THE ETHICS OF ARISTOTLE BOOK VIII Friendship or Love Chapter I

It will be natural to discuss friendship or love next, for friendship is a kind of virtue or implies virtue. It is also indispensable to life. For nobody would choose to live without friends, although he were in possession of every other good. Nay, it seems that if people are rich and hold official and authoritative positions, they have the greatest need of friends; for what is the good of having this sort of prosperity if one is denied the opportunity of beneficence, which is never so freely or so admirably exercised as towards friends? Or how can it be maintained in safety and security without friends? For the greater a person's importance, the more liable it is to disaster. In poverty and other misfortunes, we regard our friends as our only refuge. Again, friends are helpful to us, when we are young, as guarding us from error; and when we are growing old, as taking care of us, and supplying such deficiencies of action as are the consequences of physical weakness, and when we are in the prime of life, as prompting us to noble actions, according to the adage: "Two come together;" for two people have a greater power both of intelligence and of action than either of the two of himself.

It would seem that friendship or love is the natural instinct of a parent towards a child, and of a child towards a parent, not only among men, but among birds and animals generally, and among creatures of the same race towards one another, especially among men. This is the reason why we praise men who are the friends of their fellow-men or philanthropists. We may observe too in travelling how near and dear every man is to his fellow-men or philanthropists. We may observe too in travelling how near and dear every man is to his fellow-man.

Again, it seems that friendship or love is the bond which holds states together, and that legislators set more store by it than by justice; for concord is apparently akin to friendship, and it is concord that they especially seek to promote, and fraction, as being hostility to the state, that they especially try to expel.

If people are friends, there is no need of justice between them; but people may be just, and yet need friendship. Indeed it seems that justice, in its supreme form, assumes the character of friendship.

Nor is friendship indispensable only; it is also noble. We praise people who are fond of their friends, and it is thought to be a noble thing to have many friends, and there are some people who hold that to be a friend is the same thing as to be a good man.

But the subject of friendship or love is one that affords scope for a good many differences of opinion. Some people define it as a sort of likeness, and define people who are like each other as friends. Hence the sayings "Like seeks like," "Birds of a feather," and so on. Others on the contrary say "two of a trade never agree." Upon this subject some philosophical thinkers indulge in more profound physical speculations; Euripides asserting that: "the parched Earth loves the rain, And the great Heaven rain-laden loves to fall

Earthward"; Heraclitus that "the contending tends together," and that "harmony most beautiful is formed of discords," and that "all things are by strife engendered"; others, among whom is Empedocles, taking the opposite view and urging that "like desires like."

The physical questions we may leave aside as not being germane to the present enquiry. But let us investigate all such questions as are of human interest and relate to characters and emotions, e.g. whether friendship can be formed among all people, or it is impossible for people to be friends if they are vicious, and whether there is one kind of friendship or more than one.

The idea that there is only one kind of friendship or love, because it admits of degrees, rests upon insufficient evidence; for things may be different in kind, and yet may admit of degrees. But this is a question which has been already discussed.

It is possible, I think, to elucidate the subject of friendship or love, by determining what it is that is loveable or an object of love. For it seems that it is not everything which is loved, but only that which is loveable, and that this is what is good, or pleasant or useful. It would seem too that a thing is useful if it is a means of gaining something good or pleasant, and if so, it follows that what is good and what is pleasant will be loveable in the sense of being ends.

It may be asked then, Is it that which good in itself, or that which is good relatively to us, that we love? For there is sometimes a difference between them; and the same question may be asked in regard to that which is pleasant. It seems then that everybody loves what is good relatively to himself, and that, while it is the good which is lovable in an absolute sense, it is that which is good relatively to each individual that is lovable in his eyes. It may be said that everybody loves not that which is good, but that which appears good relatively to himself. But this is not an objection that will make any difference; for in that case that which is lovable will be that which appears to be lovable.

There being three motives of friendship or love, it must be observed that we do not apply the term "friendship" or "love" to the affection felt for inanimate things. The reason is (1) that they are incapable of reciprocating affection, and (2) that we do not wish their good; or it would, I think, be ridiculous to wish the good, e.g., of wine; if we wish it at all, it is only in the sense of wishing the wine to keep well, in the hope of enjoying it ourselves. But it is admitted that we ought to wish our friend's good for his sake, and not for our own. If we wish people good in this sense, we are called well-wishers, unless our good wishes are returned; such reciprocal well-wishing is called friendship or love.

But it is necessary, I think, to add, that the well-wishing must not be unknown. A person often wishes well to people whom he has not seen, but whom he supposes to be virtuous or useful; and it is possible that one of these persons may entertain the same feeling towards him. Such people then, it is clear, wish well to one another; but they cannot be properly called friends, as their disposition is unknown to each other. It follows that, if they are to be friends, they must be well-disposed to each other, and must wish each other's good, from one of the motive which have been assigned, and that each of them must know the fact of the other wishing him well.

But as the motives of friendship are specifically different, there will be a corresponding difference in the affections and friendships.

The kinds of friendship therefore will be three, being equal in number to the things which are lovable, or are objects of friendship or love, as every such object admits of a reciprocal affection between two persons, each of whom is aware of the other's love.

People who love each other wish each other's good in the point characteristic of their love. Accordingly those whose mutual love is based upon utility do not love each other for their own sakes, but only in so far as they derive some benefit one from another. It is the same with those whose love is based upon pleasure. Thus we are fond of witty people, not as possessing a certain character, but as being pleasant to ourselves. People then, whose love is based upon utility, are moved to affection by a sense of their own good, and people whose love is based upon pleasure, by a sense of their own pleasure; and they love a person not for being what he is in himself, but for being useful or pleasant to them. These friendships then are only friendships in an accidental sense; for the person loved is not loved as being what he is, but as being a source either of good or of pleasure. Accordingly such friendships are easily dissolved, if the persons do not continue always the same; for they abandon their love if they cease to be pleasant or useful to each other. But utility is not a permanent quality; it varies at different times. Thus, when the motive of a friendship is done away, the friendship itself is dissolved, as it was dependent upon that motive. A friendship of this kind seems especially to occur among old people, as in old age we look to profit rather than pleasure, and among such people in the prime of life or in youth as have an eye to their own interest. Friends of this kind do not generally even live together; for sometimes they are not even pleasant to one another; nor do they need the intercourse of friendship, unless they bring some profit to one another, as the pleasure which they afford goes not further then they entertain hopes of deriving benefit from it. Among these friendships we reckon the friendship of hospitality, Le. the friendship which exists between a host and his guests.

It would seem that the friendship of the young is based upon pleasure; for they love by emotion and are most inclined to pursue what is pleasant to them at the moment. But as their time of life changes, their pleasures are transformed. They are therefore quick at making friendships and quick at abandoning them; for the friendship changes with the object which pleases them and friendship of this kind is liable to sudden change. Young men are amorous too, amorousness being generally a matter of emotion and pleasure; hence they fall in love and soon afterwards fall out of love, changing from one condition to another many times in the same day. But amorous people wish to spend their days and lives together, as it is thus that they attain the object of their friendship.

Perfect friendship is the friendship of men who are good, and alike in virtue; for these wish well alike to each other qua good, and they are good in themselves. Now those who wish well to their friends for their sake are most truly friends; for they do this by reason of their own nature and not incidentally; therefore their friendship lasts as long as they are good--and goodness is an enduring thing. And each is good without qualification and to his friend, for the good are both good without qualification and useful to each other.

So too they are pleasant; for the good are pleasant both without qualification and to each other, since to each his own activities and others like them are pleasurable, and the actions of the good are the same or like. And such a friendship is as might be expected permanent, since there meet in it all the qualities that friends should have. For all friendship is for the sake of good or of pleasure--good or pleasure either in the abstract or such as will be enjoyed by him who has the friendly feeling--and is based on a certain semblance; and to a friendship of good men all the qualities we have named belong in virtue of the nature of the friends themselves; for in the case of this kind of friendship the other qualities also are alike in both friends, and that which is good are the most lovable qualities. Love and friendship therefore are found most and in their best form between such men.

But it is natural that such friendships should be infrequently; for such men are rare.

Further, such friendships requires time and familiarity; as the proverb says, men cannot know each other till they have 'eaten salt together'; nor can they admit each other to friendship or be friends till each has been found lovable and been trusted by each. Those who quickly show the marks of friendship to each other wish to be friends, but are not friends unless they both are lovable and know the fact, for a wish for friendship may arise quickly, but friendship does not.

This kind of friendship, then, is perfect both in respect of duration and in all other respects, and in it each nets from each in all respects the same as, or something like what, he gives which is what ought to happen between friends. Friendship for the sake of pleasure bears a resemblance to this kind; for good people too are pleasant to each other. So too does friendship for the sake of utility; for the good are also useful to each other. Among men of these inferior sorts too, friendships are most permanent when the friends get the same thing from each other (e.g. pleasure), and not only that but also from the same source, as happens between ready-witted people, not as happens between lover and beloved. For these do not take pleasure in the same things, but the one in seeing the beloved and the other in receiving attentions from his lover; and when the bloom of youth is passing the friendship sometimes passes too (for the one finds no pleasure in the sight of the other, and the other gets no attention from the first); but many lovers on the other hand are constant, if familiarity has led them to love each other's characters, these being alike. But those who exchange not pleasure but utility in their amour are both less truly friends and less constant. Those who are friends for the sake of utility part when the advantage is at an end; for they were lovers not of each other but of profit.

Thus for pleasure or profit it is possible that even bad people may be friends one to another, and good people to bad, and one who is neither good nor bad to either; but it is clearly none but the good who can be friends for the friend's own sake, as bad people do not delight in one another unless some profit accrues.

It is only the friendship of the good which cannot be destroyed by calumnies. For it is not easy to believe what anyone says about a person whom we have tested ourselves for many years, and found to be good. The friendship of the good too realizes confidence, and the assurance that neither of the two friends will do injury to the other; and whatever else is implied in true friendship. But in other friendships there is no reason why calumnies and injuries should not occur.

Now the world recognizes friendships among men, where the friendship is based upon utility, in the same way as among states; for it seems that expediency is the motive with which alliances are contracted between states. It recognizes also friendships where the mutual effect is based upon pleasure as among children. This being the view of the world, it is perhaps right to recognize among such friendships, first, friendship properly called, i.e. the friendship of the god, qua good, and then other friendships which are so called by analogy; for in them people are friends in so far as they involve something that is good or like good, as pleasure itself is a good to people who are fond of pleasure. But these friendships do not altogether coincide, nor is it the same persons who become friends from motives of utility and pleasure; for these are accidental qualities, and such qualities are not always combined in the same person.

As friendship is divided into these kinds, it may be said that while bad people will be friends from motives of pleasure or utility and will so far resemble the good, the good will be friends from love of the persons themselves, i.e. from love of their goodness. While the good then are friends in an absolute sense, the others are friends only accidentally, and because of their resemblance to thee good.

As in the case of the virtues it is sometimes a moral state, i.e. good habit, and at other times an activity, which entitles people to be described as good, so is it also in the case of friendship or love. For people who are living together delight in each other's society and do each other good. But people who are asleep or who are separated by long distances, although they are not active, are in a state which disposes them to activity; for distances do not destroy friendship absolutely, they only destroy its active exercise. Still if the absence be prolonged, it is supposed to work oblivion of the friendship itself; whence the saying: "Many a friendship is dissolved by lack of conversation."

It does not appear that either old people or austere people form friendships readily.

There is little in them that can give pleasure, and nobody can spend all his days in the company of what is painful or not pleasant; for it appears that there is nothing which nature avoids so much as what is painful or desires so much as what is pleasant.

If people tolerate one another, but do not live together, they are more like well­wishers than friends; for there is nothing so characteristic of friendship as living together. People who are in want of assistance long to spend their days in company; for they of all people are the least suited to a solitary life. But it is impossible for people to live together always, unless they are pleasant to one another, and have the same pleasures; and this, it seems, is the characteristic of social intercourse.

It is the friendship of the good which is friendship in the truest sense, as has been said several times. For it seems that, while that which is good or pleasant in an absolute sense is an object of love and desire, that which is good or pleasant to each individual is an object of love or desire to him; but the love or desire of one good man for another depends upon such goodness and pleasantness as are at once absolute and relative to the good.

Affection resembles an emotion but friendship resembles a moral state. For while affection may be felt for inanimate as much as for animate things, the love of friends for one another implies moral purpose, and such purpose is the outcome of a moral state.

Again, we wish the good of those whom we love for their own sake, and the wish is governed not by emotion but by the moral state. In loving our friend too, we love what is good for ourselves; as when a good man becomes a friend, he becomes a blessing to his friend. Accordingly each of two friends loves what is good for himself, and returns as much as he receives in good wishes and in pleasure; for, as the proverb says, equality is friendship.

These conditions then are best realized in the friendship of love of the good. Among austere and elderly people friendship arises less easily, as they are more peevish and less fond of society; for it is social intercourse which seems to be the principal element and cause of friendship. Thus it is that the young form friendships quickly, but old people do not, as they do not make friends with any body who is not delightful to them, nor do austere people. Such people, it is true, wish each other well; they desire each other's good, and render each other services; but they are not really friends, as they do not satisfy the principal condition of friendship by living together and delighting in each other's society.

It is as impossible to be friends with a number of people in the perfect sense of friendship, as it is to be in love with a number of people at the same time; for perfect friendship is in some sense an excess and such excess of feeling is natural towards an individual, but it is not easy for a number of people to give intense pleasure to the same person at the same time, or, I may say, to be good at all. Friendship too implies experience and familiarity, which are very difficult. But it is possible to find a number of people who are pleasant, as affording profit or pleasure; for people of this kind are numerous and their services do not occupy much time.

Among such people the friendship which is based upon pleasure more nearly resembles true friendship, when each party renders the same services to the other, and they are delighted with each other or with the same thing, as e.g. in the friendships of the young; for a liberal spirit is especially characteristic of these friendships.

The friendship which rests upon utility is commercial in its character. Fortunate people do not want what is useful but what is pleasant. They want people to live with; and although for a short time they may bear pain, nobody would endure it continuously; nobody would endure the good itself continuously, if it were painful to him. Hence it is that they require their friends to be pleasant. They ought perhaps to require them also to be good, and not only so, but good in relation to themselves; for then they will have all the qualities which friends ought to have.

It appears that people in positions of authority make a distinction between their friends. Some are useful to them, and others are pleasant, but the same people are not in general both useful and pleasant. For they do not look for friends who are virtuous as well as pleasant, or who will help them to attain noble ends; they look partly for amusing people when they want to be pleased, and partly for people who are clever at executing

**It** has been stated that a virtuous man is at once pleasant and useful; but such a man does not become the friend of one who is superior to him unless he is himself superior to that person in virtue. Otherwise there is no such equality as occurs when his superiority in virtue is proportionate to his inferiority in some other respect. Friendships of this kind however are exceedingly rare.

The friendships which have been described are based upon equality; for the services and sentiments of the two friends to one another are the same, or they exchange one thing for another, e.g. pleasure for profit. **It** has been already stated that friendships depending on exchange are less true and less permanent than others. As being at once similar and dissimilar to the same thing, such friendships may be said both to be and not to be friendships. They look like friendships in respect of similarity to the friendship which depends upon virtue; for the one possesses pleasure, the other utility, and these are characteristics of virtuous friendships as well. But as virtuous friendship is undisturbed by calumnies, and is permanent, while these are quickly changed, and as there are many other differences between them, it seems that their dissimilarity to virtuous friendship makes them look as if they were not friendships at all. There is another kind of friendship or love depending upon superiority, e.g. the friendship or love of a father for a son, or of any elder person for a younger, .... or of a ruler for a subject. These friendships or love of parents for children is not the same as that of rulers for subjects, nor indeed is the friendship or love of a father for a son the same as that of a son for a father, ..... For in each of these there is a different virtue and a different function, and there are different motives; hence the affections and friendships are also different. It follows that the services rendered by each party to the other in these friendships are not the same, nor is it right to expect that they should be the same; but when children render to parents what is due to the authors of their being, and parents to children what is due to them, then such friendships are permanent and virtuous.

In all such friendships as depend upon the principle of superiority, the affection should be proportionate to the superiority; i.e. the better or the more useful party, or whoever may be the superior should receive more affection than he gives; for it is when the affection is proportionate to the merit that a sort of equality is established and this equality seems to be a condition of friendship.

But it is apparently not the same with equality in justice as with equality in friendship. **In** justice it is proportionate equality which is the first consideration, and quantitative equality which is the second, but in friendship quantitative equality is first and proportionate second. This is clearly seen to be the case, if there be a wide distinction between two persons in respect of virtue, vice, affluence, or anything else. For persons so widely different cease to be friends; they do not even affect to be friends. But it is nowhere so conspicuous as in thee case of the Gods; for the Gods enjoy the greatest superiority in all good things. **It** is clear too in the case of kings; for people who are greatly inferior to them do not expect to be their friends. Nor again do worthless people expect to be the friends of the best or wisest of mankind. No doubt in such cases it is impossible to define exactly the point up to which friendship may be carried; it may suffer many deductions and

yet continue but where there is a great distinction as between God and man, it ceases to be.

This is a fact which has given rise to the question whether it is true that friends to really wish the greatest good of their friends, e.g. whether they wish them to be Gods; for then they will lose them as friends, and will therefore lose what are goods, and friends are goods.

That being so, if it has been rightly said that a friend wishes his friend's good for the friend's sake, it will be necessary that the friend should remain such as he is. He will wish his friend the greatest good as a man. And yet perhaps he will not wish him every good, as every one wishes good in the highest sense to himself.

It seems that ambition makes most people wish to be loved rather than to love others. That is the reason why most people are fond of flatters; for a flatterer is an inferior friend, or pretends to be so, and to give more love than he receives. But to be loved seems to approximate to being honoured, and honour is a general object of desire. Not that people, as it appears, desire honour for its own sake, they desire it only accidentally; for it is hope which causes most people to delight in the honours paid them by persons of high position, as they think they will obtain from them whatever they may want, and therefore delight in honour as a symbol of prosperity in the future. But they who aspire to gain honour from persons of high character and wide information are eager to confirm their own opinion of themselves; they delight therefore in a sense of their own goodness, having confidence in the judgment so expressed upon it. But people delight in being loved for their own sake. Hence it would seem to follow that it is better to be loved than to be honoured, and that friendship or love is desirable in itself.

But friendship seems to consist rather in loving than in being loved. It may be seen to be so by the delight which mothers have in loving; for mothers sometimes give their own children to be brought up by others, and although they know them and love them, do not look for love in return, if it be impossible both to love and to be loved, but are content, as it seems, to see their children doing well, and to give them their love, even if thee children in their ignorance do not render them any such service as is a mother's due.

As friendship consists in loving rather than in being loved, and people who are fond of their friends receive praise, it is in some sense a virtue of friends to love; hence where love is found in due proportion, people are permanent friends, and their friendship is permanent.

It is in this way that, even where people are unequal, they may be friends, as they will be equalized. But equality and similarity constitute friendship, especially the similarity of the virtuous; for the virtuous, being exempt from change in themselves, remain unchanged also in relation to one another, and neither ask others to do wrong nor do wrong themselves to please others. It may even be said that they prevent it; for good people neither do wrong themselves nor allow their friends to do it.

But if people are useful and pleasant to each other, they remain friends for a long

The friendship which is based upon utility seems more than any other to be a union of opposites. It is, e.g., such friendship that arises between a poor man and a rich man, or between an ignorant man and a well informed man; for if a man happens to be in want of something, his desire to get it makes him give something also in exchange.

But the love of husband and wife seems to be a natural law, as man is naturally more inclined to contract a marriage than to constitute a state, inasmuch as a house is prior to a state, and more necessary than a state, and the procreation of children is the more universal function of animals.

In the case of other animals this is the limit of their association; but men unite not only for the procreation of children but for the purpose of life. As soon as a man and a woman unite, a distribution of functions takes place. Some are proper to the husband and others to the wife; hence they supply one another's needs, each contributing his special gifts to the common stock. It is thus that utility and pleasure seem alike to be found in this friendship; but its basis will be virtue too, if the husband and wife are virtuous, as each of them has his or her proper virtue, and they will both delight in what is virtuous ....

It seems too that children are a bond of union between them; hence such marriages as are childless are more easily dissolved, as children are the common blessing of both parents, and such community of interest is the bond of union between them.

To ask how husband and wife and friends in general should live together, is, it appears, nothing else than to ask how it is just for them to live; for justice is clearly not the same thing between one friend and another as towards a stranger or a comrade or a fellow­traveller.

Another question which presents a difficulty is whether we ought, or ought not, to dissolve friendships with people whose character is no longer what it once was.

It answers that, if the motive of the friendship was utility or pleasure, then when the utility or the pleasure comes to an end, there is nothing unreasonable in dissolving the friendship. For it was the utility or the pleasure that we loved, and when they have ceased to exist, it is only reasonable that our love should come to an end. But there would be ground for complaint, if a person, whose affection was due to utility or pleasure, pretended that it was due to character. For as we said at the outset, differences arise between friends most frequently when the actual reason of the friendship is not the same as they suppose it to be.

Now if a person A deceives himself into imagining that it is his character which wins him B's affection, although there is nothing in B's conduct which warrants such an idea, he has only himself to blame; but if he is imposed upon by B's pretense, he has a right to complain of him as an imposter and to complain of him still more strongly than of a person who utters counterfeit coin, inasmuch as the felony affects what is more precious than a more pecuniary interest.

But there is this further question. If we admit a person to our friendship, believing him to be a good man, and he turns out and is seen to be a rascal, is it still our duty to love him? But love, it may be answered, is an impossibility, as it is not everything, but only the good that is lovable. A wicked person is not lovable, nor ought he to be loved; for it is not right for us to be lovers of the wicked, or to make ourselves like bad men; but it has been already said that like loves like.

Is it right in such circumstances to dissolve a friendship at once? Perhaps not in all cases, but only where the vice is incurable. If there is a possibility of reforming the friend who has gone wrong, it is a duty to help him in respect of his character even more than in respect of his property, and enters more closely into friendship. It would be admitted that, if a person dissolves a friendship in these circumstances, his action is not at all unreasonable. He was not a friend of the person as that person is now, and therefore if his friend has been metamorphosed and if it is impossible to restore him, he abandons the friendship.

Again, suppose A retains his original character, and B becomes more moral or vastly superior to A in virtue; is it right for B to treat A as a friend? It is impossible, I think for him to treat him so. The case becomes clearest, if there is a wide discrepancy between the two friends. It may happen so in thee friendships of boyhood; for if one of two friends remains a boy in mind, and the other is a fully developed man, how can they be friends, if they do not sympathise with each other in their tastes or in their pleasures and pains? There will be no personal sympathy between them, and without sympathy it is impossible. As we saw, to be friends, as it is impossible for two people to live together. But this is a point which has been already discussed.

Is it right then, when two friends cease to be sympathetic, for one to treat the other as not being in any sense more an alien than if he had never become a friend? The answer seems to be that we must not forget the old intimacy, but as we think it a duty to gratify friends rather than strangers, so we ought to show some consideration for old friends in virtue of the past friendship, provided that the dissolution of friendship is not due to some extraordinary vice.

The origin of friendly relations to our friends and of the characteristic marks of friendship seems to lie in our relation to ourselves. For a friend may be defined as one who wishes and does what is good, or what seems to be good, to another for the other's sake, or who wishes the existence and life of his friend for the friend's sake. This is the feeling of mothers towards their children, and of friends who have had a quarrel towards each other. Or again, a friend may be defined as one who lives with another and shares his desires, or as one who sympathises with another in his sorrows and joys, as is preeminently the case with mothers in relation to their children. But it is one or the other of these characteristics which constitutes the definition of friendship. They are all found in the relation of other men to themselves, in so far as they affect to be good. For it seems, as has been said, that virtue and the virtuous man are the measure of everything; for the virtuous man is at unity with himself, and desires the same things with his whole heart. We therefore wish what is good or what appears to be good for himself, and effects it, as a

good man naturally carries out what is good, and he does so for his own sake, i.e. for the sake of the intellectual part of his nature, which seems to be in every man his true self. Also he wishes his own life and preservation, and especially the life and preservation of the part of himself by which he thinks. For existence is a good thing for the virtuous man, and everybody wishes what is good for himself but nobody desires to lose his personality even on condition that nothing should be wanting to his new personality, although this condition is not inconceivable, as God even now possesses the supreme good; he desires it only on condition of being whatever he now is, and it would seem that the thinking faculty is the man's true self, or is more nearly his true self than anything else is.

Such a person wishes to live with himself. It is pleasant for him to do so; for the memories of the past are pleasant, and he has good hopes, i.e. pleasant hopes, of the future. His mind too is full of speculations, he sympathises with himself preeminently in pain and pleasure; for the same things are pleasant or painful to him always, they do not vary, as he experiences, it may be said, few regrets. As then all these conditions are realized in the relation of a virtuous man to himself and as he has the same relation to his friend as to himself (for his friend is a second self) it seems that friendship consists in one or other of these conditions, and that they in whom these conditions are realized are friends.

Whether it is possible or not for a man to be a friend of himself is a question which may be left for the present. It would seem to be possible in so far as two or more of the specified conditions exist, and because the friendship of one man for another in its extreme form is comparable to the friendship or love of a man for himself. On the other hand it appears that these conditions exist in the majority of people, although they are bad people. Perhaps then we may conclude that these conditions are found in such people only so far as they please themselves and suppose themselves to be good. For if a person is utterly bad and impious, these conditions do not exist; they do not even appear to exist in any bad people; for such people are at variance with themselves, and while desiring one set of things, wish for something else. They are e.g. incontinent (that is, undisciplined) people; they choose not what seems to themselves good, but what is pleasant, although it is injurious, or they are so cowardly and lazy that they abstain from doing what they think to be best for themselves, or they are people whose moral depravity has led them to commit terrible crimes, and they hate and shun life and put an end to themselves.

Vicious people seek companions to spend their days with and try to escape from themselves; for when they are alone, there are many disagreeable things which they recall, and others which they anticipate, but when they are in the company of other people, they forget them. There is nothing lovable in them, and therefore they have no feeling of love for themselves, nor do such people sympathise with themselves in joy or sorrow; for their soul is divided against itself, one part being pained--so vicious is it--at abstaining from certain things, and the other part being pleased, one part pulling this way, and the other that way, as if they would tear the man asunder. Or if it is impossible to feel pain and pleasure simultaneously, it is not long at all events before the vicious man is pained at having been pleased and could have wished that he had not enjoyed such pleasures; for the wicked are full of regrets.

as there is nothing lovable in him, and it follows that if this condition is a condition of extreme misery, we must strain every nerve to avoid wickedness, and must make it our ambition to be virtuous; for then we shall stand in a friendly relation to ourselves, and shall become the friends of others.

Goodwill resembles friendship, but it is not the same thing; for goodwill, unlike friendship, may be directed towards people who are unknown to us, and who do not know that we wish them well, as has been already said.

Again, goodwill is not the same thing as affection; for it does not imply intensity of feeling or desire, which are concomitants of affection.

Again, while affection implies familiarity, the feeling of goodwill may arise in a moment, as e.g. when we feel goodwill towards competitors in the games. We wish them well and we sympathise with them, but we should not think of giving them practical help; for as we said, goodwill arises in a moment and it implies no more than a superficial regard.

Goodwill then may be said to be the germ of friendship, as the pleasure which we feel in looking upon a person is the germ of love. Nobody falls in love, unless he has first felt delight in the beauty of the person whom he loves; but it does not follow that one who feels delight in a person's beauty falls in love, unless he longs for him even in absence and desires his presence. So too it is impossible for people to be friends, unless they have come to feel goodwill to each other; but it does not follow that, if people wish each other well, they are friends, for we merely wish the good of those to whom we feel goodwill, we should not think of giving them practical help or of taking serious trouble in their behalf. It may be said then metaphorically that good will is unproductive friendship, but by lapse of time and familiarity it may become friendship, although not such friendship as is based on utility or pleasure; for neither utility nor pleasure is a possible basis of goodwill. It is true that if A has received a benefaction from B, he renders his goodwill to B as a return for the services done him, and it is only right for him to make such a return. But if A wishes to confer a benefaction on B in the hope of gaining some advantage by his help, it seems that he does not wish well to B, but rather to himself, as in fact he is not B's friend, if his motive in courting him is the desire to get something out of him. On the whole however it may be said that goodwill, when it arises, depends on some sort of virtue or goodness. It arises when we look on a person as noble or brave and so on, as we said in the case of competitors in the games.

Unanimity too, appears to be a mark of friendship; but if so, unanimity is not mere unity of opinion, as this may exist among people even if they do not know one another. Nor do we speak of persons who are united in judgment on any subject, e.g. on astronomy, as unanimous; for unanimity on these subjects is not a mark of friendship; but we speak of states as unanimous when they are united in judgment upon their interests, and have the same purposes and pursue a common policy.

It is thus when people agree upon practical matters that they are said to be unanimous, especially when they agree upon such practical matters as are important and

as are capable of belonging to both parties or to all. Thus a state is unanimous when all thee citizens are in favour of making the offices of state elective, or of forming an alliance with the Lacedaemonians, or of electing Pittacus governor, Pittacus himself having been at the time willing to govern.

But when each of two parties wishes to be governor like Eteocles and Polynices in the Phoenissae, there is not unanimity but discord; for unanimity does not mean both parties entertain the same view whatever it may be, but that they entertain the same view as to the way of carrying it out, as when the masses and the upper classes agree in desiring the government of the best citizens; for then they all gain their desire.

Unanimity then appears to be political friendship, and indeed it is often so described, as it touches the interests and concerns life. Such unanimity can exist only among the virtuous; for they are unanimous both in themselves and in their relation to each other. They are anchored, as it were, immovably, as their wishes are permanent, and do not ebb and flow like the Eurious; the objects of their wishes are just and profitable, and they all agree in desiring these objects.

It is impossible for bad men to be unanimous, as it is impossible for them to be friends, except to a slight extent; for each desires an advantage over the other in all profits, and seeks to avoid his share of labours and public service, and while each person wishes to gain unfair advantage and to escape a fair share of duty, he criticizes and thwarts his neighbors' actions; for unless they keep an eye upon each other, their community is destroyed. The consequence is that they are always in a state of discord, each insisting that the other shall do what is just, and neither wishing to do it himself.

Chapter X

Proper Number of Friends

It is our duty then to make the largest possible number of friends? or is it with friendship generally, as with the friendship of hospitality, where it has been neatly said:

"Give me not many friends, nor give me none," i.e. will it here too be proper neither to be friendless nor again to have an excessive number of friends?

In case of friends whose friendship we make from motive of expediency the rule is a perfectly proper one, as it is a laborious task to return the services of a number of people, nor is life long enough for the task. A larger number of such friends then than are sufficient for one's own life would be superfluous and prejudicial to noble living; they are therefore unnecessary.

Again, of those whom we make friends it may be asked, Should they be as numerous as possible or is there a fixed limitation to the size of a circle of friends, as there is to the size of a state? For ten people would not be enough to compose a state; on the other hand, if the population rose to a hundred thousand, it would cease to be a state. It may be suggested, however, that the number of citizens is not a single fixed amount, but may be anything within certain definite limits. So too there will be a definite limit to the number of friends. It will, I think, be the highest number with whom a person could live.

For it is community of life which we saw to be the especial characteristic of friendship, and it is easy to see that a person cannot live with a number of people and distribute himself among them.

Again, a person's friends must themselves be friends of each other, if they are all to pass their days together, and this is a condition which can hardly exist among a number of people. It is hard for a person to sympathise fittingly with a number of people in their joys and sorrows; for it will probably happen that at the very time when he is called upon to rejoice with one he will be called upon to sorrow with another.

Perhaps it is well then not to try to have the largest possible number of friends, but to have only so many as are sufficient for community of life, as it would seem to be impossible to be a devoted friend of a number of people. Hence it is impossible to be in love with several people; for love is in its intention a sort of exaggerated friendship, and it is impossible to feel this exaggerated friendship except for an individual. So too it is impossible to be the devoted friend of more than a few people. This is what seems to be practically the case. We do not find that people have a number of friends who are as intimate with them as comrades. The classical friendships of story too have all been friendships between two persons.

People who have a host of friends, and who take everybody to their arms, seem to be nobody's friends, unless indeed in the sense of which all fellow-citizens are friends; and if they have a host of friends, we call them complaisant people.

Although then as a fellow-citizen it is possible for one to be the friend of a number of people and yet not to be complaisant, but to be truly virtuous, it is impossible to be the friend of a number of people as being virtuous and deserving of friendship for their own sake. We must be content if we can find only a few people who deserve such friendship.

It remains to ask, Is it in times of prosperity or in times of adversity that friends are more needed? We require them at both times; for in adversity we need assistance, and in prosperity we need people to live with and to do good to, as it is presumably our wish to do good.

Friendship then is more necessary in times of adversity; therefore in adversity we want friends to help us; but it is nobler in times of prosperity; therefore in times of prosperity we look for good people, as it is more desirable to do them services and to live in their society. For the mere presence of friends is pleasant even in adversity, as pain is alleviated by the sympathy of friends. Accordingly it may be doubted whether they take part of the burden as it were upon themselves or it is rather the pleasure of their presence, and the thought of their sympathy, which diminishes the pain we feel.

We need not now discuss whether this or something else is the cause of the alleviation. It is clear, at all events, that the fact is as we state it. But it seems that the presence of friends is a source partly of comfort and partly of pain. There is pleasure in the mere sight of friends, especially when one is in adversity, and something too of support against sorrow; for the look and voice of a friend are consoling to us if he be a person of

tact, as he knows our character and the sources of our pleasure and pain. On the other hand it is painful to perceive that a person is pained at our own adversity, as everybody avoids being a cause of pain to his friends. Accordingly people of a courageous nature shrink from involving their friends in their pain, and such a person, unless he be extraordinarily indifferent to pain, cannot endure the pain which he causes them, nor can he in any way put up with people whose sympathy takes the form of lamentation, as he is not fond of indulging in lamentation himself. It is only weak women and effeminate men who take delight in such people as display their sympathy by their groans and who love them as friends and sympathisers in their sorrow. But it is evident that we ought always to imitate one who is better than ourselves.

The presence of friends in seasons of prosperity is a pleasant means of passing the time, and not only so, but it suggests the idea that they take pleasure in our own goods. It would seem a duty then to be forward in inviting friends to share our good fortune, as there is a nobleness in conferring benefactions, but to be slow in inviting them to share our ill fortune, as it is a duty to give them as small a share of our evils as possible, whence the saying: "Enough that I am wretched."

But the time when we should be most ready to call them to our side is the time when it is probable that at the cost of but slight personal inconvenience they will have a chance of doing us a great service.

On the other hand, it is, I think, proper for us to go to our friends when they are in trouble, even if they do not send for us, and to make a point of going, as it is a friendly act to do good, especially to those who are in need and have made no claim upon us; for this is the nobler and pleasanter course for both. It is proper too to be forward in helping them to enjoy themselves, as this again is a service that friends may render, but to be less forward in seeking to get enjoyment for ourselves as there is nothing noble in being forward to receive benefits. Still we must, I think, be on our guard against seeming churlish, as sometimes happens, in rejecting their services.

Nothing is so welcome to people who are in love as the sight of one another. There is no sense that they would choose anything in preference to this, as it is upon this more than upon anything else that the existence and creation of their love depends. May we not say then that there is nothing which friends desire so much as community life? For the essence of friendship is association.

Again, a man stands in the same relation to his friend as to himself; but the sense of his own existence is desirable; so too then is that of the existence of his friend. The activity of friends too is realized in living together. It is only reasonable therefore that they should desire community of life.

Again, whatever it is that people regard as constituting existence, whatever it is that is their object in desiring life, it is in this that they wish to live with their friends. Accordingly some people are companions in drinking, others in gambling, others in

gymnastic exercises, or in the chase or in philosophy, and each class spends its days in that for which it cares more than for anything else in life; for as it is their wish to live with their friends, they do the things and participate in the things which seem to them to constitute a common life.

Thus the friendship of the bad proves to be vicious; for as they are unstable they participate in what is bad, and become vicious by a process of mutual assimilation. But the friendship of the virtuous is virtuous; it grows as their intercourse grows, and they seem to be morally elevated by the exercise of their activity and by the correction of each other's faults; for each models himself upon the pleasing features of the other's character whence the saying: "From good men learn good life" ....

We censure people who are exceedingly fond of themselves, and call them "lovers of self' by way of reproach; for it seems that a bad man has an eye to his own interest in all that he does, and all the more in proportion to his greater viciousness. Accordingly it is a charge against him that he does nothing without an eye to his own interest. The virtuous man, on the other hand, is moved by a motive of nobleness, and the better he is, the more strongly he is so moved; he acts in the interest of his friend, disregarding his own. The facts of life are at variance with these theories as indeed we might expect; for we ought, it is said, to love our best friend best; but the best friend is he who, when he wishes the good of another, wishes it for the other's sake, and wishes it even if nobody will know his wish. But these conditions and all such others as are characteristic of friendship, are best realized in the relation of a man to himself; for it has been said that all the characteristics of friendship in the relation of a man to other men are derived from his relation to himself. All the proverbial sayings agree with this view, such as "Friends have one soul," "Friends' goods are common goods," "Equality is friendship," and "Charity begins at home"; for all these conditions exist preminently in relation to oneself, as every one is his own best friend, and therefore must love himself best.

It is not unnatural to ask, Which of these two lines of argument ought we to follow, as there is something convincing in both? Perhaps then it will be well to analyse them and to determine how far and in what sense they are respectively true. Now the truth will I think become clear, if we ascertain the meaning of the word "self-love" in them both. When people use it as a term of reproach, they give the name "lovers of self' to people who assign themselves a large share of money, honours, and bodily pleasures than belongs to them. These are the objects of desire to men in general. It is these that they conceive to be the highest goods, on these that they set their hearts, and it is for these therefore that they contend. Thus people who are eager to get an undue share of these things gratify their desires and emotions generally, or, in other words, the irrational parts of the soul. This is the character of men in general, and hence as men in general are bad, the term "self-love" has come to be used in a bad sense. It is right then to censure people who are lovers of self in this sense. It is easy to see that people ordinarily apply the term "self-love" to those who assign themselves an undue share of such things as money, honour, and pleasure; for

if a person were to set his heart always on preeminence in doing what is just or temperate or virtuous in any other respect, and were always and by all means to reserve to himself the noble part, nobody would accuse him of self-love or censure him for it. Yet it would seem that such a person is conspicuously a lover of self. At all events he assigns to himself what is in the highest sense good, and gratifies the supreme part of his nature and yields it an unqualified obedience. But as it is the supreme part of a state or any other corporation which seems to be in the truest sense the state or corporation itself, so it is with a man. Accordingly he is in the truest sense lover of self, who loves and gratifies the supreme part of his being. Again, a person is called continent and incontinent (that is, disciplined or undisciplined) according as reason is, or is not the ruling faculty in his being. But to say this is to say that the reason is the man. Also it is when we act most rationally that we are held in the truest sense to have acted ourselves, and to have acted voluntarily.

It is perfectly clear then that it is the rational part of a man which is the man himself, and that it is the virtuous man who feels the most affection for this part. It follows that the virtuous man is a lover of self, although not in the sense in which a man who is censured for self-love is a lover of self, but in a sense differing from it as widely as a life directed by reason differs from a life directed by emotion, and as the desire for what is noble differs from a desire for what seems to be one's interest. Now if people set their hearts preeminently upon noble actions, we all approve and applaud them; but if all people were eager in pursuit of what is noble and exerted themselves to the utmost to do the noblest deeds, then the state would have all its wants supplied, and an individual citizen would have the greatest of all goods, assuming that virtue is the greatest good. We conclude then that a good man ought to be a lover of self, as by his noble deeds he will benefit himself and serve others, but that the wicked man ought not to be a lover of self, as he will injure himself and other people too by following his evil passions. In the bad man then there is a discrepancy between what he ought to do and what he does, whereas the virtuous man does what he ought to do; for reason always chooses what is best for itself, and the good man is obedient to his reason. It is true of the virtuous man that he will act often in the interest of his friends and of his country, and, if need be, will even die for them. He will surrender money, honour, and all the goods for which the world contends, reserving only nobleness for himself, as he would rather enjoy an intense pleasure for a short time than a moderate pleasure long, and would rather live one year nobly than many years indifferently, and would rather perform one noble and lofty action than many poor actions. This is true of one who lays down his life for another; he chooses great nobleness for his own .... It is reasonable then to call such a man virtuous as he prefers nobleness to everything, he may even surrender the opportunity of action to his friend. It may be nobler for him to inspire his friend to act than to act himself.

From The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle, Books VIII and IX, translated by J. E. Weldon (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1892).