

pides, as a monster of corruption and wickedness. Whilst doing this, the poet brings out the chief traits of Socrates' character. The representation of that great man in the *Clouds* is nothing short of downright caricature. As there represented he is a rogue of the lowest stamp. he detests the gods as well as those ancient institutions so dear to the Grecian heart and he wishes all men to do likewise. His philosophy is a fraud abounding in subtleties and quibbles. He himself is vain-glorious and full of lofty airs. He is a hard-hearted, half-starved wretch, whose withered, parched countenance never wears a smile.

How different was the real character of Socrates! He a rogue? Ah no! He was ever persuaded that he had a special religious mission to fulfil, consequently he led a life more pure than that of any other pagan. What motive had he to act the rogue? With the bravery and endurance he had manifested whilst a soldier, with his almost supernatural power of intellect, might he not have become the foremost man of all Greece, had he so wished? He neither ridiculed nor despised the gods, on the contrary, he spent long days and sleepless nights in studying their nature and origin. Even after he became convinced that his countrymen's notions concerning the gods were erroneous, i.e. did not directly condemn the worship of those deities. He was far too humble to affirm that he was in the right and that the whole Grecian nation was in the wrong. Yet such indeed was the case. At least he approached much nearer truth than any of his countrymen did. His philosophy, instead of being shrouded in a cloudy mist as Aristophanes would have us believe, was simple and intelligible for those who were willing to understand. Cicero says of him that he brought down philosophy from the heavens to the earth. Finally, though Socrates was a man of deep thought, yet like most men truly great, he was of a happy, jovial disposition.

The reader of the *Clouds* cannot but be struck by the activity of the author's mind and the scope of his thought. It is said of Julius Caesar that he could be writing, reading, dictating and listening, all at the same time. We almost believe Aristophanes could do the same. All Grecian history, all Grecian literature,

besides a vast store of other knowledge, seems to be before his mind at one and the same moment. Now he praises one, now he censures another of Greece's great men. Note the terrible cut Strepsiades gives to Pericles for his conduct towards the Euboeans. In another passage four or five words give us the chief characteristics of Euripides' poetry.

The Attic poets paid great attention to harmony. A taste for it was cultivated with care by prose writers and orators. Ancient critics attribute even to Demosthenes a concealed number and rhythm which the modern ear fails to detect. The harmony of the *Clouds* is manifest to its every reader. When properly read, its verses are as music to the ear. The sound of the words corresponds throughout to the train of thought expressed by them. In the choruses, for instance, the words are full and flowing. Musical as these verses are, they want neither strength nor sublimity. Indeed, we are almost tempted to say that in point of style the *Clouds* has no equal.

The morality displayed in this comedy is of the highest order. It may be summed in these words: like father, like child. Aristophanes rightly maintains that if the education of children be neglected, or if they receive but a godless education, their parents will be the first to suffer. Strepsiades gives his son a godless, worldly education, when the latter returns home, he severely chastises his aged father and continues to ill-treat him throughout his whole life. This is precisely what the Catholic Church teaches. She advises, yea even commands parents to give their children a holy, a godly education. She contends that education without religion makes a man exactly what Phidippides becomes, a consummate rascal. You, who pride yourselves on being christians and yet expel God from the class-room, go learn a lesson from the Pagan Aristophanes.

At times indeed, in the *Clouds*, the poet becomes accidentally immoral. As he resembles Shakespeare in loftiness of conception, so he also resembles him in crudeness of expression. He sometimes uses language which almost shocks the ears of a Christian. However, we pardon him this fault. In his time it was not considered a fault at all, since such form of expression was in common use, especially