

Aristot. *Rhetorica* I 4 1359b19-1360a38

[7] σχεδὸν γάρ, περὶ ὧν βουλευόνται πάντες καὶ περὶ ὧν ἀγορεύουσιν οἱ συμβουλευόντες, τὰ μέγιστα τυγχάνει πέντε τὸν ἀριθμὸν ὄντα: ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν περὶ τε πόρων, καὶ πολέμου καὶ εἰρήνης, ἔτι δὲ περὶ φυλακῆς τῆς χώρας, καὶ τῶν εἰσαγομένων καὶ ἐξαγομένων, καὶ νομοθεσίας:

Now, we may say that the most important subjects about which all men deliberate and deliberative orators harangue, are five in number, to wit: ways and means, war and peace, the defence of the country, imports and exports, legislation.

[8] ὥστε περὶ μὲν πόρων τὸν μέλλοντα συμβουλεύειν δεοὶ ἂν τὰς προσόδους τῆς πόλεως εἰδέναι τίνες καὶ πόσαι, ὅπως εἴτε τις παραλείπεται προστεθῆ καὶ εἴ τις ἐλάττων αὐξηθῆ, ἔτι δὲ τὰς δαπάνας τῆς πόλεως ἀπάσας, ὅπως εἴ τις περιέρχεται ἀφαιρεθῆ καὶ εἴ τις μείζων ἐλάττων γένηται: οὐ γὰρ μόνον πρὸς τὰ ὑπάρχοντα προστιθέντες πλουσιώτεροι γίνονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφαιροῦντες τῶν δαπανημάτων. ταῦτα δ' οὐ μόνον ἐκ τῆς περὶ τὰ ἴδια ἐμπειρίας ἐνδέχεται συνορᾶν, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαῖον καὶ τῶν παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις εὕρημένων ἱστορικῶν εἶναι πρὸς τὴν περὶ τούτων συμβουλήν.

Accordingly, the orator who is going to give advice on ways and means should be acquainted with the nature and extent of the State resources, so that if any is omitted it may be added, and if any is insufficient, it may be increased. Further, he should know all the expenses of the State, that if any is superfluous, it may be removed, or, if too great, may be curtailed. For men become wealthier, not only by adding to what they already possess, but also by cutting down expenses. Of these things it is not only possible to acquire a general view from individual experience, but in view of advising concerning them it is further necessary to be well informed about what has been discovered among others.

[9] περὶ δὲ πολέμου καὶ εἰρήνης τὴν δύναμιν εἰδέναι τῆς πόλεως, ὅποση τε ὑπάρχει ἤδη καὶ πόσῃ ἐνδέχεται ὑπάρξαι, καὶ ποία τις ἢ τε ὑπάρχουσα ἐστὶν καὶ ἥτις ἐνδέχεται προσγενέσθαι, ἔτι δὲ πολέμους πῶς καὶ τίνας πεπολέμηκεν. οὐ μόνον δὲ τῆς οἰκείας πόλεως ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ὁμόρων ταῦτα ἀναγκαῖον εἰδέναι, καὶ πρὸς οὓς ἐπίδοξον πολεμεῖν, ὅπως πρὸς μὲν τοὺς κρείττους εἰρηνεύηται, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ἥττους ἐφ' αὐτοῖς ἢ τὸ πολεμεῖν, καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις, πότερον ὅμοιαι ἢ ἀνόμοιαι: ἐστὶν γὰρ καὶ ταύτη πλεονεκτεῖν ἢ ἐλαττοῦσθαι. ἀναγκαῖον δὲ καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα μὴ μόνον τοὺς οἰκείους πολέμους τεθεωρηκέναι ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς τῶν ἄλλων, πῶς ἀποβαίνουσιν: ἀπὸ γὰρ τῶν ὁμοίων τὰ ὅμοια γίγνεσθαι πέφυκεν.

In regard to war and peace, the orator should be acquainted with the power of the State, how great it is already and how great it may possibly become; of what kind it is already and what additions may possibly be made to it; further, what wars it has waged and its conduct of them. These things he should be acquainted with, not only as far as his own State is

concerned, but also in reference to neighboring States, and particularly those with whom there is a likelihood of war, so that towards the stronger a pacific attitude may be maintained, and in regard to the weaker, the decision as to making war on them may be left to his own State. Again, he should know whether their forces are like or unlike his own, for herein also advantage or disadvantage may lie. With reference to these matters he must also have examined the results, not only of the wars carried on by his own State, but also of those carried on by others; for similar results naturally arise from similar causes.

[10] ἔτι δὲ περὶ φυλακῆς τῆς χώρας μὴ λανθάνειν πῶς φυλάττεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος εἰδέναι τῆς φυλακῆς καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τοὺς τόπους τῶν φυλακτηρίων (τοῦτο δ' ἀδύνατον μὴ ἔμπειρον ὄντα τῆς χώρας) , ἵν' εἴ τ' ἐλάττων ἢ φυλακὴ προστεθῆ καὶ εἴ τις περιεργὸς ἀφαιρεθῆ καὶ τοὺς ἐπιτηδείους τόπους τηρῶσι μᾶλλον.

Again, in regard to the defense of the country, he should not be ignorant how it is carried on; he should know both the strength of the guard, its character, and the positions of the guard-houses (which is impossible for one who is unacquainted with the country, so that if any guard is insufficient it may be increased, or if any is superfluous it may be disbanded, and greater attention devoted to suitable positions.

[11] ἔτι δὲ περὶ τροφῆς, πόση δαπάνη ἱκανὴ τῇ πόλει καὶ ποία, ἢ αὐτοῦ τε γιγνομένη καὶ ἢ εἰσαγωγίμος, καὶ τίνων τ' ἐξαγωγῆς δεόνται καὶ τίνων καὶ παρὰ τίνων εἰσαγωγῆς, ἵνα πρὸς τούτους καὶ συνθῆκαι καὶ συμβολαὶ γίνωνται: πρὸς δύο γὰρ διαφυλάττειν ἀναγκαῖον ἀνεγκλήτους τοὺς πολίτας, πρὸς τε τοὺς κρείττους καὶ πρὸς τοὺς εἰς ταῦτα χρησίμους.

Again, in regard to food, he should know what amount of expenditure is sufficient to support the State; what kind of food is produced at home or can be imported; and what exports and imports are necessary, in order that contracts and agreements may be made with those³ who can furnish them; for it is necessary to keep the citizens free from reproach in their relations with two classes of people—those who are stronger and those who are useful for commercial purposes.

[12] εἰς δ' ἀσφάλειαν ἅπαντα μὲν ταῦτα ἀναγκαῖον δύνασθαι θεωρεῖν, οὐκ ἐλάχιστον δὲ περὶ νομοθεσίας ἐπαΐειν: ἐν γὰρ τοῖς νόμοις ἐστὶν ἢ σωτηρία τῆς πόλεως, ὥστ' ἀναγκαῖον εἰδέναι πόσα τέ ἐστὶ πολιτειῶν εἶδη, καὶ ποῖα συμφέρει ἐκάστη, καὶ ὑπὸ τίνων φθειρεσθαι πέφυκεν καὶ οἰκείων τῆς πολιτείας καὶ ἐναντίων. λέγω δὲ τὸ ὑπὸ οἰκείων φθειρεσθαι, ὅτι ἔξω τῆς βελτίστης πολιτείας αἱ ἄλλαι πᾶσαι καὶ ἀνιέμεναι καὶ ἐπιτεινόμεναι φθίρονται, οἷον δημοκρατία οὐ μόνον ἀνιέμενη ἀσθενεστέρα γίγνεται ὥστε τέλος ἦξει εἰς ὀλιγαρχίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιτεινομένη σφόδρα: ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ γρυπότης καὶ ἡ σιμότης οὐ μόνον ἀνιέμενα ἔρχεται εἰς τὸ μέσον, ἀλλὰ καὶ σφόδρα γρυπὰ γινόμενα ἢ σιμὰ οὕτως διατίθεται ὥστε μηδὲ μυκτῆρα δοκεῖν εἶναι.

With a view to the safety of the State, it is necessary that the orator should be able to judge of all these questions, but an understanding of legislation is of special importance, for it is

on the laws that the safety of the State is based. Wherefore he must know how many forms of government there are; what is expedient for each; and the natural causes of its downfall, whether they are peculiar to the particular form of government or opposed to it. By being ruined by causes peculiar to itself, I mean that, with the exception of the perfect form of government, all the rest are ruined by being relaxed or strained to excess. Thus democracy, not only when relaxed, but also when strained to excess, becomes weaker and will end in an oligarchy; similarly, not only does an aquiline or snub nose reach the mean, when one of these defects is relaxed, but when it becomes aquiline or snub to excess, it is altered to such an extent that even the likeness of a nose is lost.

[13] χρήσιμον δὲ πρὸς τὰς νομοθεσίας τὸ μὴ μόνον ἐπαΐειν τίς πολιτεία συμφέρει, ἐκ τῶν παρεληλυθότων θεωροῦντα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις εἰδέναι, αἱ ποῖαι τοῖς ποίοις ἀρμόττουσιν: ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι πρὸς μὲν τὴν νομοθεσίαν αἱ τῆς γῆς περίοδοι χρήσιμοι (ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ λαβεῖν ἔστιν τοὺς τῶν ἐθνῶν νόμους) , πρὸς δὲ τὰς πολιτικὰς συμβουλὰς αἱ τῶν περὶ τὰς πράξεις γραφόντων ἱστορία: ἅπαντα δὲ ταῦτα πολιτικῆς ἀλλ' οὐ ῥητορικῆς ἔργον ἐστίν.

Moreover, with reference to acts of legislation, it is useful not only to understand what form of government is expedient by judging in the light of the past, but also to become acquainted with those in existence in other nations, and to learn what kinds of government are suitable to what kinds of people. It is clear, therefore, that for legislation books of travel are useful, since they help us to understand the laws of other nations, and for political debates historical works. All these things, however, belong to Politics and not to Rhetoric.

Senofonte, *Memorabili*, III 6

1 Γλαύκωνα δὲ τὸν Ἀρίστωνος, ὅτ' ἐπεχείρει δημηγορεῖν, ἐπιθυμῶν προστατεύειν τῆς πόλεως οὐδέπω εἴκοσιν ἔτη γεγονώς, τῶν ἄλλων οἰκείων τε καὶ φίλων οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο παῦσαι ἐλκόμενόν τε ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος καὶ καταγέλαστον ὄντα: Σωκράτης δέ, εὖνους ὦν αὐτῷ διὰ τε Χαρμίδην τὸν Γλαύκωνος καὶ διὰ Πλάτωνα, μόνος ἔπαυσεν.

Ariston's son, Glaucon, was attempting to become an orator and striving for headship in the state, though he was less than twenty years old; and none of his friends or relations could check him, though he would get himself dragged from the platform and make himself a laughing-stock. Only Socrates, who took an interest in him for the sake of Plato and Glaucon's son Charmides, managed to check him.

2 ἐντυχὼν γὰρ αὐτῷ πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τὸ ἐθελῆσαι ἀκούειν τοιάδε λέξας κατέσχευεν, ὦ Γλαύκων, ἔφη, προστατεύειν ἡμῖν διανενόησαι τῆς πόλεως; ἔγωγ', ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες. νῆ Δί', ἔφη, καλὸν γάρ, εἴπερ τι καὶ ἄλλο τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις. δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι, ἐὰν τοῦτο διαπράξῃ, δυνατὸς μὲν ἔσει αὐτὸς τυγχάνειν ὅτου ἂν ἐπιθυμῆς, ἱκανὸς δὲ τοὺς φίλους ὠφελεῖν, ἐπαρεῖς δὲ τὸν πατρῶον οἶκον, ἀυξήσεις δὲ τὴν πατρίδα, ὀνομαστός δ' ἔσει πρῶτον μὲν ἐν τῇ πόλει, ἔπειτα ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι, ἴσως δ', ὥσπερ Θεμιστοκλῆς, καὶ ἐν τοῖς βαρβάροις:

For once on meeting him, he stopped him and contrived to engage his attention by saying: "Glaucon, have you made up your mind to be our chief man in the state?"

"I have, Socrates."

"Well, upon my word there's no more honourable ambition in the world; for obviously, if you gain your object, you will be able to get whatever you want, and you will have the means of helping your friends: you will lift up your father's house and exalt your fatherland; and you will make a name for yourself first at home, later on in Greece, and possibly, like Themistocles, in foreign lands as well; wherever you go, you will be a man of mark."

3 ὅπου δ' ἂν ἦς, πανταχοῦ περιβλεπτός ἔσει. ταῦτ' οὖν ἀκούων ὁ Γλαύκων ἐμεγαλύνετο καὶ ἠδέως παρέμενε. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ὁ Σωκράτης, οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, τοῦτο μὲν, ὦ Γλαύκων, δῆλον, ὅτι, εἴπερ τιμᾶσθαι βούλει, ὠφελιτέα σοι ἢ πόλις ἐστί; πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη. πρὸς θεῶν, ἔφη, μὴ τοίνυν ἀποκρούψῃ, ἀλλ' εἶπον ἡμῖν ἐκ τίνος ἄρξῃ τὴν πόλιν εὐεργετεῖν.

When Glaucon heard this, he felt proud and gladly lingered.

Next Socrates asked, "Well, Glaucon, as you want to win honour, is it not obvious that you must benefit your city?"

"Most certainly."

"Pray don't be reticent, then; but tell us how you propose to begin your services to the state."

4 ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ Γλαύκων διεσιώπησεν, ὡς ἂν τότε σκοπῶν ὀπόθεν ἄρχοιτο, ἄρ', ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, ὥσπερ φίλου οἶκον εἰ αυξῆσαι βούλοιο, πλουσιώτερον αὐτὸν ἐπιχειροῖς ἂν ποιεῖν, οὕτω καὶ τὴν πόλιν πειράσῃ πλουσιωτέραν ποιῆσαι;

As Glaucon remained dumb, apparently considering for the first time how to begin, Socrates said: "If you wanted to add to a friend's fortune, you would set about making him richer. Will you try, then, to make your city richer?"

"Certainly."

5 πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη. οὐκοῦν πλουσιωτέρα γ' ἂν εἴη προσόδων αὐτῇ πλειόνων γενομένων; εἰκὸς γοῦν, ἔφη. λέξον δὴ, ἔφη, ἐκ τίνων νῦν αἱ πρόσοδοι τῇ πόλει καὶ πόσαι τινές εἰσι; δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι

ἔσκεψαι, ἴνα, εἰ μὲν τινες αὐτῶν ἐνδεῶς ἔχουσιν, ἐκπληρώσης, εἰ δὲ παραλείπονται, προσπορίσης. ἀλλὰ μὰ Δί', ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων, ταῦτά γε οὐκ ἐπέσκεμμαι.

"Would she not be richer if she had a larger revenue?"

"Oh yes, presumably."

"Now tell me, from what sources are the city's revenues at present derived and what is their total? No doubt you have gone into this matter, in order to raise the amount of any that are deficient and supply any that are lacking."

"Certainly not," exclaimed Glaucon, "I haven't gone into that."

6 ἀλλ' εἰ τοῦτο, ἔφη, παρῆλιπες, τὰς γε δαπάνας τῆς πόλεως ἡμῖν εἰπέ: δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι καὶ τούτων τὰς περιττὰς ἀφαιρεῖν διανοῆ. ἀλλὰ μὰ τὸν Δί', ἔφη, οὐδὲ πρὸς ταῦτά πω ἐσχόλασα. οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, τὸ μὲν πλουσιωτέραν τὴν πόλιν ποιεῖν ἀναβαλούμεθα: πῶς γὰρ οἷόν τε μὴ εἰδότα γε τὰ ἀναλώματα καὶ τὰς προσόδους ἐπιμεληθῆναι τούτων;

"Well, if you have left that out, tell us the expenditure of the city. No doubt you intend to cut down any items that are excessive."

"The fact is, I haven't had time yet for that either."

"Oh, then we will postpone the business of making the city richer; for how is it possible to look after income and expenditure without knowing what they are?"

7 ἀλλ', ὦ Σώκρατες, ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων, δυνατόν ἐστι καὶ ἀπὸ πολεμίων τὴν πόλιν πλουτίζειν. νῆ Δία σφόδρα γ', ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, ἐὰν τις αὐτῶν κρείττων ᾖ: ἥττων δὲ ὦν καὶ τὰ ὄντα προσαποβάλοι ἄν. ἀληθῆ λέγεις, ἔφη.

"Well, Socrates, one can make our enemies contribute to the city's wealth."

"Yes, of course, provided he is stronger than they; but if he be weaker, he may lose what she has got instead."

8 οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, τὸν γε βουλευσόμενον, πρὸς οὐστυνας δεῖ πολεμεῖν, τὴν τε τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καὶ τὴν τῶν ἐναντίων εἰδέναι δεῖ, ἴνα, ἐὰν μὲν ἡ τῆς πόλεως κρείττων ᾖ, συμβουλεύῃ ἐπιχειρεῖν τῷ πολέμῳ, ἐὰν δὲ ἥττων τῶν ἐναντίων, εὐλαβεῖσθαι πείθῃ. "Therefore, in order to advise her whom to fight, it is necessary to know the strength of the city and of the enemy, so that, if the city be stronger, one may recommend her to go to war, but if weaker than the enemy, may persuade her to beware."

"You are right."

9 ὀρθῶς λέγεις, ἔφη. πρῶτον μὲν τοίνυν, ἔφη, λέξον ἡμῖν τῆς πόλεως τὴν τε πεζικὴν καὶ τὴν ναυτικὴν δύναμιν, εἶτα τὴν τῶν ἐναντίων. ἀλλὰ μὰ τὸν Δί', ἔφη, οὐκ ἂν ἔχοιμί σοι οὕτω γε ἀπὸ στόματος εἰπεῖν. ἀλλ' εἰ γέγραπταί σοι, ἔνεγκε, ἔφη: πάνυ γὰρ ἡδέως ἂν τοῦτο ἀκούσαιμι. ἀλλὰ μὰ τὸν Δί', ἔφη, οὐδὲ γέγραπταί μοι πω.

"First, then, tell us the naval and military strength of our city, and then that of her enemies."

"No, of course I can't tell you out of my head."

"Well, if you have made notes, fetch them, for I should greatly like to hear this."

"But, I tell you, I haven't yet made any notes either."

10 οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, καὶ περὶ πολέμου συμβουλεύειν τὴν γε πρώτην ἐπισχῆσομεν: ἴσως γὰρ καὶ διὰ τὸ μέγεθος αὐτῶν ἄρτι ἀρχόμενος τῆς προστατείας οὐπω ἐξήτακας. ἀλλὰ τοι περὶ γε φυλακῆς τῆς χώρας οἶδ' ὅτι ἤδη σοι μεμέληκε, καὶ οἶσθα ὅποσαι τε φυλακαὶ ἐπίκαιροί εἰσι καὶ ὅποσαι μὴ, καὶ ὅποσαι τε φρουροὶ ἱκανοὶ εἰσι καὶ ὅποσαι μὴ εἰσι: καὶ τὰς μὲν ἐπικαίρους φυλακὰς συμβουλεύσεις μείζονας ποιεῖν, τὰς δὲ περιττὰς ἀφαιρεῖν.

“Then we will postpone offering advice about war too for the present. You are new to power, and perhaps have not had time to investigate such big problems. But the defence of the country, now, I feel sure you have thought about that, and know how many of the garrisons are well placed and how many are not, and how many of the guards are efficient and how many are not; and you will propose to strengthen the well-placed garrisons and to do away with those that are superfluous.”

11 νῆ Δί', ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων, ἀπάσας μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε, ἔνεκά γε τοῦ οὕτως αὐτὰς φυλάττεσθαι ὥστε κλέπτεσθαι τὰ ἐκ τῆς χώρας. ἐὰν δέ τις ἀφέλη γ', ἔφη, τὰς φυλακάς, οὐκ οἶει καὶ ἀρπάζειν ἐξουσίαν ἔσεσθαι τῷ βουλομένῳ; ἀτάρ, ἔφη, πότερον ἐλθὼν αὐτὸς ἐξήτακας τοῦτο, ἢ πῶς οἴσθα ὅτι κακῶς φυλάττονται; εἰκάζω, ἔφη. οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, καὶ περὶ τούτων, ὅταν μηκέτι εἰκάζωμεν, ἀλλ' ἤδη εἰδῶμεν, τότε συμβουλευσομεν;

“No, no; I shall propose to do away with them all, for the only effect of maintaining them is that our crops are stolen.”

“But if you do away with the garrisons, don't you think that anyone will be at liberty to rob us openly? However, have you been on a tour of inspection, or how do you know that they are badly maintained?”

“By guess-work.”

“Then shall we wait to offer advice on this question too until we really know, instead of merely guessing?”

“Perhaps it would be better.”

“Now for the silver mines.

12 ἴσως, ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων, βέλτιον. εἷς γε μὴν, ἔφη, τὰργύρεια οἶδ' ὅτι οὐκ ἀφιξαι, ὥστ' ἔχειν εἰπεῖν δι' ὃ τι νῦν ἐλάττω ἢ πρόσθεν προσέρχεται αὐτόθεν. οὐ γὰρ οὖν ἐλήλυθα, ἔφη. καὶ γὰρ νῆ Δί', ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, λέγεται βαρὺ τὸ χωρίον εἶναι, ὥστε, ὅταν περὶ τούτου δέη συμβουλευεῖν, αὕτη σοι ἢ πρόφασις ἀρκέσει. σκώπτομαι, ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων.

I am sure you have not visited them, and so cannot tell why the amount derived from them has fallen.”

“No, indeed, I have not been there.”

“To be sure: the district is considered unhealthy, and so when you have to offer advice on the problem, this excuse will serve.”

“You're chaffing me.”

13 ἀλλ' ἐκείνου γέ τοι, ἔφη, οἶδ' ὅτι οὐκ ἡμέληκας, ἀλλ' ἔσκεψαι, πόσον χρόνον ἰκανός ἐστιν ὁ ἐκ τῆς χώρας γιγνόμενος σῖτος διατρέφειν τὴν πόλιν, καὶ πόσου εἰς τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν προσδεῖται, ἵνα μὴ τοῦτο γε λάθῃ σέ ποτε ἢ πόλις ἐνδεῆς γενομένη, ἀλλ' εἰδὼς ἔχῃς ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀναγκαίων συμβουλεύων τῇ πόλει βοηθεῖν τε καὶ σῶζειν αὐτήν. λέγεις, ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων, παμμέγεθες πρᾶγμα, εἴ γε καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι δεήσει.

“Ah, but there's one problem I feel sure you haven't overlooked: no doubt you have reckoned how long the corn grown in the country will maintain the population, and how much is needed annually, so that you may not be caught napping, should the city at any time be short, and may come to the rescue and relieve the city by giving expert advice about food.”

“What an overwhelming task, if one has got to include such things as that in one's duties!”

14 ἀλλὰ μέντοι, ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, οὐδ' ἂν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ποτε οἶκον καλῶς τις οἰκήσειεν, εἰ μὴ πάντα μὲν εἴσεται ὧν προσδεῖται, πάντων δὲ ἐπιμελόμενος ἐκπληρώσει. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἡ μὲν πόλις ἐκ πλειόνων ἢ μυριάων οἰκιῶν συνέστηκε, χαλεπὸν δ' ἐστὶν ἅμα τοσούτων οἰκῶν ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, πῶς οὐχ ἓνα τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ πρῶτον ἐπειράθῃς ἀυξῆσαι; δεῖται δέ. κὰν μὲν τοῦτον δύνῃ, καὶ

πλείοσιν ἐπιχειρήσεις: ἓνα δὲ μὴ δυνάμενος ὠφελῆσαι πῶς ἂν πολλούς γε δυνηθείης; ὥσπερ, εἴ τις ἐν τάλαντον μὴ δύναίτο φέρειν, πῶς οὐ φανερόν ὅτι πλείω γε φέρειν οὐδ' ἐπιχειρητέον αὐτῷ;

"But, you know, no one will ever manage even his own household successfully unless he knows all its needs and sees that they are all supplied. Seeing that our city contains more than ten thousand houses, and it is difficult to look after so many families at once, you must have tried to make a start by doing something for one, I mean your uncle's? It needs it; and if you succeed with that one, you can set to work on a larger number. But if you can't do anything for one, how are you going to succeed with many? If a man can't carry one talent, it's absurd for him to try to carry more than one, isn't it?"

15 ἀλλ' ἔγωγ', ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων, ὠφελοῖην ἂν τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ οἶκον, εἴ μοι ἐθέλοι πείθεσθαι. εἶτα, ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, τὸν θεῖον οὐ δυνάμενος πείσαι, Ἀθηναίους πάντας μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ νομίζεις δυνήσεσθαι ποιῆσαι πείθεσθαί σοι;

"Well, I could do something for uncle's household if only he would listen to me."

"What? You can't persuade your uncle, and yet you suppose you will be able to persuade all the Athenians, including your uncle, to listen to you?"

16 φυλάττου, ἔφη, ὦ Γλαύκων, ὅπως μὴ τοῦ εὐδοξεῖν ἐπιθυμῶν εἰς τούναντίον ἔλθῃς. ἢ οὐχ ὀρᾶς ὡς σφαλερόν ἐστι τό, ἃ μὴ οἶδέ τις, ταῦτα ἢ λέγειν ἢ πράττειν; ἐνθυμοῦ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων, ὅσους οἶσθα τοιούτους, οἳ φαίνονται καὶ λέγοντες ἃ μὴ ἴσασι καὶ πράττοντες, πότερά σοι δοκοῦσιν ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐπαίνου μᾶλλον ἢ ψόγου τυγχάνειν καὶ πότερον θαυμάζεσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ καταφρονεῖσθαι:

Pray take care, Glaucon, that your daring ambition doesn't lead to a fall! Don't you see how risky it is to say or do what you don't understand? Think of others whom you know to be the sort of men who say and do what they obviously don't understand. Do you think they get praise or blame by it?

17 ἐνθυμοῦ δὲ καὶ τῶν εἰδόντων ὅ τι τε λέγουσι καὶ ὅ τι ποιοῦσι: καί, ὡς ἐγὼ νομίζω, εὐρήσεις ἐν πᾶσιν ἔργοις τοὺς μὲν εὐδοκιμοῦντάς τε καὶ θαυμάζομένους ἐκ τῶν μάλιστα ἐπισταμένων ὄντας, τοὺς δὲ κακοδοξοῦντάς τε καὶ καταφρονουμένους ἐκ τῶν ἀμαθεστάτων.

And think of those who understand what they say and what they do. You will find, I take it, that the men who are famous and admired always come from those who have the widest knowledge, and the infamous and despised from the most ignorant.

18 εἰ οὖν ἐπιθυμεῖς εὐδοκιμεῖν τε καὶ θαυμάζεσθαι ἐν τῇ πόλει, πειρῶ κατεργάσασθαι ὡς μάλιστα τὸ εἰδέναι ἃ βούλει πράττειν: ἐὰν γὰρ τούτῳ διενέγκας τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιχειρήσῃς τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράττειν, οὐκ ἂν θαυμάσαιμι εἰ πάνυ ῥαδίως τύχοις ὧν ἐπιθυμεῖς.

Therefore, if you want to win fame and admiration in public life, try to get a thorough knowledge of what you propose to do. If you enter on a public career with this advantage over others, I should not be surprised if you gained the object of your ambition quite easily."