator; but are we to accept the delineations of hatred, roused to its fullest intensity, for calm and faithful historic portraiture? Must we not carefully distinguish in all cases between the language of passion and that of reason? No man who reads Burke's celebrated "Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's Debt," how much soever he may admire the wonderful power of the orator, would for a moment think of finding there a true portrait of the younger Pitt. The premier who so long stood at the helm, and so faithfully as well as skilfully guided the ship of state through the most perilous seas, there appears as a monster of iniquity, without parallel in history. We by no means condemn the orator. We may even accord the highest praise to his delineations, viewed as oratory; but we can never

accept them as history. Now the principles of historic evidence do not change. If we are to distrust the representations of a violent political adversary in one age, shall we not also in another? Does it not become us, then, to review some of the current opinions in regard to the great rival of Demosthenes; to challenge them anew; and to endeavor, if possible, to gain fuller and more truthful views?

Not only does historic justice demand this, in an age when nearly all the great questions relating to antiquity are subjected to a more careful scrutiny than ever before; but aside from this consideration, we think a true understanding and just appreciation of Demosthenes himself depends to a large extent on a correct idea of the character and standing of his great rival.

Have we then any trustworthy means of ascertaining in how far the hideous picture of Aeschines and his ancestors in the Oration on the Crown is true or false? This question has lately been examined critically by Arnold Schaefer, Professor at Grimma, in his work entitled, "Demosthenes and his Time" (*Demosthenes und seine Zeit*). In this work, an entire chapter is devoted to the ancestry and life of Aeschines up to his entrance on his political career (*Herkunft und Lebensweg des Aeschines bis zum Eintritt in die politische Laufbahn*). We propose in the remainder of this Article to follow the course of thought and to present the views of Schaefer in the main on this subject. In so doing, our only apology is the fact that the entire question is here subjected to a more searching examination and rigid analysis than in anything we have before seen.

#### I. FAMILY CONNECTIONS OF AESCHINES.

Aeschines claimed a lineal descent from one of the ancient and honorable families of Athens—the priestly family of the Butadae. This claim was established by the fact that his father belonged to a phratría, which took part in the same sacrifices as the Eteobutadae; from whom the priestess of Athena was chosen—a circumstance mentioned by Aes-

chines not more to exalt the dignity of his phratría, than to indicate that to his family access was offered to the highest priestly offices. That he belonged to the *deme* of the Cothocidae, who were in the same *phyle* with the Butadae, is shown by Demosthenes. Accordingly Aeschines, in contrasting his origin with that of his great rival, whom he considers inferior in rank, prides himself on the sacred offices and graves of his ancestors. Of a family thus honorable was Atrometus, father of Aeschines, who was born six years before the Peloponnesian war. In his youth he devoted himself to athletic exercises, without concern respecting a livelihood until his fortune was lost by the war. From the thirty tyrants he escaped and fled to Corinth. He next engaged as a hired soldier in Asia, where he served with distinction. Returning from thence, he fought under Thrasybulus for the restoration of the democracy. Thus much we learn from Aeschines in his Oration on the Embassy. The picture which he there draws of the public misery at the close of the war derives its coloring from the narrative of his father, who had lived through those unhappy times. Obtaining his information from the same source, Aeschines vividly describes, in the Oration against Ctesiphon, the new life at Athens after the return of the fugitive citizens. In what way Atrometus supported himself and family after this period Aeschines does not inform us; still he leaves us to infer, in speaking of the loss of property, that his father after the war lived in indigence. He means nothing else than this, also, when he speaks of himself as being in his lot a private citizen, and on an equality with the middling classes. Reference is evidently made again to his own ancestry when he speaks of the law-giver as not excluding from the *bema* those who are not descended from generals, nor those who may have labored for their own support. These intimations are all that we can gather on this point from Aeschines himself. At the age of ninety-four Atrometus, perhaps the oldest citizen then living, appeared in court at the trial respecting the embassy (348 B.C.), and pleaded for his son. He died a year afterwards.

He witnessed, therefore, at the extreme limit of human life, the escape of his son from the punishment of treason, and the influential position which he had acquired through the friendship of the powerful Macedonian King.

The statements of Aeschines, considered by themselves, present nothing contradictory or incredible. That wealthy citizens were reduced to poverty in the course of the Peloponnesian war appears from numerous testimonies. The devastation of the Athenian territory, the loss of foreign possessions, the total destruction of trade and commerce, in connection with the extraordinary sacrifices demanded by the war, had deprived many a family of hereditary comfort and standing. In this general distress Atrometus left his native city, to seek his fortune elsewhere. Aeschines speaks of this departure as a banishment, without mentioning the cause. One might conjecture that he had been involved in the fall of some kindred house ; but since we have no knowledge that he ever mingled in politics, it seems more probable that Aeschines speaks of a voluntary absence as a forced departure from home. If Atrometus sought foreign military service, the best opportunity was offered in Corinth, at that time a principal place of enlistment. It is not improbable that he then, as conjectured in the scholia (Aesch. II. 147), entered the service of a Persian satrap. Soon, however, the course of events at Athens encouraged him to return home, and seek his fortune there anew.

More than this Aeschines does not communicate concerning his father. It is now in place to consider how Demosthenes describes him. In the Oration on the Embassy the orator relates what he had heard from elderly people — that the father of Aeschines had obtained a pitiful living as schoolmaster, and he even mentions the place of the school. If such had been the fact, a long time must, meanwhile, have elapsed ; since, if old age had not brought with it repose, the advancement of his sons would at least have ameliorated his condition. In another passage of the same oration Demosthenes calls to mind the condemnation of men who had rendered

the state eminent services ; also of those who were sprung from eminent families ; and then continues thus : “ The son of Atrometus the schoolmaster, and of Glaucothea — a child of such parents, a man who in nothing ever showed himself useful to the state ; neither he himself, nor his father, nor one of his brothers — such a man, will you suffer to escape from your hands ! Since, what horse, what trireme, what military expedition, what chorus, what liturgy, what voluntary contribution, what of all these things, has ever been furnished to the state by these men ” (Dem. p. 432). Here also the reproaches cast on Atrometus spring from the fact that he had been a schoolmaster, and had not participated in honorable services in behalf of the state. In keeping with this view, Demosthenes speaks of Aeschines and his brothers as commonplace men (*τοὺς τυχόντας ἀνδρώπους*).

This is all that Demosthenes has to say of Atrometus in the Oration on the Embassy, in which he certainly does not spare his antagonist. Nothing really dishonorable is here brought forward ; nothing that contradicts the statements of Aeschines. Since, in the time about which Aeschines is silent—that is, after the return home—might we suppose his father to have been a schoolmaster. Ever afterwards might the ancestry of Aeschines appear ordinary, but not vulgar.

In the Oration on the Crown Demosthenes tells a very different story, when it serves his purpose to meet the groundless reproaches of his enemy in the same vein. We need not repeat his words ; they are in the memory of every reader of Demosthenes ; since more effective scorn has seldom been poured forth by any orator. He here paints the father of Aeschines, under the name Tromes, as the vilest slave, so little trusted that he must wear a wooden collar and clogs. In this character he serves the schoolmaster Elpias ; and Aeschines must attend his father to prepare the ink, scour the benches, sweep the schoolroom. Thus is he brought up in the most abject poverty by his beggarly parents. Late in life does Aeschines elevate himself above this condition. He

becomes at the same time an Athenian and an orator. Then he transforms his father Tromes into an Atrometus.

The orator presents here in the strongest colors a picture, whose outlines correspond as little to the sketch in the earlier oration as they do to that which Aeschines himself makes of his father. Instead of an Athenian citizen who is not in a condition to make special offerings to the state, we find a pitiful slave; instead of a schoolmaster, a schoolmaster's menial; instead of Atrometus, one Tromes. Do we now inquire which of these two views is the more truthful, we shall be compelled to adopt the earlier. It is supported by the testimony of the older citizens; it was presented while Atrometus was still alive; finally, it is not in conflict with the statements of the son. The later invective has nothing of all this in its favor. Even if we assume that Demosthenes did not in the Oration on the Crown purposely give loose reins to his bitterly provoked hatred in the utterance of groundless reproaches on the ancestry of Aeschines, but that all which he brings forward had been received through popular tradition, we must not by any means, even in that case, forget how impure a fountain of information this always is. Furthermore, in this case also, the statements were made thirteen years after the death of Atrometus, an ordinary citizen, who had attained the great age of ninety-five years. The popular account would naturally become the more exaggerated, the higher the eminence reached by the man at whose low origin rumor darkly hints.

The earlier representation is consistent with all our other knowledge on the subject, while the later invective presents only contradictions. The name Tromes (the trembler) would be given even to a slave only as a particular stigma; and if Aeschines's father was called Tromes as a slave, he would be very unlikely, on stealing into the rank of citizen, to assume a name which would remind every one of his former servitude. The name "Tromes" would come much more naturally from Atrometus, than the latter from the former. Besides, the name Atrometus for a free-born Athenian is

made quite certain by other and similar formations, as Ademantus and Aphobus; also the names of his sons, Philochares, Aeschines, Aphobetus, the last being formed after the analogy of the father's name.<sup>1</sup> But if the representation of Aeschines concerning his ancestry was all false, and he was really sprung from "those whom the people curse," why did not Demosthenes at once put an end to the ruinous influence of such a man, by calling him to an account for his unwarrantable assumption of the rights of a citizen? It has been mentioned above that Aeschines brought his aged father into court in the trial on the embassy, to move the pity of the judges; would he have ventured to do this, if thereby he should bring fresh to mind a disgraceful origin? It is scarcely credible; and we find in this fact another proof that the invective of Demosthenes in the Oration on the Crown is without foundation, and in contradiction to the earlier statements; in short, that the orator has drawn a caricature to serve his purpose at the time. Hence, we cannot safely take a single feature as a correct delineation of the character and life of Atrometus. He might indeed have been an assistant teacher under the schoolmaster Elpias, — an explanation found in the scholia, — and afterwards, as Passow supposes, might have become the head of the school; but this point is of but little importance.

Thus much of Atrometus. We come now to the inquiry respecting the mother of Aeschines. She also, if we accept the statements of her son, was descended from an honorable family, being the daughter of Glaucus of Acharnae, and sister of the general Cleobulus. So it appears she was at least free-born. Her name, Glaucothea, is mentioned by Demosthenes in the Oration on the Embassy. It is derived from that of her father, and is as purely Attic as any name can well be. Her brother, with Demaenetus as fellow commander, defeated the Lacedemonian fleet under Chilon. Respecting this Chilon, as a naval commander, we have no further infor-

<sup>1</sup> Atrometus, from a privative and *τρόμος*, *trembling*. Aphobetus, from a privative and *φόβος*, *fear*.



mation. He was probably no other than the brother-in-law of king Archidamus, who commanded the Spartans in the battle with the Arcadians at Cromnus (364 B.C.). Chilon fell in this battle, and is mentioned by Xenophon as one of the conspicuous men whose loss was severely felt by the Lacedemonians. Thus it appears that Cleobulus, brother of Glaucothea, had contributed towards a victory over an eminent Spartan, at a time when the Athenians were first learning again to conquer. In a similar way, in another passage also, Aeschines speaks of his kinsmen on his mother's side as free-born Athenians.

With this, let us compare what Demosthenes in the Oration on the Embassy says of Glaucothea; for this is the name by which she is there called, and no doubt of her rightful claim to it is expressed. She is alluded to in three passages, each time indeed as conducting dishonorably and unlawfully in the office of priestess. For this she had deserved death as much as any other priestess for like misconduct.

These charges of Demosthenes can hardly be considered without foundation; especially as Aeschines passes them over in silence. But whatever conclusion we may arrive at respecting the actual conduct of Glaucothea, whatever may have been the peculiar aggravations or palliations in her case, the fact is to be noted that no formal accusation was ever made against her; also that Demosthenes does not question the fact of her being an Athenian and a priestess.

How different is the picture in the Oration on the Crown! How is everything which before was only ambiguous, suspicious, or at most punishable, now painted in the most glaring colors, as mean, vulgar, and loathsome! We need not here repeat in full the circumstantial description, how Aeschines's mother lived as a common harlot, ready for all wantonness, and hence received the name Empusa; or how the galley-piper Phormio, himself a slave, raised her up from this occupation; or how, afterwards, when Aeschines became enrolled among the citizens he changed the name of his mother (as also that of his father), so that the hag Empusa

was very reverently named Glaucothea, *blue-eyed goddess*. Demosthenes explains the significance of the former name: "Having obtained," says he, "this appellation from the fact of her doing and suffering everything." But Empusa can only be regarded as a nickname; and in such a change of names as Demosthenes alleges — Tromes becoming Atrometus — we should anticipate some name sounding similarly to Glaucothea. Now, what would be more natural than Glaucis? — a supposition already made in ancient times. But this name would not serve the purpose of Demosthenes; for, though not so high sounding as Glaucothea, it was yet a good citizen name. He therefore seizes on the offensive appellation Empusa.

This description of the mother of Aeschines also contradicts the earlier implications of Demosthenes. In the Oration on the Embassy Glaucothea appears as an Athenian; in that on the Crown, as among the lowest of the rabble, mingling only with slaves. Was her conduct as priestess formerly liable to suspicion, perhaps punishable; now the orator knows how to paint, even to a hair, her outrageous improprieties. Proofs, such as to settle the question of fact beyond a doubt, are not in existence. Aeschines had no occasion in the Oration against Ctesiphon to speak of his mother, and we are consequently limited to his former oration, and to those of Demosthenes, for our information on this point. Is it said that Demosthenes would not have dared to draw such a picture without good reason; that the simple fact of his venturing thus far is a proof of the unfavorable opinion of his hearers? This is not quite so clear; and even if his hearers did hold such views, the question still arises: were they truthful?

That Glaucothea was not a slave, but a free-born Athenian, as Aeschines affirms, obtains confirmation, as we saw before, from the earlier oration of Demosthenes himself. Thus, the imputation in the later oration of a change of names, and of obtaining the rights of citizen by stealth, falls to the ground. But what of her abandoned private life? This charge also

does not appear in the Oration on the Embassy ; though we may safely assume that Demosthenes omits in that speech nothing disgraceful to his adversary which " the information obtained from elderly people " would offer. No such testimony is alluded to in the Oration on the Crown. The assumption is that all acknowledge the truthfulness of the picture. Not, therefore, from actual observers, but, we may suppose, from common gossip, Demosthenes took the features of that picture which he sketches. Almost seventy years had elapsed since the putative facts ; and in popular tradition the memory of a woman, whose name was frequent in the city, whose children had but lately risen to eminence would be at least liable to erroneous delineations. Even definite witnesses of the supposed deeds might be found, who had never even seen her ; and reports current in the city, arising from more recent events, might easily become connected by an anachronism with her memory. Thus a picture of the parents of this upstart might be found ready made ; and Demosthenes adds to this, from the gossip which he had himself collected, whatever suits his own fancy. He spins out the scandalous story of the mysteries, by attributing to Glaucothea all the excesses which had ever been practised in them. In this way she is held up for scorn and derision ; but if we inquire after the truth or credibility of such a representation, the evidence all falls to the ground.

The question may perhaps occur to some minds : why did Demosthenes change the invective against the parents of Aeschines found in the earlier oration into such contemptuous reproaches in the later speech ? Here we must first consider, that in the Oration on the Embassy Demosthenes is the accuser ; Aeschines the accused, to whom the right of making the reply belongs. Thus it was important to present only facts, so as not to expose weak points which his adversary might attack, and by this means divert the attention of the judges from the real issue. A like necessity to weigh his words did not exist in the delivery of the Oration on the Crown, since he was now in the position of defendant,

and had no fear that his opponent would afterwards examine and refute what he brought forward only as a digression. This fact presents to our view the later representation as less trustworthy. Again, we can readily see why Demosthenes in his defense pours out such unmeasured reproach and scorn on Aeschines. He wished to brand him as the venal traitor of his country, and the personal enemy who, in public and private, had embittered his life, and had never ceased, with impudent front, to slander him. If we, then, read in Aeschines's speech against Ctesiphon that Demosthenes is descended by unlawful wedlock from a traitor condemned to death, if we weigh fully such a charge, we shall be prepared, if not to justify, at least to comprehend, the invective of Demosthenes. In general, however, such license of speech ought not to be looked at from the point of view of an Athenian, to whom an unbridled tongue was not displeasing; much rather may we adopt Plutarch's opinion, which he had just illustrated by the case of Aeschines and Demosthenes, that vituperation and invective are least of all suited to a statesman. Such vulgar pastime, says he, does more harm to him who introduces it than to the one who is compelled to be the victim; frustrates the object of the business in hand, and disturbs the assemblies both of senate and people. The contemporaries of Demosthenes were not of this mind. In the pleasure arising from a good joke they forgot, or little cared, whom it hit. From such indulgence Demosthenes abstains entirely in his popular harangues.<sup>1</sup> He complains also in the Oration on the Crown, that the people bartered away the interests of the state for the pleasure of listening to raillery. He disapproves of this popular tendency in emphatic terms. "I have supposed," says he, in another passage, "that our ancestors established these courts of justice, not that we may assemble you here, and utter against one another, from our privates grievances, words that are not to be spoken; but rather that we may bring proofs, if any one has in anything

<sup>1</sup> The Oration on the Crown, it must be recollected, was delivered in a court of justice.

wronged the state." But when at last Demosthenes has himself set aside all proofs, and, though not a friend of vituperation, as he affirms, repels the attacks of his adversary with like weapons, he declares more than once that he is forced to such language only through the lavish abuse of Aeschines. This proud favorite of foreign kings, whose powerful voice had just rung out in pompous speech, Demosthenes now seeks to hold up for derision, and thus to obliterate the impression which the invective of Aeschines had made. Testimony is not brought forward; rebutting testimony is not expected. This invective assumes fully the character of that personal ridicule which abounds in the Athenian comedy. That, indeed, is the source from which it comes. From comedy it was transferred by a laughter-loving people to oratory; and if we will estimate it correctly, we must weigh it in the same scales with Aristophanes's ridicule of Cleon, Euripides, or Socrates. Whatever in it is blameworthy must be charged, not on any individual, but on the entire period. In the scorn which is heaped on Aeschines, the nickname *Empusa*, given to his mother, points directly to the comic stage. Demosthenes reminds his auditors of the comic mask simply to excite their laughter. But for earnest and entire truth, the Athenians themselves would never think of taking it.

Accordingly we must not picture to ourselves *Glaucothea*, any more than *Atrometus*, as the orator has chosen to do; but must limit ourselves to the better grounded statements in the Oration on the Embassy, remembering always that her character as priestess was not above suspicion.

That the parents of Aeschines were Athenian citizens appears further confirmed when we consider what is said of his brothers; since against these, even Demosthenes can say nothing worse than that they had no special claim to the high honors which they had received. According to him, *Philochares* had once devoted himself to the painting of drums and of alabaster boxes, while *Aphobetus*, like his brother Aeschines, had been employed as a scribe, from which occupations

both had been called, without any special deserts, to the most honorable offices — those of general and ambassador. A scholiast undertakes to defend Philocares against Demosthenes. Starting with the very just thought, that the orators shamelessly disparage the praiseworthy efforts of their opponents, he falls into the absurdity of comparing Philocares with the most celebrated painters, Zeuxis, Apelles, and Euphranor. This requires no refutation, and would not have been alluded to, but for the fact that Maussac adopts the idea as truthful.<sup>1</sup> Aeschines introduces his eldest brother, in the Oration on the Embassy in this manner: “This Philocares, our eldest brother, not following ignoble pursuits, as Demosthenes injuriously affirms, but passing his time in gymnasia, and having joined in a military campaign with Iphicrates, after serving three years continuously as general, has now come to entreat you to save me.” Now it may be that Philocares was not distinguished as a general; yet it is clear that his election and his conduct in office gave no special offense. Of Aphobetus Demosthenes says, that together with his brother Aeschines he had earned money by holding subordinate positions as scribe; afterwards both were promoted by the people to a higher place in the same occupation, and lived two years at the public expense. This may all be true, as Aeschines does not contradict it; but it also remains true that Aphobetus was afterwards honored with the highest offices of the state. We learn from Aeschines that he was sent as envoy to the Persian king, and at another time was entrusted with the care of the public revenues. Granting now that Aphobetus and his brothers owed their promotion to the patronage of Eubulus, still it does not appear that their conduct was unworthy of their official stations. On what ground Demosthenes casts suspicion on the private life of Aphobetus is not known. Aeschines on this point simply says he had children by a lawful marriage. The name of another brother, Eunomus, is given by a later grammarian. But in all probability this is an error, since there is no mention of a

<sup>1</sup> Annotat. ad Harpocr. lex. ἀλαβοστοθῆκαι, p. 13, 7.

third brother in the works either of Demosthenes or of Aeschines; and the biographers expressly state that Aeschines had but two brothers. From the orations of Aeschines and Demosthenes on the Crown, we learn nothing additional, save that Demosthenes simply alludes to one of the brothers, doubtless Aphobetus, as statesman and orator, without attributing to him anything dishonorable.

The remaining family connections of Aeschines seem also to prove his Athenian descent. He married the daughter of Philodemus the Paeonian, whom he mentions as a man of distinction in his own deme, and as having aided Demosthenes to obtain an enrolment among the citizens. His brother-in-law Philo, is praised as a brave hoplite, and Demosthenes mentions that more than five talents fell to Aeschines from this kinsman. Philo, therefore, appears to have been a man of wealth and of good character. Another brother-in-law Aeschines has occasion to defend against the attacks of Demosthenes. In the Oration on the Embassy Demosthenes speaks of the execrable Cyrebion, who marched riotously in the Dionysiac processions without a mask. To this, Aeschines replies, that Demosthenes misrepresents the good conduct of Philo's brother Epicrates; for who ever saw him in the daytime in a Dionysiac procession, or at night, conducting improperly? It appears from this that Epicrates and Cyrebion denoted the same person; and we know that Alexis, in a comedy, used the latter name for a parasite. Demosthenes mentions still another brother-in-law of Aeschines, Nicias by name, who in a love intrigue accompanied Chabrias to Egypt. Of all this Aeschines says nothing whatever, and only mentions Philo and Epicrates as brothers of his wife. It appears that he was married before he went on the embassy to Macedonia, since in the trial that resulted from this embassy he brought into court his three children to move the compassion of the judges.

The ancient biographies throw little light on the question of Aeschines's ancestry, since they are founded entirely on the statements in the speeches still extant. It is not, however,

irrelevant to remark that they regard all which is said of the slave Tromes as mere fiction, and represent Aeschines the Cothocidian as sprung from a house not distinguished either for noble rank or for wealth. Herein we find a proof that the reproaches of Demosthenes were taken in ancient times for what they are worth.

The result of our inquiry may be thus summed up. Aeschines was an Athenian by birth, from the deme of the Cothocidae, the son of Atrometus and Glaucos. His father boasted of relationship to the most ancient families of Athens, but was so far impoverished at the close of the Peloponnesian war that he betook himself to Corinth, and, as a hired soldier, engaged in military service in Asia. Thence, on the expulsion of the thirty tyrants, he returned home and supported himself as a schoolmaster. In his old age he saw all his sons elevated to public offices. He died at the advanced age of ninety-five, a year after the acquittal of Aeschines from the charge of misconduct in the Macedonian embassy, during which trial he had himself pleaded for the life of his son. His wife Glaucos, daughter of Glaucus, had occasion to be proud of her brother Cleobulus, who as naval commander successfully and honorably withstood the Lacedaemonians. She herself held the office of priestess, but not without the suspicion of having used it for dishonorable gains. The brothers of Aeschines rose to the highest positions. We hear, however, as little of their special services to the state as of malversation in office. Finally, Aeschines was connected by marriage with a family of wealth, but not of marked distinction in other respects.

## II. EARLY EDUCATION OF AESCHINES.

In considering the question how Aeschines was educated for his later career in life, we need not enter particularly on the account in the Oration on the Crown; since we have already considered somewhat at length the invective of Demosthenes as it is there found. It is also, in fact, a matter of secondary importance to us whether Aeschines assisted



his parents with domestic service, as they brought up their children under many privations ; more important is it to know what incentives he had for the cultivation of his native powers, and in how far the ordinary education of an Athenian youth was denied him. We naturally think, first of all, of his father's instruction ; and with this thought we may connect the fact that he more than once alludes to his father's narratives of earlier times in Athens. That Aeschines was not brought up in vulgar and rude society is manifest from his orations. And though we may concede the truth of Isocrates's complimentary language : " to all those who know how to speak, our city has been a teacher " ; yet we may also affirm that no man could become a secretary of the city, nor an actor, without particular instruction, even if a brilliant natural eloquence might dispense with such aid. It is also noticeable that Aeschines himself is fond of alluding to his education, not to say of parading his learning. In the Oration against Timarchus he cites passages from Homer, Hesiod, and Euripides, and addresses the advocates in these words : " But since you call to mind not only Achilles and Patroclus, but also Homer and other poets, as though the judges were without education, while you claim to be yourselves persons of high culture, and in your learning despise the common people ; in order that you may know that we also have heard and learned a little, we will rehearse something of these things." These words appear the more remarkable, when it is considered that no speech had preceded ; but Aeschines, in anticipation of what the other party might say, takes occasion to display his learning in all its length and breadth. In a similar way, in the Oration against Ctesiphon he quotes from Hesiod : " And I will cite the words," says he, " for on this account I suppose we as children learn the sayings of the poets, that as men we may make use of them." Whenever Demosthenes cites passages from the poets, the thought does not occur to us that he wishes to show us what he has learned. He uses them as tributary to the end in view, and they never fail in their effect. Aeschines, on the other

hand, uses them for parade; sometimes very inopportunately. When he wished to establish before Philip the claims of Athens to the possession of Amphipolis, he spoke of the ancient times, how Acamas, son of Theseus, had received the land as a dowry with his wife. If this instance is considered excusable and proper, from the Grecian custom of establishing their land-titles by an appeal to the mythical age, then we may refer to the ostentatious speech before Philip on the origin of the Delphian sanctuary, and to the speech before the Amphyctyonic council on the Cirrhean territory. True, Aeschines does not make these learned digressions without an object; but the manner in which he speaks shows his self-satisfaction. This feeling is apparent in the peroration of his speech against Ctesiphon, and exposes a weak point to the keen glance of his antagonist. To strengthen his appeal, he resorts to this apostrophe: "O earth and sun and virtue and understanding and education, by which we distinguish the honorable and the base." Demosthenes suggests that Aeschines cries out as if in a tragedy, and appeals to that which does not belong to him; that being in reality without culture, he grasps at the appearance of it; and that any man who was really well educated would blush to hear such things spoken of himself by another. We must not suppose that Demosthenes, just for the sake of bearing hard on his antagonist, claims a delicacy of feeling which no doubt was further removed from the Greeks in their free speech than from us. This want of delicacy according to our standard often appears in the Greek orators. Thus Isocrates, in his address to Philip, in which he claims the right of speaking on public affairs, though neither a general nor statesman, nor otherwise invested with authority, uses this language: "In respect to good judgment and education I dispute the palm with any one, though he pronounce my declaration lacking in delicacy." Demosthenes did not attack Aeschines for that which innocently fell from his lips on a single occasion. We have already cited passages in which he boasts of having learned something, and these are a fair specimen of his

prevailing character. He is in fact never weary of alluding to his superior culture and education.

We may conclude, therefore, from all that has been said above, that Aeschines came from his father's school well instructed in the rudiments of an education, and that he was acquainted with the poets and with ancient histories; also, that while he followed the profession of actor he may have learned much more of the same kind; but we may also conclude that he was lacking in higher and nobler culture, while there is apparent a certain pride in his knowledge, laboriously acquired, and in those fine manners which were not possessed from his youth.

Physical grace and dexterity were imparted to him in the gymnasia, to which he often repaired, even in later years. On arriving at manhood he spent two years, according to law, in military service on the borders, and after this period took part in various expeditions as hoplite. The first of these, as he himself states, was to Phlius, with a division of Athenian and mercenary troops (366 B.C.). In this he won honorable notice from his superiors. Afterwards he fought with credit in the battle of Mantinea; and again, he served with distinction in Euboea, first under Diocles (357 B.C.), then in the expedition sent to aid the tyrant Plutarch (350 B.C.). In this last, Aeschines stood in a company of picked men, and so greatly distinguished himself before the eyes of Phocion that a wreath of honor was awarded to him; besides, he was chosen with Temenides, chief of the Pandionian tribe, to bear the tidings of victory to Athens. For this also the citizens again rewarded him with a wreath of honor. Well may Aeschines boast, therefore, of having discharged his duties as a citizen creditably in this respect.

### III. AESCHINES AS ACTOR.

From the mouth of the orator himself we hear nothing on this subject. While at other points he repels the attacks of Demosthenes, he here receives in silence the lavish derision of his adversary — a sufficient proof that he had nothing to

say in self-defense. Since the profession of actor was not in itself disreputable among the Greeks, we must suppose either that the relation of Aeschines to the stage had been in general attended with little credit to himself, or else that he had in some particular instance met with a humiliating failure. Both, in fact, were true, and consequently he could look back on this period in his life only with a feeling of mortification.

In respect to the actors generally, we should remember that all who would take part in theatrical exhibitions at Athens were subjected to two conditions—they must be free-born Athenians, and must have properly studied the histrionic art. The three actors, who according to Athenian custom were required for each play, were distributed to the poets by lot; not however singly, but in sets, so that the first (the protagonist) chose for himself the other two (the deuteragonist and tritagonist). Thus we find, in Demosthenes, Ischander mentioned, not in a single play alone, but regularly, as the deuteragonist of Neoptolemus; and Aeschines, as the tritagonist of Theodorus and Aristodemus. Whoever had won a prize was admitted the following year without examination to a corresponding part; and it may be conjectured that in such cases they were allowed to choose the plays in which they would appear; since it is a fact that many actors appeared regularly in the plays of favorite poets. The pay they received was high, and it might be largely increased by engagements in other Grecian cities, as well as by prizes. The prize was awarded to the protagonist, but the second actor may also have received a portion of it. He was at least held in honor, and stood far above the tritagonist; since, while those who played the principal parts were regarded as artists, and were highly esteemed, the third actor received but a slender share of the honor. He was taunted with the comparatively low pay for which he was employed; while the brilliant parts, in which he often figured as king or tyrant, were held up in contrast with his sorry lot. Tritagonist is often used by Demosthenes as a term of reproach. Still, we must not assign too low a place in histrionic skill

even to this part. We know that the Athenians demanded culture and talent in the whole representation; and the parts which fell to the third actor, as for example Creon in the *Antigone*, though not so difficult as some others, were yet brought into immediate juxtaposition with them, and must be decently acted.

Aeschines was not lacking in talent for dramatic representation. Though not lofty in stature, he was well formed and vigorous, and by practice had acquired composure and grace of movement. Added to this, he possessed a voice of rare strength and fulness, which in his later years had a magic power over an audience. Demosthenes is never weary in warning his judges against this influence; and in setting forth with manifest bitterness the contrast between the contents of Aeschines's speeches and their charming sound. Aeschines was thus fitted for those parts which required a dignified, and sometimes pompous, bearing and a commanding voice; but the more delicate expression of the finer feelings did not lie within his province. This belonged to the protagonist. However, it was necessary for the tritagonist, equally with the other actors, to conform his voice, as well as his movements, to certain rules which the development of the dramatic art had introduced. He must learn to unite with the others in producing a certain unity of action; and hence must know how according to circumstances to elevate and depress and otherwise modulate his voice. Demosthenes often calls attention to this art as exhibited by Aeschines. Thus, in alluding to the choice which the Athenians made of an orator to pronounce the eulogy over those who had fallen at Chaeronea, he says: "They thought it becoming that the man chosen for this purpose should not deplore the fortune of the slain, like an actor, with the voice, but should grieve in heart." This is the modulation of the voice under deep emotion, the *inclinata vox*, which Quintilian, in referring to this passage, illustrates.

Aeschines attached himself to those actors who reproduced on the stage the master works of the earlier drama. Demos-

thones implies this in the Oration on the Embassy in this manner. Aeschines, in the oration against Timarchus, had cited a passage from the Phoenix of Euripides and used it for his purpose. In this play he had never appeared on the stage. He ought rather, Demosthenes suggests, to have selected from the Antigone of Sophocles the speech of Creon, whom he had often represented, and with whose words he was perfectly familiar; since it was customary as a compliment to the tritagonist to give him the part of the tyrants. From this passage we learn definitely in what characters Aeschines appeared. It is also suggested in the same connection with what actors he was associated. Who, then were, these actors, and what was their professional standing?

Theodorus and Aristodemus, the persons in question, are often mentioned by contemporary and by subsequent writers. Pausanias speaks of Theodorus, whose monument he saw on the sacred way to Eleusis, as the first tragic actor of his time; and not less than this is implied by the allusion of Aristotle. He lays down the rule for orators that they should not speak with an affected tone, but naturally, since the one creates suspicion, while the other convinces. And this is shown by comparing the voice of Theodorus with that of other actors; while in them it sounds foreign and affected, in him it seems to come from the soul. Again, Aristotle elsewhere mentions that Theodorus did not allow another actor, not even if he were accomplished, to precede him; since the spectators were won by the first impressions. This has been explained as meaning that Theodorus, in those plays where the principal actor did not appear at the beginning, took a subordinate part. Occasionally this may have occurred; but oftener, unless the play conformed to his rule, as the Antigone for example, he would introduce modifications, such as to give the first place to his part. That actors often took such liberties is well known, since laws were enacted to prevent them; and those who reproduced the plays, especially of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, were required to adhere strictly to the original form.

We learn from Plutarch that the histrionic skill of Theodorus was afterwards remembered. This writer mentions him, together with Polus, as the greatest of tragic actors. Aelian speaks of him in the same tenor. He relates that the tyrant, Alexander of Phœræ, was once so overcome with emotion in witnessing the action of Theodorus, that he was compelled to leave the theatre. Various plays are mentioned in which Theodorus took the leading part; and it is supposed that Aeschines was associated with him in many of these as tritagonist.

Aristodemus was the associate of Theodorus on the stage, and enjoyed in his time an equal reputation, though somewhat younger, and in posthumous fame inferior. He played not only at Athens, but also at other cities; and we hear of him in the character of actor, together with Neoptolemus, at the court of Philip, even during the war between Athens and Macedonia. On their return home they were honored as bearers of dispatches, reporting to the Athenians how greatly Philip desired peace and friendship. Aristodemus was afterwards even chosen as an envoy by the Athenian people; although in the subsequent peace negotiations he withdraws to the background, and Philocrates with Aeschines become the conspicuous characters. Aristodemus, like Theodorus, was a tragic actor, of handsome person, and crowned in many cities. Among his favorite characters, Demosthenes mentions Antigone, in the well-known play of Sophocles; in which Aeschines had played with him, as well as with Theodorus, the part of Creon. A scholiast speaks of his being a native of Metapontum. If this were so, the right of citizenship must have been conferred on him by the Athenian people; since, as a resident foreigner, he could neither have appeared on the stage, nor have been chosen as envoy of the city.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In passing we may here mention another actor of that period, Satyrus, son of Theogeiton of Marathon, whom Lucian mentions, together with Polus and Aristodemus, as a hero and god on the tragic stage. So far as we know, this is the only mention of a tragic actor of this name. The one mentioned by Demosthenes, and highly eulogized for his courageous conduct before Philip,

To this age belong two other tragic actors of eminence, who, in addition to their professional engagements, were employed as envoys by the state. These were Neoptolemus, a special favorite with Philip, and his associate (as deuteragonist) Ischander. With the latter Aeschines stood for a while in intimate relations; and it was in performing a play with this actor that he met with the unfortunate accident which terminated his career on the stage, making the recollection of this period of his life a sore mortification. In acting the Oenomaus of Sophocles in the theatre at Colyttus, he fell down on the stage, and was raised up by Sannion, master of the chorus. We may well suppose he could not again make his appearance on the stage before the Athenian public.

Of the truth of this story there seems to be no doubt; as the particular theatre and the particular representation in which the unlucky event occurred are specified. Yet it is a matter of surprise that Demosthenes should mention the unhappy incident for the first time in the later oration. In the earlier — the Oration on the Embassy — he banters Aeschines as a practised tritagonist under accomplished actors; as one who must learn his part accurately; and who, having collected iambics, went through them in solemn tone to the end; as having of necessity resorted to other means of subsistence beyond his profession; and to all this Aeschines only says in reply, that he had never done anything dishonorable for a livelihood. Finally, Demosthenes asserts, that while Aeschines was representing as tritagonist the misdeeds of Thyestes and of those at Troy, he was driven away from the theatre with hisses and well-nigh stoned to death, so that he at last abandoned his profession. But not a word is said of Oenomaus. How different is the picture in the Oration on the Crown! We here find the choicest collection of the

was a comedian. Still there may have been another Satyrus, a tragic actor; and he may have been the same who, according to the familiar story of Plutarch, pointed out to Demosthenes wherein his delivery was defective; having first requested the desponding orator to recite a passage from a tragic poet, and then having repeated it after him with proper intonation.



most scornful invective with which a pitiable actor was ever overwhelmed. Nothing is said of his committing his part to memory, or of the kings and heroes whom Aeschines personated by the side of actors who stood first in their profession; but he appears as *the accomplished tritagonist* who devoured the iambics, who spoiled the verses. Here also we read of Oenomaus, whom Aeschines by his bad acting murdered in Colyttus; of his falling down, while Demosthenes was a spectator, and hissed at him. And not this alone, but he appears as tritagonist with Simylus and Socrates, who were nicknamed *the groaners*. With these, he collects figs and grapes and olives from the gardens of other people, like a fruit-huckster, receiving more money for the stolen fruits than from the plays which he acted at the peril of his life; since there was a war without herald and without armistice between him and the spectators. "Well may you," adds Demosthenes, with the most biting sarcasm, "reproach as coward those who are inexperienced in such dangers." In another passage, Aeschines is called "a real tragic ape, a rustic Oenomaus, a mock orator." These stinging reproaches can lay no claim to our credence. They are pure invective; not fact. Save Demochares and Philostratus, the ancient world do not appear to have taken them in earnest.

We may therefore set these odious delineations quite aside. Still, this being done, we must yet acknowledge that Aeschines resorted to the stage, not from any peculiar fitness or fondness for the histrionic art, but as a means of subsistence, perhaps as a temporary shift. Even thus, his talent was such that the first actors of the age associated him with themselves for the third parts. By this means, he became familiar with the master-pieces of Attic tragedy, and acquired full command of his voice; all of which was exceedingly valuable to him in his subsequent career, though it sometimes betrayed him into a delivery which appeared theatrical and over-pathetic. His dignified bearing, and his intentional avoidance of numerous and violent gestures, may also be referred to the influence of the stage, where he had usually supported

the character of kings and heroes.<sup>1</sup> For the development of noble and exalted character the life of an actor was certainly not favorable. As at other times, so then, the majority of actors were a frivolous and sensual class, expending their earnings in Bacchanalian revels and love intrigues. In this way, Aeschines became familiar with those love adventures and erotic songs to which he alludes in the Oration against Timarchus, and for which he partly apologizes. Fortunately, no doubt, for his reputation, these are no longer extant.

#### IV. AESCHINES AS SECRETARY.

From the tragic stage Aeschines returned to the employment of secretary, at which he had already previously tried his hand. For this kind of labor the demand at Athens was quite extraordinary; not only in the courts, and in all departments of the general government, but also in the separate demes and tribes. Testimonies and judicial decisions, laws and decrees, official documents of the greatest variety, were to be recorded, filled out, or copied; and for all this, secretaries were required. The oftener citizens unacquainted with the public business were brought into office by lot, so much the greater was the need of a professional class who were familiar with the regular forms of business, and with the laws and ordinances of the state. But they were required and employed not merely as copyists and recorders, but also as keepers of the archives, and as clerks who read in all courts and public assemblies the various documents which were cited. Thus, for example, in the courts, each party had its clerk, who read, as occasion required, the testimonies, laws, and other documents which were called for. The rank and occupation of secretary varied of course very greatly. For many transactions, even of the state, educated slaves were used; resident foreigners also were thus taken into the service of individual citizens; but chiefly, and in a public

<sup>1</sup> The well-known and exquisite statue of Aeschines (sometimes, though we think incorrectly, called Aristides) from the theatre at Herculaneum, represents him with his hand enveloped in his outer garment.

official capacity exclusively, the poorer citizens were thus employed. Sometimes they were attached to orators and attorneys, or to civil magistrates; sometimes they were appointed by the council or the popular assembly, and taken into their service for a specified time. Among these last, three may be specially mentioned: the one who was chosen from the council by lot for a prytany, whose duty it was to collect and fill out the records and decrees for his period of office; the secretary of the entire council, who also kept their archives; and the secretary of the popular assembly, who, in addition to his other duties, read the documents which might be called for. A herald was also associated with him, who at his direction recited the appropriate forms of prayer and made announcements. As the services of these secretaries might at any time be required, they remained in the prytaneum, and were entertained at the public expense.

Aeschines served as secretary in various positions: first, in the inferior offices for a trifling compensation; afterwards, most likely when he withdrew from the stage, under Aristophan and Eubulus, at that time the leading men in the government. He would thus become acquainted with the laws and the decrees of the people (*ψηφίσματα*), as well as with all the crooks and turns resorted to in the courts and in the popular assemblies. Not unfrequently evasions or perversions were practised. Especially common was the artifice of reading the acts or laws, not entire, but in parts; such clauses being selected from them as seemed best to serve a present purpose, the remainder being left quite out of view. In this practice Aeschines is thought to have become unusually adept. It was probably through the recommendation of Eubulus that Aeschines and his brother Aphobetus were elected secretaries by the people, and were entertained at the public expense two years. From this office they rose to still more important positions, becoming orators and envoys to foreign states.

Thus much seems to be pretty well established respecting the career of Aeschines up to the period of his entrance into

the political arena. It may be seen that he had acquired much experience and varied information which would be useful to him as a politician and orator, but not a finished and artistic preparation for the duties of statesman as well as orator. We should hardly expect to hear of such a preparation in his case; yet subsequent writers represent him to have gone through a complete course in rhetoric and philosophy. Thus Demetrius Phalereus makes him a pupil of Isocrates and of Plato. Caecilius, rejecting this view, speaks of the orator Leodamas as his master; for no other reason, probably, than because Aeschines places the art of this orator above that of Demosthenes. If by this is simply meant that Aeschines took Leodamas as a model, it may all be true, but more than this is in the highest degree improbable. With as little reason it has been inferred from the style of his oratory that he had studied under the rhetorician Alcidas of Elea, a pupil of Gorgias, who outdid his master in pompous delivery. We can only admit, at most, that Aeschines had studied the treatise of Alcidas on rhetoric, as Demosthenes asserts, though even this may be intended as a sarcasm.

That Aeschines had never received any systematic instruction in the art of eloquence was acknowledged in ancient times by thoughtful critics. They denied expressly that he had been under any master, asserting that he had cultivated himself by his labors as secretary, and pushed his way forward to a commanding place among his contemporaries by his native energies alone. This judgment is confirmed in many ways. Even Aeschines himself claims the credit of having become an orator through his inborn talent, and not by the aid of the schools. We must not, however, infer from this, that Aeschines had not been diligent in the study of eloquence. This point is sufficiently settled by the fact that he prepared his speeches for publication. On closer examination, also, we find in his works distinct traces of study; not alone in the fact that on one occasion he uses for his exordium part of a speech which he had previously heard, and on another, transcribes a passage entire from Andocides,

an earlier orator ; but it is nowhere to be disguised with what nice calculation he brings his materials together and shapes them to his purpose, whatever pains he may take to appear careless of the rules of art, and led on only by the subject itself. When he aims to move the feelings of his audience, his diction rises to a pathetic power, and embraces an uncommon fulness and solemnity of expression. Yet, in his sonorous and powerful words the lack of a moral inspiration is perceptible. They do not take hold of us, because they are wanting in truth. When he undertakes to anticipate and refute the arguments of his antagonist he appears heavy, and his conjectures far-sought. In general, the rythm and elastic movement which prevail in the speeches of Demosthenes are not so characteristic of Aeschines. Especially does he lack the power of Demosthenes to re-animate the debate, by interposing smart and lively questions. Thus, with all his gifts, which distinguished him above other orators, and made him the most formidable opponent of Demosthenes, he did not attain the highest place, which is awarded to art, cultivated, refined, and perfected in nobility of soul.