

Sappho, and the Ideal love of the Greeks.

In the year 1816, Professor Welcker published his treatise entitled: „Sappho von einem herrschenden Vorurtheil befreit“; reedited in the second volume of his *Kleine Schriften* (p. 80), in 1845. The prejudice referred to was a belief, shared by the modern with the antient public, that Sappho's intercourse with her female friends had not been altogether of an innocent nature. In vindicating this point of her character, he did not enter in detail on the kindred question of her relations to the male sex. But the general tone of his argument implied, that he considered her as little open to censure on the one as on the other ground. Hence, among the numerous writers, Bernhardy, Bode, Richter, K. O. Müller, and others, who in the sequel asserted her moral purity in the wider sense, several are found appealing to him as a fellow supporter of their views. Having myself been led, with every admiration for her genius and many generous qualities, to form a less favourable opinion of her social habits, I gave effect to that opinion in my *History of Grecian literature*, published in 1850. It is against that portion of my work (vol. III. p. 272 sqq.), that, after an interval of nearly seven years, Welckers recent article: „Ueber die beiden Oden der Sappho“¹⁾ in this journal (1856 p. 226) is chiefly directed.

My opponent begins by objecting (p. 234) to the mode in which my biographical notice of Sappho was embodied. He assumes that it was, or ought to have been, intended as

1) In referring to that article I shall, for distinction's sake, where required, use the initials Rh. M. (Rheinisches Museum). My opponents former tract on „Sappho etc.“, will in like manner be cited, in its second edition, by the abbreviation Kl. S. (*Kleine Schriften*).

an answer to his treatise of 1816; and complains that instead of confining my argument to the proper subject of that treatise, I had extended it to Sapphos morality at large; „thus mixing up two things which he had carefully kept separate“. The misconception is entirely on his own side. That section of my work neither is, nor ever was meant to be a „Gegenschrift“, as he defines it, against him or any other person. It forms part of a general history of Greek literature. The materials supplied by the life and works of the poetess have, accordingly, in my main text, been treated in their full extent, in properly historical form; all mention by name of any modern author on the subject, being, also in deference to the usage of historical style, restricted to the notes. My remarks on Sappho's moral character were directed chiefly to her intercourse with men; to the opinions consequently of the other writers above cited, rather than to those of Welcker. The question to which he had confined himself was not attractive, and was treated as concisely as possible. But although in my general argument, less attention was thus bestowed on his views than on those of succeeding commentators, I was induced, in my notes and appendix, to give a certain prominence to his name and work; both as a mark of respect to the originator of a popular theory, and in consideration of the friendly intercourse that had long subsisted between us. Hence also, widely as I differed from him, my opposition, as he himself admits, was conducted in the most friendly as well as courteous spirit. Not an expression that could reasonably create soreness in any well constituted mind, has escaped me. I wish I could say the same of his reply, which I have read with both surprise and pain. It is not so much an answer to my remarks on the character of Sappho, as a series of injurious imputations against my own. I am pronounced at the outset, in a most contemptuous tone, virtually incompetent to judge on questions of this nature, as being dead to all sense of ideal beauty in antient art. I am accused of having, from zeal to depreciate German scholarship, grossly misrepresented the opinions of Sappho's German apologists; of having attributed to them opinions, it is added, with a passing compliment to my nation, such as „even in England“ (as the land where any thing incredibly absurd most easily finds credit), „no one could believe they ever expressed.“ My own remarks on the life and works of the poetess are stigmatised as arbitrary assertions, or as false and unfair to an „extreme of presumption“, „astounding“ in any critic.

I engage to prove in the sequel, first: that every one of these allegations is itself either absolutely false, or absurdly frivolous; and secondly, that the portions of my opponent's own text in which they are advanced, are such a tissue of misstatements and misquotations, as it is difficult to conceive any sane person committing to print, with so obvious a certainty of exposure before his eyes. It has been my study through life, never wantonly to hurt the feelings of any man, either friend or adversary; but when so wantonly and ungenerously assailed, I shall not in self defence deal lightly with the aggressor.

Of argument in the proper sense the Reply contains but little. The strong points of my case are overlooked, or met by bare reassertions of statements already refuted. Much space is devoted to a sort of running application to my text, of the rhetorical figures described by Quintilian under the titles: Repetitio, Aposiopesis, Rogatio etc. The mode in which these expedients for evading what a litigant is unable to answer, have here chiefly been employed, consists in quoting (more commonly misquoting), often at full length, and then dismissing, the obnoxious passages, either with an affectation of dignified silence, or with appropriate expressions of wonder and contempt, as monstrous, incredible, or beneath serious notice. Portions of my text amounting in all to not a few pages, have from time to time been subjected to this ordeal of empty taunt or vapid declamation²).

There is however one part of the Reply which I have read with great satisfaction; the admission which it contains, of the substantial correctness of my view of Sappho's moral character. This admission, it is true, is in so far limited, as to remind one of the case of the unmarried gentlewoman, who when taxed with having given birth to a baby, excused herself on the plea that it was „a very little one“. Welcker has, in like manner, restricted Sapphos breach of moral propriety to what, from the tone of his remarks in p. 246 and elsewhere, he seems to consider a little one; but which in less partial quarters may, even on his own state-

2) Observe for example how, page after page (250 sqq.), he cavils at the words „association“ etc., applied by me, in common with O. Müller, and most other apologists of Sappho, to her female circle; as if it mattered a hearsbreadth to the real question at issue, whether that circle was designated by those or other cognate expressions. Amid this effervescence of frothy irritation about nothing, the stronger points of my argument, p. 301-307, as to the real nature and merits of the association, are left unanswered.

ment of it, not appear of quite so venial a nature. In early life, he tells us, she was married, and her reputation as a wife unsullied. On being left a widow, already well advanced in years, with a young daughter, she conceived a passion for a youth of tender age called Phaon, with whom she long cohabited. But her lover in the end proved inconstant, and, to escape her importunities, retired from Lesbos to Sicily, whither she followed him in a frantic state of love and mental distress. On this occasion it was that she composed her still extant Ode to Venus, complaining of Phaon's cruelty, and imploring a renewal of their intercourse in language, the power and beauty of which have in every age been proverbial, and much of which, as my opponent does not seem to deny (Rh. M. p. 228), is, under the most elegant disguise, not only lascivious but bordering on the obscene.

It is with much regret that, before entering further on the main questions here at issue, I am constrained to dwell on matters personal to myself, by rebutting the injurious charges which have been brought against me. This however is an act of justice to my argument as well as myself. For were I to allow the readers of this journal, in which those charges were promulgated, to suppose me capable of the folly and dishonesty imputed to me, I could not expect them to put faith in a single statement that I might advance, on this or any other subject.

In my history (vol. III. p. 290 sqq.), and in the foregoing pages, I have stated, 1) that most of the authors who, since Welcker, have treated of Sappho, have asserted her moral purity in the wider sense; 2) that several of them have appealed to his opinion as here coinciding with their own; and 3) that they appeared to me justified in that appeal, by the tenor of his tract of 1816. These statements my opponent pronounces false and unjust, to himself and the other writers whom they affect. Let us first examine his plea on their behalf: p. 254:

„Die deutschen Apologeten der Sappho haben . . . Ursache sich ernstlich zu beklagen. Denn ihre Auffassung der Sappho ist nicht weniger zur Carikatur geworden, als die ihr entgegengestellte der Sappho selbst. . . . Die „scrupulous anxious morals³⁾, feminine decency and propriety, really modest and virtuous woman, . . . refined delicacy of moral sentiment⁴, die ihnen aufgerückt werden, haben sie niemals

3) See infra Note 6.

von ihr ausgesagt. . . . Sie waren auch nicht bemüht, die Liebe zum Phaon und den Sprung vom Felsen als injuriös zu beseitigen, sondern nur den Sprung hielten sie für Dichtung.“ I was really startled by the perusal of these sentences. Had I then recklessly attributed to so many authors, opinions the reverse of those expressed in the works which I quoted? On the other hand, could Welcker be guilty of deliberate untruth in imputing to me such a proceeding? This I was equally unwilling to believe. I therefore turned anxiously to their pages for a solution of the dilemma; and beg attention to the following extracts:

K. O. Müller, *Gesch. der Griech. Lit. Bd. I p. 311*: „Eben so deutlich erkennt man das Gefühl der unbescholtenen Ehre . . . in den Versen die sich auf das Verhältniss des Alkäos zur Sappho beziehen . . . Alkäos weiss es sehr wohl, dass die Liebenswürdigkeit und heitre Anmuth der Sappho ihrer sittlichen Würde nichts entzieht. . . Mit diesen ächtesten urkundlichen Zeugnissen bildet nun freilich die Ansicht mancher Späteren einen herben Contrast.“

Bernhardy, *Grundr. der Gr. Lit. II. Th. p. 488*: „Abenteuer mit Phaon, Vorwurf ausschweifender Liebe, Sprung von Leukas, lauter von den Alten fleissig angebaute Malereien, durch gründliche Kritik vernichtet . . . von Welcker“⁴⁾.

Richter, *Sappho p. 22*: „Aus den Ueberresten ihrer Dichtungen tritt am deutlichsten die schon berührte Innigkeit und Gluth ihres Empfindens hervor, welche gepaart war mit jungfräulicher Reinheit. . . Sie achtete wahren innern Werth über alles Glück“. p. 17 „Aus diesen Angaben dürfen wir mit Wahrscheinlichkeit folgern, dass die Liebe zum Phaon . . . auf die Rechnung witziger Köpfe zu schreiben ist.“

Pauly, *Real-Encycl. v. Sappho*: „Die ganze Erzählung von ihrem Verhältniss zu Phaon, beruht ohne Zweifel nur auf einem schlechten Witze der Attischen Komiker“.

Bode, *Gesch. der Gr. Poes. II. Th. p. 423—425*. „Von Tugend und Würde spricht sie mit einem nicht zu verkennenden Selbstgeföhle, und schätzt die sittliche Schönheit als des Lebens kostbarstes Kleinod. . . Eine Frau, der das Be-

4) See also in his previous text, her „stets klare sittliche Stimmung“, „sittliche Würde“ etc. The nugacity of Welcker's declamation about Vittoria Colonna, in p. 254, is proved, and every word of my text sneered at in his note 23, is more than justified, by the passage of Bernhardy, p. 485, § 4: „Im ganzen Umfang der griechischen Literatur galt Sappho als die vollendetste ihres Geschlechts“ etc., — by the text of Richter quoted above, and by similar panegyrics of other apologists.

wusstsein ihrer innern Sittenreinheit Entschlossenheit und Muth einflösst“.

To these may be added an English authority, also appealed to by Welcker: Smith, Dict. of Biogr. etc. v. Sappho: „Not only is there in her fragments no line which can cast a cloud on her fair fame. . . It was reserved for a distinguished living scholar“ (Welcker) „to give a final refutation to the calumny“; (regarding her immoral intercourse with either sex). „The well known fable of Sapphos love for Phaon . . . vanishes at the first approach of criticism“.

The reader may judge, whether the „Auffassung of Feminine decency and propriety, virtue, modesty“ etc., which Welcker charges me with having fastened on his fellow apologists, is a richer „Caricatur“ of his present more mature estimate of Sappho's character, than their own Auffassung of: Unbescholtener Ehre, sittlicher Würde, kostbarem Kleinods sittlicher Schönheit, Bewusstsein innerer Sittenreinheit, cloudless fair fame. etc.

The gravity with which, in the sequel, he quotes Richter's eulogy of the „Virgin purity“ of Sappho, as proof of the injustice I did Richter in quoting it; and the self complacency with which he himself blames Richter, for holding the very same view, which, in opposition to me, he had just before denied that Richter ever held, passes all comprehension.

Neue, another (justly) esteemed fellow apologist, while not positively asserting Sapphos „purity and chastity“, maintains at least (Fragm. Sapph. p. 8): „contrariam sententiam inanibus auctoritatibus defendi“. Among these inanes auctoritates Welcker, now that he has spoken out as to her male amours, must in Neues estimation be content to rank.

In regard to the other audacious mistatement, that the „Apologeten nicht bemüht waren ihre Liebe zu Phaon als injuriös zu beseitigen“, observe how Bernhardt quotes Welcker as his authority for the opinion; which Welcker, instead of denouncing Bernhardt's misquotation, denounces me as a libeller for imputing to Bernhardt! The labyrinth of misrepresentation and self contradiction is here such as to bewilder one's brain in attempting to thread its mazes.

Thus much regarding the fellow apologists. Now for my still graver offence, of assuming Welcker himself to have committed the absurdity of supposing Sappho to be a virtuous woman. Subjoined are the passages on which my assumption was founded. Kl. S. p. 98: „Auch spricht sie in mehrerern Stellen von Tugend und Würde mit einem nieht

zu verkennenden Selbstgefühl“. . . p. 114 „Je mehr man... die unbefleckten Lorbeerkränze ins Auge fasst, womit die Griechen so vieler Jahrhunderte die Dichterin immer frisch geschmückt haben“. . . I confess myself so obtuse as not to be able to perceive, how these characteristics can apply to any other than a woman of continent life and unblemished reputation; or how a heroine, who in 1816 and 1845 was so thoroughly conscious of virtue and moral worth, and crowned with „spotless“ laurels, should in 1856 have become, herself so vicious and her laurels so tarnished, as they are represented by my opponent in the affair with Phaon.

In quoting, in the foregoing p. 567 sq.; the charge against me on behalf of the fellow apologists, I have reserved a portion of it for separate notice, as a specimen, among many, of the ungenerous casuistry with which its author endeavours, by putting a false construction on the letter of my statements, to convey a still falser impression of their spirit. In my p. 309, after noticing some licentious allusions in the Ode to Venus, I add: „and this we are told is the language of an innocent virgin or a virtuous matron.“ These words my opponent quotes (p. 255), in such a manner as to lead his readers to suppose, that I had described some one of Sapphos commentators as literally characterising the passages of the Ode in the above terms, and then exclaims: „Nicht einmal in England kann geglaubt werden dass diess gesagt worden.“ Whoever reads my remark in the connexion of my text, will at once perceive the charge of dishonesty against me to be a quibbling prevarication of Welcker; my meaning being simply: that those who like O. Müller, Bernhardt, Richter, and Welcker himself in his original treatise, give the poetess credit for virgin or matronly purity, while they admit the Ode to Venus to be her composition, are guilty, as they undeniably are, of the inconsistency imputed to them.

In my p. 317, I have described Müller as discovering in *Fragm. II, (Neue)*, merely a „warm expression of maternal interest and friendly attachment.“ The passages of Müller to which I referred are, p. 321: „Man sieht dass das Verhältniss weit weniger die Farbe einer mütterlichen Fürsorge, als einer verliebten Leidenschaft annimmt; and (same page): „So schildert die Dichterin nichts als eine freundliche Zuneigung zu einem jüngern Mädchen, die indess bei der grossen Reizbarkeit aller Gefühle, den Ton der glühendsten Leidenschaft annimmt.“ Welcker, p. 256, taxes me with misrepresenting Müller, because, in my remark above cited,

I omitted to transcribe his mention of the verliebte Leidenschaft in his first passage, and of the glühendste Leidenschaft in the second. I reply that, although for the sake of conciseness, I have varied the terms of Müller's statement, I have most religiously conveyed his meaning. For his argument is throughout, that the passionate strain in which Sappho addresses her young companions, the „verliebte Leidenschaft“ namely, and the „glühendste Leidenschaft“, are not to be taken by the letter, or for any thing else than what he so plainly defines them to be, the „Ton“ or „Farbe“, not the reality of her feelings. The reality he everywhere as plainly defines, to be nothing more than warm maternal interest or friendly attachment. What then are we to make of the following assertion of Welcker: „Es ist ganz unrichtig was p. 317“ (of my work) „gesagt ist, dass er (Müller) in der zweiten Ode, blos einen warmen Ausdruck mütterlichen Interesses und freundlicher Zuneigung erkenne. Er setzt hinzu: „die indess bei der grossen Reizbarkeit der Gefühle den Ton glühendster Leidenschaft annimmt“. This either means nothing, or it is an assertion, that Müller really considered the language of Sappho tainted by sensually amorous feeling. For what other feeling could that be, which while neither warm maternal interest nor friendly attachment, was glühendste verliebte Leidenschaft? To Welcker, therefore, not to me, attaches the responsibility of having, in the blind heat of his argument, fastened on Müller opinions which Müller himself every where disclaims, and from which I have most fairly exonerated him.

In my p. 497 I remark, that Welcker, while admitting the Lesbian vice to have been alluded to by satirical writers of every „historical period of antiquity“, denies its general prevalence in Greece „at any period“. I can hardly conceive any intelligent critic here understanding the expression „historical period“, followed too as it is by the antithesis „any period“, in a sense different from what, even when standing alone, it invariably bears, and in which the parallel German phrase historische Periode is equally familiar; as defining namely the period distinct from, and subsequent to, the earlier poetical age of Greece. Nor was the definition superfluous. For while the allusions in question belong exclusively to the historical period, I knew that none other existed. Observe then how, in his reference to my statement, my most candid opponent, omitting the word „historical“, assumes that I have misrepresented him, on the very point where I had so carefully guarded against the risk of mis-

representation: „Endlich habe ich nicht sagen können, dass diese (Zeugnisse) in jeder Periode des Alterthums, also auch in der ältesten häufig vorkommen, da sie aus dieser in der That gänzlich fehlen!“⁵⁾

In several places I have alluded to the proverbial prominence of amorous material in Sappho's compositions. Upon this Welcker moralises (p. 240) in the following courteous strain: So lässt es sich in der That nur aus der äussersten Präsumption erklären, wenn der Verfasser vorher, ohne Citate herauszuwagen, fast alle Fragmente für wollüstig erklärt; oder dass sie mit wenigen Ausnahmen die zarte Leidenschaft ausdrücken, die, in einer oder andern Gestalt, das Thema ihrer gesammelten Werke ausmachten. . . . Bei solchen Behauptungen eines Kritikers ist es unmöglich nicht zu erstaunen“.

Upon this I remark first: It is not true that I have, „fast alle Fragmente für wollüstig erklärt.“ This is another of Welcker's many unjustifiable misquotations of my text. Subjoined is the passage to which I suppose he refers: p. 291: „her voluptuous habits are testified by almost every extant fragment of her poems“. This is a very different thing, both in form and substance, from what he has put into my mouth. No correct English writer, whatever he might say of a woman's habits, would talk of a „voluptuous fragment“ of a poem. But besides, voluptuous and wollüstig, though cognate, are not, I apprehend, synonymous terms. The former in its primary sense denotes, as its etymology shows, simply a devotion to pleasurable enjoyment; but without necessarily implying (as I believe wollüstig implies, or is here at least meant by Welcker to imply), meretricious sensual enjoyment. We may describe a female leader of the „Ton“ in Paris or London, as a woman of voluptuous habits, with reference merely to her round of balls, theatres, and other social luxuries; and it would be unfair to assume, apart from other considerations, that the definition comprised voluptuousness of a worse nature. That the expression was applied by me to Sappho's habits in this less extreme sense, with reference, that is, to the songs, dances, and other social

5) P. 239. The quibble on the term „either“, in the previous part of the same page, is more pardonable; as being founded, partly on ignorance of the niceties of English idiom, partly on my own somewhat free use of an idiomatic expression. But no English reader, conversant with the general tenor of my argument, would ever have supposed that I meant my opponent's „doubt“, there alluded to, to apply to Sappho.

festivities, also largely celebrated in her remains, at least as much as to her amours, every candid reader would have perceived, from my separate notice of the latter in the immediately ensuing text.

The further assertion, that I have described her fragments as expressing, „mit wenigen Ausnahmen die zarte Leidenschaft“ is equally untrue in itself, and a still grosser perversion of my words. These are to the effect p. 279, „that the tender passion . . . in one shape or other, formed the theme, with little exception, of her collective works.“ The term „collective works“, not fragments, was here used advisedly; first because many of the fragments, in their present detached state, are not properly of an erotic character; although there can, secondly, be little doubt, from the mass of antient testimony to be quoted below, that the original poems to which they belonged were of that character. Admitting however my statement, either in my own words or in Welckers falsification of them, to be incorrect, it might not be a valid excuse for my error to show, that it had been shared by every Sapphic commentator from the time of Aristotle downward, inclusive of Welcker himself. But it would be a great aggravation of the scandal that attaches to him, in making me the sole scape-goat for the common offence, as an „astounding“ piece of „presumption“ etc. Let us then see how the case stands with my predecessors. Among the moderns I shall limit my citations to authors specially commended by my opponent:

1. Clearchus, ap. Athen. XIV p. 639: *Τὰ ἐρωτικά φησιν ᾄσματα, καὶ τὰ Λοκρικὰ καλούμενα, οὐδὲν τῶν Σαπφούς καὶ Ἀνακρέοντος διαφέρειν.* Concerning the *Λοκρικὰ ᾄσματα* see my vol. III. p. 45 conf. p. 315, note.

2. Plutarch. de Pyth. or. XXIII: *Τί δ' ἀπολείπει τοῦ λέγοντος ἐρωτικὴν μὴν γεγονέναι Σαπφῶ γυναικῶν, ὁ μαντικὴν μὴν φάσκων γεγονέναι Σίβυλλαν.*

3. Pausan. I. XXV. 1: *Ἀνακρέων . . . πρῶτος μετὰ Σαπφῶ τὴν Λεσβίαν, τὰ πολλὰ ὧν ἔγραψεν ἐρωτικά ποιήσας.*

4. Demetr. de Eloc. c. 132: *νυμφατοὶ κῆποι, ὑμέναιοι, ἐρωτες, ὅλη ἡ Σαπφοῦς ποιήσις.*

5. Horat. Od. IV IX. 10: *Spirat adhuc amor, Vivuntque commissi calores Aeoliae fidibus puellae.*

6. Ovid. Trist. II. 265: *Lesbia quid docuit Sappho nisi amare puellas?*

7. Bernhardt, Op. cit. p. 485: *„Ihr innerstes Element ist die Liebe . . . Ein individueller und erotischer Ton durchzog sämtliche Lieder.*

8. Ulrici, Gesch. der griech. Poës. Bd. II. p. 360: „Die regierende Macht ihres innern und äussern Lebens war ganz eigentlich die Liebe. Diese göttliche Leidenschaft spiegelte sich, wie der leuchtende Mittelpunkt ihrer Gedanken, in ihren Dichtungen ab.

9. Bode, op. cit. p. 421: „Von ihr sagt Horatius: Das Lesbische Saitenspiel athme noch immer Liebe. . . Aber nicht alle (Lieder) waren in diesem Tone“ geschrieben.

10. Pauly, Real-Encycl. v. Sappho: . . . „Ihr Stoff ist ausschliesslich die Liebe“.

11. Smith, Dict. v. Sappho: „The fragments that survive are chiefly of an erotic character“.

12. Neue, Sapph. Fragm. p. 10: „In tota poesi eius regnabat amor, ut, praeter ipsas reliquias, testatur Demetrius“.

I have cited Neue last, both as expressing himself in very strong terms, and as Welcker's favourite editor of the fragments. My opponent also reviewed his edition in this journal; and in that review, not only is no objection taken to this really exaggerated statement, but the reviewer himself pointedly subscribes to it, by suggesting additional authorities in support of it:

13. Welcker, Kl. S. Bd. I. p. 113: „Zu den Stellen welche mit Nachdruck Liebe als den Hauptinhalt der Sapphischen Lieder darstellen, gehört vorzüglich, ausser dem Horazischen: Vivuntque commissi calores etc., Plutarch etc.“ He had also previously, in his tract of 1816, sanctioned the opinion which he now considers „astounding in any critic“, by describing (Kl. S. Bd. II. p. 101) the „Leidenschaft zum Phæon, oder andere Liebe“, as having „den grössern Theil ihrer Lieder eingenommen“.

Was I not justified in doubting, whether an author could be in his right judgement, who with these books habitually in his hands, and paraded at the end of his article as vouchers for his opinions, with his own words staring him in the face, ignores the whole as unwritten, and then founds on his own inconsistency, and on gross perversions of my text, charges of „presumption“ etc. against me, which, unless indeed my intellect had been as spell-bound as his own, were sure to recoil on himself ⁶⁾.

6) I must here protest, once for all, against the reckless manner in which Welcker, throughout his Reply, not only misquotes my words, but puts words into my mouth which I never used, or could have used, being neither sense nor English. In addition to the examples above noted, I am made, in his p. 254, to talk of Sappho's „scr-

Having thus recanted his former heresy, he proceeds to argue, in a new strain of paradox and self contradiction, that Sappho's amorous compositions form, in truth, but a very limited part of her collection. I may safely leave him to settle that question with the entire body of her commentators, who, himself and his fellow apologists included, have, during the last 2000 years, unanimously held the contrary opinion.

I have now reached the last which I deem worthy of special notice, certainly not the least offensive, of the personal reflexions with which my opponent has seasoned his reply. It is that formerly noticed, in which I am pronounced blind to ideal beauty in Grecian art, p. 236:

„Ueber die Sache selbst (Sapphos erotic relations to her own sex) hätte Mure sich anders gedacht, wenn er sich nicht skeptischer als billig gegen die, in vielerlei Ausnahmen nicht zu leugnende, reine Griechische Liebe von Männern zu Jünglingen verhielte. . . . Erst allmählig ist mir, da der Verfasser sich darüber auszusprechen vermeidet, klar geworden, dass er alles was darüber aus dem Alterthume vorliegt als Schwärmerei . . . ohne Grund in Natur und Erfahrung, ansehen muss. Und hierauf ist nicht einzugehen. Denn weit schwerer als für den Theologen, den welcher an Gott und Unsterblichkeit nicht glauben kann, zu bekehren, möchte es für den Philologen sein, den welcher nicht an eine Verliebt-heit die nicht an Unkeuschheit träumt, noch an ideale Liebe bei den Griechen . . . und dann gewiss auch nicht an ideale Auffassung und Formen der Kunst, die bei ihnen auch allein und zuerst aufgekommen . . . glauben will, zu seinen Ansichten herüberzuziehen.“

pulous anxious morals“. „Anxious morals“ is nonsense, and the prefix „scrupulous“ renders the nonsense more nonsensical. He even forces on me scraps of his own French composition („joyeuse compagnie“ for example, p. 251), with which I trust I never could have had the bad taste to disfigure my page. It is not true, as asserted in p. 249, that I have, in my p. 315, described the reproach of „Lesbian vice“, as originating in Sappho or her school. It is not true, as asserted in p. 252 and elsewhere, that I have ever connected that reproach with the Aristophanic phrase *λεσβιζειν* (see note 12 infra). It is not true, as asserted in p. 253, that I „vermisse in den zahlreichen Stellen . . . die Gattenliebe“. In the passage appealed to, p. 308, I have said the very reverse. I „miss“ merely an allusion to Sappho's own pretended husband. It were endless to accumulate examples. I must beg the reader, generally, to put no faith in any quotation of my text by Welcker, unless verified by collation with the original.

The mystification of sentiment, and complication of structure, in which this strange rhapsody is involved (though relieved of part of its superfluity in the above extract), renders necessary some analysis of its leading categories. The substance of the imputation against me is: that I am unable to appreciate ideal art, because I am not susceptible of the ideal paederastia of the Greeks. This I admit is not precisely what is said. But I undertake to show by logical process, that the terms employed either mean this or mean nothing. My opponent's doctrine is: that the ideal paederastia of the Greeks was an essential element of their conception of ideal art. Let A therefore stand for Welcker, B for Mure, C for the Greeks; and Welcker's application of his doctrine to my case may be stated as follows: A asserts that B has no perception of ideal art, because he does not believe that C possesses a faculty, viz. susceptibility of ideal paederastia, which is essential to that perception. I maintain that this is either nonsense, or it means: that B can have no perception of ideal art, unless he himself possesses a susceptibility of ideal paederastia. For how is it possible that one man, merely by believing that certain other men possessed a quality, the possession of which is required for the performance of a certain act, can himself perform that act, without himself possessing the quality required for its performance? This were an absurdity in terms. The susceptibility therefore of ideal paederastia as possessed by C, being indispensable to the perception of ideal art, it follows that neither A (Welcker), nor B (Mure), can appreciate ideal art, unless he possesses that susceptibility. Mure does not possess that susceptibility, and cannot therefore appreciate ideal art. Welcker, I presume I am correct in stating, can appreciate ideal art, and therefore does possess that susceptibility. I readily concede to him this advantage over me; and am content that my claims to appreciate art, shall be judged by those, whose opinions are more akin to mine than to his on the subject of paederastia. I am however well pleased to have an opportunity of explaining my views on that subject. This explanation is indeed, as my opponent seems justly to imply, in some degree necessary, to place us on a level in regard to the main question at issue between us, the argument of his original treatise of 1816 having been founded, for reasons which, in so far as intelligible to me I shall state in the sequel, on a full exposition of his theory of Greek unnatural love.

I remember feeling surprise, on first perusing that treatise

tise, at the indulgent tone in which it descanted on a peculiarity of Greek manners, which I had been accustomed to suppose all enlightened Christian men viewed, in itself, whatever allowance they might make for those subjected to its influence, with unqualified abhorrence. I was however the less inclined to harsh conclusions, from observing that the authors vindication of Sappho had hinged throughout, on an effort to exhibit the unnatural love of which she had been accused, in the most unfavourable contrast with the parallel vice of her countrymen. I was therefore willing to believe that he had been led, by his zeal to palliate the latter, beyond the bounds which his cooler judgement might have prescribed. But now that he has, after a lapse of forty years, so formally reset his seal to his opinions, and even made my want of congeniality with them a handle for an insulting stigma on my own critical judgement, I have looked a little more narrowly into this part of his Treatise, and have first become aware of the extent to which his sympathies have been identified with this worst feature in the genius of Hellenism. While enlarging in panegyrical strain, on what he esteems the nobler attributes of paederastia, he seems to view even its grosser element less as an object of reprobation, than with a view to its value as the raw material, or matrix, from which were extracted those pearls of human excellence, which he holds up to admiration (pp. 93, 95, alibi), under the titles: „reine Männerliebe“; „wunderbare Freundschaft“; „heroischer Adel der Freundschaft“; „väterliche Liebe“, etc. This principle of judgement is summed up in p. 94, by a definition of the grosser element as a „menschliche Schwachheit die sich hinter eine grössere Tugend versteckt.“

One who has written so much on the Greeks, and to the same effect, as the author of these remarks, can hardly be accused of undervaluing their genius. But no admiration for their great qualities has ever blinded me to the defects of their social condition. Of those defects the worst, the dark spot which sheds a gloom over all their glorious attributes, is their unnatural vice. That so odious an impulse, the mere suspicion of which attaching to a man, causes him, in most parts at least of modern Europe, to be shunned as a pest to society, should have been so mixed up with the physical constitution of a whole nation, as to become a little less powerful instinct than the natural one between the sexes; that its indulgence should have been regulated by law; that in the extension of metaphysical science, all speculation on

the passion of love, its principles, or influence, should, in the leading schools of philosophy have been concentrated around this detestable impulse, as the mode of that passion most honorable to enlightened men, — all this constitutes so monstrous, to the Christian moralist so revolting an abnormality in the history of our species, as can barely be reconciled with the general scheme of providence, when viewed as a humiliation to which this transcendantly gifted race was subjected, in order to place them on a level with the rest of mankind. On this very ground of the power and universality of the passion, I can sympathise with the efforts of so many noble minds to control or subdue its more brutal influence, and appreciate the success with which those efforts may often have been crowned. But such indulgent feeling towards the men, does but increase my detestation of the thing, by bringing more distinctly home the fact that such men were subjected to such degradation. Welcker therefore is right in his miserable taunt, that I look on the elaborate attempts of those brilliant theorists to prove, that what is essentially base can tend to exalt or purify any element of our nature, as „Schwärmerei“; as mere sophistical expedients to sweeten the draught, which in more or less nauseous form they were obliged to swallow. I consider those parts of Platos works as standing to his nobler doctrines, in the same relation which the unnatural instinct itself bears to the nobler points of Hellenic genius. While neither by Plato in his streams of eloquent mystification, still less by the living champion of the paederastian system with whom I have now to contend, has a single example been adduced of any possible benefit accruing from it, which would not have flowed from other purer sources in a state of society free from its pollution, I think it may be shown, by very tangible evidence, that its effect was to corrupt and destroy all the best and purest relations of social life.

A first step in this argument must be to point out the lamentable manner, in which my opponent has every where confounded paederastia with friendship; two things not only distinct from, but so incompatible with each other, that where the one is, the other cannot possibly be. Of all the relations between man and man, friendship is the most ideal. Paternal, filial, fraternal love, partake each in some degree of instinct, and in so far of sense. From even this slightest and purest alloy of sense friendship is exempt. But paederastia in all its modifications is essentially and carnally sensual. The very struggles to subdue, or as my opponent ex-

presses it, to „idealise“⁷⁾, the sensual impulse, the success of which forms the glory of the Platonic paederast, are a testimony to its power; just as the effort by which the Stoic acquires, or fancies he has acquired, an insensibility to bodily pain, is a proof that the pain exists. The distinction between friendship, and paederastia in its most idealised form, may be illustrated (if it be allowed to compare the natural with the unnatural), by that between the affection which men bear to a mother, daughter, or sister, and the affection which a man of warm temperament restrained by moral principle, bears to a married woman of whom he is deeply enamoured. In the one no sensual feeling exists. In the other it is powerful, but kept under control. To take a more tangible illustration. My opponent, among other developments of the paederastian system has dwelt (Kl. S. p. 93), on those male associations common in Greece, chiefly in connexion with military discipline, which the ancients dignified with the title of Sacred bands (*ἱεροὶ λόγοι*); and which Welcker, while admitting that in most cases the relation was to the full extent a sensual one, characterises generally as a „heroischen Adel der Freundschaft“. Let us transfer the analogy to our own time. Nowhere does friendship assume a brighter aspect, or exercise a more beneficial influence, than among the youth of our universities; the term „our“ being here used, as to the honor of modern civilisation it may, with equal application to Oxford or Edinburgh, to Bonn, Paris, or Pisa. Let us imagine, that by some such fatal dispensation of destiny as that which inflicted it on the Greeks, paederastia, as it prevailed in, the Sacred bands, or among the scholars of Socrates, were to spread its influence over our seats of learning. The altered state of feeling which would ensue, where no one, even if himself uncontaminated, could feel sure that he was not, or

7) If Welcker supposes that I have ever denied the existence of his „reine Männerliebe“, in this, the only mode in which it can exist, he is mistaken. But if, as seems to be implied in parts of his commentary, he assumes the existence of a paederastia primarily and totally exempt from sensual feeling, I hold that to be a paradox in itself, and at variance with the whole Platonic love-theory. Any affection between men, altogether free from impure feeling, is either love of kin, or pure friendship, and hence essentially distinct from paederastia. Plato's ideal doctrine is every where based on the victory achieved by the spiritual over the sensual element; never on the non-existence of the latter. What I deny is my opponent's theory, that the subjugation of an unnatural impulse, can render the impulse itself pure and honourable.

might not any moment become, to the late object of his purest affection an object of unnatural lust, gives the true measure of the distinction between friendship and paederastia ⁸⁾.

It was in Athens that this vice, in the form which the name more especially denotes, Love of boys, was most accurately reduced to rule. In the strictly normal Attic relation, the Erastes was a man of the average age when the physical attributes of manhood are in their highest maturity. The Eromenos was a youth in whom those attributes were yet immature. In the Eromenos the quality of beauty was indispensable, but not in the Erastes. The ground of these distinctions, as laid down on the highest authority (Plato Phaedr. p. 240 D. Xenoph. Symp. VIII. 21) is, that in paederastian intercourse, the feeling which youth and beauty inspired and gratified was not mutual. A connexion more opposite than this to friendship can hardly be conceived. In a natural state of society, parity of years is a common, if not a necessary condition of friendship; which may also subsist between ugly men and elderly men. But one never hears of an old or ugly object of paederastian love. To elderly men accordingly, or to women and boys, friendship, in the Platonic system of ethics, was all but exclusively confined. Apart from special descriptions of paederastia, as the only dignified kind of affection between men qualified to partake of it, all or most of what in the primitive literature ranked as standard examples of the purer relation, Achilles and Patroclus, Pylades and Orestes, Hercules and Iolaus, with some of later date which we moderns would still fondly view in a different light, were drawn within the other odious category. Of treatises on friendship conse-

8) Welcker's confusion of these two ideas, involves a parallel confusion, pervading his whole argument: first, between the Greek terms *ἐρᾶν* (*ἔρωσ* etc.), and *φιλεῖν* (*φιλεῖα* etc.); and secondly between these two sets of terms, and our Germanic words Love, Liebe. A man may with equal propriety be said to „love“ his mother, sister, or friend, and his wife or mistress. But no Greek would apply the term *ἐρᾶν* or its cognates, unless perhaps in jest or in a palpably metaphorical sense, either to pure friendship or pure love of kin, or to any other than a properly erotic or sensual affection; whether with reference to living beings, or to inanimate objects of appetite, power, wealth, and other worldly enjoyments. The direct and pointed manner, therefore, in which those terms are used, by Sappho herself in her addresses to her female favourites, and by Longinus, Plutarch, and other native commentators in their remarks on those addresses, in itself proves that the love which they express was, to whatever extent, of a sensual description.

quently, as distinct from paederastia, the literature of the Platonic school is barren. The recital of Ciceros beautiful dialogue *De Amicitia*, in the Platonic circle, could have excited no other feeling than distaste or contempt.

It is to the more strictly Attic relation above described, that my opponent I presume somewhat vaguely alludes (Kl. S. p. 95), as the variety of his „wunderbare Freundschaft“, which at times assumed the character of „väterliche Liebe“ and „Trieb zu bilden und zu lehren“. And it may perhaps be conceded, that such a connexion, between an accomplished Athenian citizen and an ingenuous youth, purified, as Xenophon (*Sympos.*) represents it in the case of Callias and Autolycus, of its more degrading element, might, according to the Attic standard of educational ethics, be turned to beneficial account. But for one such case, there were numbers probably where even this purified connexion was productive of unmixed evil. The case of Callias is itself immediately in point. This man, though put forward by Xenophon as a model specimen of the ideal paederast, was, we know from other sources, a worthless profligate, from whose conversation no benefit could accrue to either man or boy. But even taking the case for a sample, as Xenophon describes it, of a class in which the youth remained physically uncorrupted, what else than injury could result from his being thus publicly paraded in a relation, which as Plato himself remarks (*Phaedr.* p. 233 A), was always open to be stigmatised by public opinion, as that with which the popular taste in paederastia was most familiar.

Such being the influence of Greek unnatural passion on the relation between man and man, how stands the case as between man and woman? It seems hardly credible that, in an elaborate commentary on that passion by a Christian writer, not an allusion should occur to the dreary, withering blight, which it shed on the best and dearest of all human connexions, the Connubial bond! Argument on this point would be an insult to the reader's taste or common sense. Let us figure to ourselves, in the way of illustration, the Athenian spouse, in the retirement of her Gynaecium, awaiting the return of her husband (for the erastes was almost always a married man), after a day, perhaps several, spent in pursuit of his Autolycus or Clinias. Imagine her gently complaining of the undue share of his time and affection bestowed on her male rival, and his bidding her mind her household affairs, and respect a connexion, through which alone her lord could be initiated into the higher refinements.

of philosophy or ideal art. Imagine the wives of the married portion of the „Sacred band“ of Elis or Thebes, inaugurating the departure of their husbands for the seat of war, as each sallied forth with his favourite esquire, who during the campaign was to occupy permanently that place in his bed (Xenoph. Symp. VIII. 34), which at home, to whatever limited extent, she had the honor of sharing with him. Admirable media for „idealising“ the taste and moral sentiment of a nation!

The effects of the vice on the other best and purest ties of domestic life, cannot be better described than in the words of Socrates (Phaedr. p. 239 E): „One thing is indeed manifest to all, and to no one more than to the Erastes himself, that his most ardent wish is to see his Eromenos deprived of every object in life which men cherish as dearest, most affectionate, most divine; of father, mother, kinsmen, and friends, as being but so many hindrances to the sweetest gratification which he himself derives from the connexion“.

Where then are we to look for that grössere Tugend, to which Welcker appeals as absorbing in its blaze of light, the few specks of „menschliche Schwachheit“, which he admits to lurk in the darker recesses of the paederastian sanctuary? Where has he pointed out, as an exception to the general rule of degradation, a single advantage, which might not have flowed from other unpolluted sources, in a state of society where the vice was viewed with the general abhorrence which it deserves. If I turn from his more homely sophistries to the glowing theories of Plato, I still find, that every practical illustration of those theories, exhibits the system in the same material forms as it appears in the ranks of the „Sacred bands“. In the passage of the Phaedrus which its author defines (p. 242. D sqq.), as the matured substance of his masters divinely inspired doctrine, a very liberal amount of sensual privilege is conceded (p. 255 E. sq.) even to the more ideal Erastes. And where the intercourse is habitually carried to the last extreme of turpitude, but within certain bounds of moderation, and in conjunction with philosophic habits, the relation is characterised (p. 256) as a noble one, and far superior to the vulgar tie of friendship. That these indulgent precepts of the master were reduced to practice in the school, appears from other descriptions both in Plato and Xenophon. The latter would hardly have introduced his revered preceptor in the Symposium (IV. 27 sq.) confessing, even in facetious mood, his having given

way to what he himself calls the „swinish“ instinct, had there not been some foundation in reality for the joke. Nor, assuming it to be a pure joke, must we forget, that it forms one of a series of similar jokes and allusions, seasoning the convivial discourse of the Socratic circle. There can indeed, with every allowance for the coarseness of Xenophontean humour, be no better proof of the baneful influence of the vice on the tone of Athenian society, than is supplied by this whole erotic entertainment, by the subjects of discourse, and the mode of their treatment; in the presence too of several of those ingenuous boys, the training of whom in the paths of virtue was one boasted object of idealised paederastia. Still more fatal is the inference, from the more practical paederastian joke described in Platos Symposium, as having been played of on his master by one of his fellow pupils 9). Can any reasonable man talk of the idealising effect on art, literature, or morals, of a state of things, under which the most accomplished of Athenian gentlemen, and the purest of Greek moralists, could not happen to pass the night in the same room, without the risk of a brutal outrage being perpetrated by the one on the person of the other? Of a state of things, under which the wisest philosopher and most elegant writer of antiquity, is not ashamed to introduce in one of his standard works, the same high-bred gentleman, narrating with festive humour, to an audience composed of the cream of Athenian society, an action which the most shameless reprobate of St. Giles's, or the Faubourg St. Antoine, were he capable of committing, would hardly be so shameless as to confess.

With more immediate reference to the alleged beneficial influence of paederastia on the Greek perception of ideal beauty in art, my blindness to which has been so sharply rebuked by Welcker, I suppose I may venture to include poetical taste among the modes of that perception; to assume therefore that one of its highest developments was the Iliad; that the ideal beauty of the Iliad is mainly centred in the character of Achilles; and that a fundamental element of that ideal beauty is the friendship between Achilles and Patroclus. I presume further, that there are few living readers of the Iliad so much under the influence of Welckers theory of ideal art, as to deny, that to transfer the relation between

9) P. 217 sqq. It is further clear from p. 222 B, that these experiments on the philosopher's virtue, were more or less common with his disciples.

the two heroes from the category of friendship to that of paederastia, would be to degrade, almost to brutalise, the sublime conception of Homer. Yet this transference has been perpetrated by most of the leading Attic poets and critics from Aeschylus and Plato downwards ¹⁰).

It has always been a consolation to me, as an admirer of Greek genius, to reflect, that Homer, the fountain head of all that is either beautiful or ideal in art or literature, should have remained, whether from his own innate purity of taste, or from the unnatural instinct having been yet dormant in his time, entirely free from its influence. Nor can there be, on the one hand, a clearer condemnation than this fact supplies, of Welcker's fallacy, that a sensibility to paederastia is required for the conception of ideal beauty; or on the other hand a better illustration of the mischievous effects of the vice on Greek literary taste, than the efforts that have been made (for the case of Achilles and Patroclus is not a solitary one) by eminent native critics, so cordially backed by my opponent ¹¹), to bring down the genius of Homer, in this particular, to a level with their own.

Admitting the fine præception of ideal beauty in form, by which the Greeks were præeminently distinguished, to have depended on a concentration of their admiring faculties on youthful and beautiful human form, for to this I presume Welcker alludes in the passage of his Reply which called forth these remarks, — it would still be a grave fallacy to assert, that those faculties required to be concentrated solely or chiefly on male beauty, and through the medium of unnatural passion. A beautiful youth between fifteen and twenty

10) Plato, Symp. p. 179 E. Aeschyl. ap. Plat. l. c. Athen. XIII. p. 601. Heyn. ad II. XI. 785.

11) In regard to Achilles and Patroclus he has not declared himself. He adheres however (Kl. S. p. 90), to the vulgar interpretation of the fable of Jupiter and Ganymede, rejected, with no less taste than critical judgement, by Böttiger and Heyne. That the Hæmeric legend here reflects nothing more than the custom, common to princely establishments in those days as now, of selecting handsome youths for the service of the banqueting hall, seems clear from the text of the Iliad, XX. 234, (conf. Heyn. ad l.); where it is not Jupiter, but the Gods collectively, who kidnap the beautiful cupbearer. Of the „idealising“ influence of the other interpretation, which in the spread of paederastian taste could not fail to obtain the ascendant in Attic poetry, even on the sublime Sophocles, we may judge from the subjoined passages, allusive to the divine Eromenos: Soph. ap. Athen. XIII. p. 602: *μηροῖς ὑπαίθων τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδα*. Eurip. Orest. 1354 (Bothe): *Γανυμήθεος . . . Διὸς εὐνεία*. Iphig. in Aul. 948: *Διὸς λέγειρον τρύφημα φίλον*.

is not, I apprehend, a more beautiful object than a beautiful maiden of corresponding years. Homer certainly did not think so. In his ignorance of any other than natural love, his more detailed descriptions of personal beauty are bestowed on women. Had the relation between the sexes in Greece, in the generations subsequent to Homer, followed its natural course, a like concentration of erotic enthusiasm on its legitimate objects, would assuredly have produced the same or still nobler results, than my opponent traces to the national curse of pæderastia. It is also a fact, not without its significance, that those tyrannical restraints on female social liberty, which, while also unknown to Homer, form another blot on later Greek civilisation, grew up simultaneously with the spread of unnatural passion.

But, I imagine the reader asking: How does all this bear on the character of Sappho? In answer to this very reasonable question, which indeed I have once or twice put to myself, I remark, that it never would have spontaneously occurred to me to carry the discussion in the above direction. But the mode in which it had already been so carried by my opponent, latterly with personal application to myself, placed me under a sort of necessity; in justice both to myself and my subject, of following in his track. The concisest mode of showing the bearings, such as they are, of our joint digression, on the main question, will be to state: first what I understand to be Welcker's argument as founded on his share in the digression, and then my counterargument as founded on my share. The object of his commentary on Greek unnatural love was to show: I, its extensive prevalence among the male sex, and its beneficial influence on the national taste and culture; II. the comparative rarity and detestable character of the parallel vice among females, and the abhorrence with which, in their case, it was viewed by the same discriminating moralists; III. the improbability that so distinguished a woman as Sappho could have given way to so odious an impulse; or that, if capable of it, she would herself have published her guilt in her verse; or, if her countrymen had believed her guilty, that, so many of them would have expressed so high an admiration for her character.

On my side, I: I admit the prevalence of male pæderastia, but maintain that its influence was in every respect the reverse of beneficial. I also II, admit the rarity of unnatural love among women, but deny that, in so far as it prevailed, it was worse, or even so bad, in their case as

in that of the men. Even granting the title which Welcker claims for Greek male moralists to act as sole arbiters in this matter, I deny that they drew any such distinction between the two cases as that which he assumes. If I am right in regard to this second head, his argument under No. III, will not be difficult to deal with.

The points involved in No. I have already been amply discussed. In regard to Welcker's distinction in No. II, between the degrees of criminality in male and female paederastia, I must observe, that in my former notice of Sappho, my hands were in some degree tied, by the restrictions which the overfastidious British public imposes on the discussion of such topics. I stated however concisely (p. 498 sq.) what I considered valid objections to his doctrine; which statement has, like so many others, in his customary mode of evasive rhetoric, been simply quoted (p. 237) and dismissed unanswered. I shall now therefore avail myself of the freedom, which the more liberal spirit of German criticism concedes, in all cases where the object is to investigate truth, due regard being had to delicacy in the mode of investigation, and endeavour to bring this point, to which my opponent attaches so vast an importance, somewhat more closely to issue. For the worst excess of male paederastia he has, we have seen, no harsher definition than: „menschliche Schwachheit die sich hinter eine grössere Tugend versteckt“. For the female vice no terms of reprobation are too extreme. It is Abscheulichkeit, Ungeheuer etc. The question is one more easily tested by example than by argument. Let us then compare the two following cases; each, as required for its full illustrative effect, of the properly sensual order. In the one we have a middle aged Athenian citizen of the upper class; a married man; for such as a general rule was every Athenian of rank on reaching man's estate; possessing therefore all legitimate scope at home for sexual indulgence, besides the scope which the license of social life afforded to similar indulgence abroad. Let us imagine this man, by pecuniary or other corrupt means, — for Socrates himself defines such connexions as not the result of mutual feeling, — possessing himself of an innocent lad of fifteen, and treating him in the mode also described by Socrates (Xen. Symp. VIII. 32. Pl. Phaedr. p. 254 A.). Let us imagine on the other hand, two Greek ladies, of naturally warm temperaments; their society despised and their beds deserted, often for weeks at a time, by their husbands, each engaged in attendance on his favourite Eromenos; their other opportu-

nities of social, not to say sexual, enjoyment, limited to the narrow circle of their gynaecea. Let us imagine these two women, fondly attached to each other, by mutual sympathy as well as affection, solacing themselves by Sapphos „eros lysimeles“, whatever it may have been ¹²⁾, for the privations and indignities to which they were subjected by the heartless tyranny of the other sex. Let the impartial reader decide which of these two cases best deserves to be characterised as „menschliche Schwachheit“, which as Abscheulich etc. Let Welcker himself answer the question; not, by repeating and evading my words; but let him answer it categorically, and give his reasons for his answer.

The abhorrence felt by Greek male moralists for female irregular intercourse, has, in my former remarks, to a cer-

12) I have never attempted, nor shall I now attempt, to define it, still less those other nice varieties of Lesbian immorality, which Welcker analyses with so much taste and ingenuity, under the titles: *λεσβίζειν, λάβδα, λαικαστρία*, oris stuprum, *ἀνδριζόμεαι, σιφνιάζειν, ροινηκίζειν, κελητίζειν* etc. (Kl. S. p. 86 sq. Éd. 1816. p. 23 sq.). I must however venture a word in defence of the term „Lesbian vice“, against which, as applied by me to the irregular love of Sappho, he has thrown away so much good declamation. It will suffice to specify the authorities which connect that irregularity with Lesbos. These are 1) the Ode of Anacreon (Bergk, Poet. lyr. p. 778 2d. Ed.) complaining of a Lesbian mistress having deserted him for a female rival. 2) The Attic comedy; which all Sapphos apologists, except Welcker, consider, and justly, a principal organ of the evil report against her. 3) Ovids line: „Lesbides infamem quae me fecistis amatae“. 4) The previous „literature“, whatever it may have been, to which my opponent (Rh. M. p. 244) refers, as having supplied Ovid with this allusion. 5) The dialogue of Lucian (Moretr. 5); where a Lesbian female paederast is mentioned by name, with the remark: *τοιαντίας γὰρ ἐν Λέσβῳ λέγουσι γυναῖκας*. 6) The scholion on Clemens, Paedag. III: *τὰς μιὰς τριβδάδας, ἃς καὶ ἑταιριστρίας καὶ Λεσβίας καλοῦσι*. 7) The notice in Suidas, that Sappho lay under the reproach of guilty intercourse with her Lesbian female associates. 8) The allusion by Maximus Tyr. (Diss. XXIV) to her Lesbian love (if not in his view her Lesbian vice), as the only female variety of erotic passion analogous to the paederastia of Anacreon. — If this be not enough to constitute a place or people what is commonly called proverbial for a certain peculiarity, the number of such proverbs must be greatly reduced. In the face of all this, my opponent gravely asserts (Kl. S. p. 87): „Von einem üblen Rufe der Insel Lesbos im Punkte der Heterästrien kann gar nicht die Rede sein!“ Bernhardy and Büttmann both thought differently. The former (op. cit. p. 484) calls the love in question the „Lesbische Wollust“; the latter, with Welcker's tacit acquiescence (Kl. S. p. 115) the „berühmte Lesbische Liebe“. Here, as on other occasions, I have the honour of being made the scape-goat for the common offence.

tain extent been admitted, and the argument founded on it has, to such extent, been refuted (p. 498 sq.) on grounds evaded by my opponent¹³). But on further reflexion I perceive, that my admission was too unqualified, and that in truth the Greeks entertained little, if any greater abhorrence for the female than the male variety of the passion, unless indulged in what they considered a licentious excess or from sordid motives. Where the sentiment was reciprocal or disinterested, the gratification kept within bounds of external decorum, and combined with those fascinations of beauty, genius, or intellectual refinement, which Plato prescribes as essential to dignity and propriety in male intercourse, there can be no doubt that the same leniency of judgement was extended to the other sex. In proof of this may be cited, Anacreon's allusion to his having been supplanted in the affections of a Lesbian mistress by a female rival (see note 12). Surely, if Welcker's theory were true, here was an occasion for a disappointed lover showering down anathemas of *Abscheulichkeit* etc, on the guilty pair. The poet however treats the matter but as an ordinary case of unsuccessful rivalry. No less to the purpose is the passage in which Maximus Tyrius (Diss. XXIV), places the female love of Sappho in the same category as the male love, not only of Socrates, but of Anacreon: „As for the Eros of the Lesbian Sappho, what else was it than the Socratic art of love; . . . for both describe themselves as loving many, and captivated by all kinds of beauty; and what Alcibiades and Charmides . . . were to Socrates, Gyrinna and Althis . . . were to Sappho; and what the rival masters Prodicus and Gorgias . . . were to him, Gorgo and Andromeda were to her. . .

13) In re quoting (p. 238), the passages formerly quoted, he dwells triumphantly on the fact that Lucian, in one of his dialogues, introduces even a female, condemning the unnatural love of her own sex; as if Lucian's opinions, whether real or affected, became a bit the less Lucian's own, by being placed in a fictitious mouth. The other dialogue of Lucian, „Amores“, to which he appeals, tells rather against than in favour of Welcker's argument. The speaker is here inveighing (c. 19 sqq) with equal virulence, against both varieties of unnatural love; the only real distinction drawn being, that to the honor of the women theirs was the rarest. My opponent however suppresses the parts unfavourable to himself, while he misinterprets and exaggerates what is favourable. The phrase $\tilde{\omega}$ νεώτερε χρόνε (c. 28) by which he assumes the female vice to be exclusively stigmatised as an abuse of recent origin, refers obviously to the distinction previously drawn (c. 20), in regard to both sexes, between the comparative purity of the primitive age of Greece, and the corruption of her „historical period“.

— The art of Anacreon is of the same kind; for he too loves every beautiful youth; . . . and his pages are full of the hair of Smerdis, the eyes of Cleobulus, and the juvenile grace of Bathyllus“. It must here be remarked that Welcker, in quoting this author in favour of his own views, carefully suppresses that part of the passage which refers to Anacreon. I readily, with Maximus T., concede to Sappho's paederastian affection, the same purity as to that of the Teian minstrel, or even of the Socratic eromenoi, as defined in the Phaedrus (p. 255 sq.). To these passages may be added that of Longinus, to be further noticed below, where Sappho's address to one of her female lovers is characterised, in terms of eulogy rather than censure, as *ἔρωτικὴ μανία*; a phrase which, by reference to philological grounds (see note 8 supra), no Greek author could have applied to any other than a sensually erotic affection. As little could Plutarch, in reference to the same Ode, have used the terms *τῆς ἐρωμένης ἐπιφανείσης . . . φλέγεσθαι τὸ σῶμα* (Amat. XVIII) in any other sense.

My unfavourable view of Sappho's relation to her own sex is founded; first, on the passages of her poems allusive to that relation; secondly, on the evidence at large which her remains supply, of her immoral habits; thirdly, in so far as secondary evidence is required, on that of those ancient commentators, Ovid in particular, who, in full possession of her works, and of all subsidiary aids to their interpretation, and free from the erotic hallucination of the second rate Platonists of his age, was, by his peculiar order of taste and intellect, singularly qualified to judge in such matters; and whose judgement regarding Sappho's female as well as male loves, coincides in all essential respects with my own.

In my p. 317 I have, in concurrence with Longinus, described the passage most broadly descriptive of her affection for a female favourite, as the one „which, in the whole volume of Greek literature, offered the most powerful concentration into one brilliant focus, of the modes in which amorous concupiscence can display itself on the human frame“. I have hence assumed that the affection experienced was not mere friendship, but irregular passion. The more reasonable of the „apologists“ do not deny that such would be the literal construction of her language; but they object to its being so construed. They argue that it does but reflect „an essential feature of the Greek character“, the habit of „mixing up feelings that among nations of calmer

temperament have always been perfectly distinct. I deny that this is a feature of the Greek character. To assert that it is, is a pure *petitio principii*. It is not illustrating Sappho by laws founded on the Greek character, but forcing on the Greek character laws founded on fanciful interpretations of a single poetess. I maintain that, far from mixing up feelings perfectly distinct, one of the most characteristic excellences of the Greek Muse, is the unequivocal precision with which she discriminates every different passion or feeling; and which contrasts not more strongly with the wild allegory of the East, than with the dreamy sentimentality of much of our popular English and German poetry. In no Greek author, as Welcker himself (strange to say), has justly remarked (*Kl. S.* p. 83), was this excellence more conspicuous than in Sappho, or more generally recognised by her native critics; not one of whom would have dreamt of taking those passages in any other than a purely erotic sense; whatever view they might take of the erotic impulse which dictated them. Still more to the point than the commentary of Longinus is the anecdote in Plutarch (*Demetr.* 38), of the mode in which the physician Erasistratus applied the symptoms described in Ode II, as a practical love test, in the celebrated case of Antiochus and Stratonice. That Welcker should actually quote this anecdote (*Rh. M.* p. 229), in proof of the unsensual nature of the symptoms, is an obliquity of judgement against which it would be vain to argue. Suffice it to refer to the sequel of the story, where the possession of Stratonice's person by the lover, is found necessary to remove both the symptoms and the disease. We have here at least Plutarch's assurance, that what Sappho felt towards Atthis, was the same as a man feels towards a woman, whom he is burning with desire to enjoy.

If all we knew besides of Sappho went to prove her a virtuous woman, there might be something in these attempts to mystify the natural sense of her language. But now that the leading champion of her honor has admitted, that at an age when the fire of sexual passion commonly begins to burn dim; when (as he so naively describes her, *Rh. M.* p. 246) „a widow, mistress of a school“, and mother of a daughter, whom it was her duty to train, both by example and precept, in the path of virtue, — she threw herself into the arms of a paramour, young enough to have been her son; that when deserted by him, she pursued him frantically over the face of Hellas, and emblazoned her shame, for the benefit of her daughter, her scholars, and the Hellenic

public, in an ode second in elegant lasciviousness to none in the literature of her country, — now that all this has been admitted by her own leading advocate, the case for the defence breaks down altogether. A woman who is proved in one instance to have acted in such a manner, and proclaimed her act in such a strain, is hardly entitled to have a figurative construction put on her other descriptions of her amorous emotions, to whomsoever addressed.

The evidence of general character is here so important, that I shall pursue it a step or two further. From certain expressions in this ode I inferred (p. 309), that the male amour there described was not the only one in which Sappho had been engaged. As Welcker seems neither to have understood my inference, nor the passage on which it was founded, I must explain myself more clearly. Assuming, as he assumes, the love for Phaon to have been a single and a constant love, though chequered by lover's quarrels, how could Venus, described by the poetess as so much in her confidence and so deeply interested in her affairs, be ignorant of that fact; or how could Sappho in this ode attribute to her such ignorance, and represent her, when called in to aid on a former occasion, as anxiously enquiring (v. 18 sq.): „Who is it that offends you? Whom shall I again allure back to your love“? Even supposing (with Welcker), that the occasion referred to was a previous quarrel with Phaon, these questions of the goddess would still imply, that he was not the first or only such enemy, against whom she had been invoked as an ally.

My opponent and his fellow apologists every where assume that Sappho was married; on the ground chiefly that she had a daughter, and that the daughter of so exemplary a woman must necessarily have been a legitimate child. In my p. 278 I urged, though here again with too little precision, what I thought fair evidence to the contrary; and here again Welcker (p. 252), without answering my reasons, simply pronounces them „insignificant“, and continues his argument on the basis of Sappho having had a husband. Let us first see how he makes out his case, and I will then add a word or two on mine. He repudiates, with commentators of all classes, the „Cercolas of Andros“, who with the Attic comoedians figured as Sappho's consort, as an indecent fiction of those satirists. He appeals however to the graver authority of Suidas, whom he quotes (Kl. S. p. 113) as stating: „that she was married to a rich citizen of Mytilene“. Suidas states no such thing. Let him speak for himself;

ἐγαμήθη δὲ ἀνδρὶ Κερκώλῃ πλουσιωτάτῳ, ὀρμωμένῳ ἀπὸ Ἄνδρου. The husband of Suidas therefore is the Cercolas of the comedy. The Mytilenaeen marriage certificate is a fictitious document; and all evidence on the affirmative side disappears ¹⁴). — The evidence on the negative side is: first, the absence from her remains of all mention of her married life. There is one quality for which Sappho's apologists and detractors equally give her credit, the openness of her nature, and the consequent number and frankness of her allusions to herself and her affairs. Assuming then the first half of her womanhood to have been passed with a husband, how is it, that amid those copious notices of other persons and things connected with her, not one should occur to the father of her child, to the joys or anxieties of her connubial life, to the sorrows of her widowhood? The evidence that her entire collection was barren of such notices is equally conclusive. There can be no doubt that Ovids „Letter to Phaon“ mentions every more prominent fact of her life transmitted on her own authority; but not a hint of her married state. It seems incredible that a poet of Ovids taste and discernment, in dwelling on so many details foreign to his argument; on the death of her parents in her sixth year; on her quarrel with her brother, its cause, and his subsequent destiny; on her daughter; on her female associates, their names, and the nature of her connexion with them, — should have omitted the part of her history best calculated to enhance the effect of his elegy, by pathetic apostrophes of the afflicted fair one, to her past days of peace in the enjoyment of an innocent love, or to her widowhood as the primary source of her present crime and sorrow. Add to this the indirect negative placed on her marriage by both Horace and Ovid, in their pointed mention of her as the „Lesbian maiden“. Who can believe that Ovid, or any poet in his senses, would have made Phaon address a middle aged widow by the title of „Lesbi puella“? The case therefore reduces itself to the subjoined logical thesis: A certain lady had a daughter. It is admitted that this lady cohabited for some years with at least one youthful paramour. There is no evidence that she ever was married, but

14) Had Sappho had an authentically recorded husband, there would hardly, in the true spirit of the Attic comedy, have been room for a purely fictitious one of this description. The point of the jest evidently is, that she had no husband but *ζέρκος*. The ambiguously figurative phrase: *ὀρμώμενος ἀπὸ Ἄνδρου* (viriliter irrumpens) is probably borrowed to the letter from the comedy.

a good deal to the opposite effect. Whether is it more probable that the daughter was the offspring of the paramour, or of a husband? Of a husband maintains Welcker. The reader may form his own opinion.

In conclusion, I have only further to remind him, that these remarks on the life or character of the poetess, are to be considered but as paralipomena to the section on Sappho in my History of Greek literature. To it therefore he is referred, as well for a full knowledge of my opinions and arguments, as to enable him to judge of the extent to which both have been misquoted or evaded by my opponent, on other points besides those to which attention has here been specially directed.

William Mure.