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[-1-] THE MASK, OR ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THEATRES AND OF THE SCENARIES FOR TRAGIC, SATIRIC AND COMIC PLAYS. A DIALOGUE BY THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS SIGNOR KNIGHT HERCOLE BOTTRIGARO.

A. B. C. D.

<A.> THIS weather is very cold, God preserve you.

B. Add: and long and boring. Welcome!

A. Come near the fire and warm up, as we have done. After having absorbed some natural heat, we have moved away from it a little.

A. As they say, it is no less pleasurable to burn one of these bundles of withes in winter than to drink a glass of wine in summer.

B. Wine assaults us with equal strength to wine. Athenaeus says that this was noted by the poet from Kyrene as well as by Panyasis, an epic poet, who said: "Wine is for man a nourishment similar to fire". He lauded it also not only as a very pleasant element of convivial dining and a most sought after pleasure of sweet friends and companions, but also as a great comfort in adversity and as a source of inspiration. Along these very lines, Anacreon said in a passage of one of his poems:

"When I drink a sweet wine,
Any worry, any preoccupation,
Any pain, any anxiety,
Any overpowering thought
dissolves into wind and smoke."

He repeated this in two, if not three, other places.

C. There would be nothing to say in praise of wine above what these and other esteemed ancient poets have left written, particularly when [-2-] it is sweet, an epithet ascribed to it a thousand times by the divine Homer because of the excellence of its quality or taste. He also called it suave.

B. Not only there would be nothing to add in praise of wine, but also to nothing to add to discredit it. Maybe this was more that Athenaeus, Plutarch and Homer themselves said. Therefore, I shall say that, so that we may not be deprived of such a suave and delicate drink (better, it is a divine potion identified by some as ambrosia and by others, more commonly, as the nectar of the gods of the Gentiles) and man may not lack also this difference from the rest of the animated beings, it was necessary to find some delectable substance to temper its extreme power (as Virgil warns us in his Elegy against Venus and Bacchus: "Put Venus in stocks and Bacchus in handcuffs, so that one may offend neither of them with their gifts."). Such substance was the same found to contain the vehemence of fire, namely, water. Therefore, some beautiful and sharp mind took inspiration from this to name [b. in marg.] wine the Fifth Element.

A. This finds confirmation in what I have hard people say about Ferrara, namely, that it lacks all of the five elements, which [c. in marg.] thus come to be named as Water, Earth, Air, Fire and Wine.

C. It derives from the fact that it was built, as the Writers say, on the ancient Swamps. It occurs tome that Ludovico Ariosto bears very accurate witness to this in the Satira that he wrote to his brother Galasso in Rome on the topic of wines: "Without much water I do not taste our own, born on swampy terrain".

B. Therefore, one may say that the reply of Cesano, philospher at the court of Hyppolitus, second Cardinal of Ferrara to his master when he asked him [d. in marg.] for permission to visit Bologna for fifteen or twenty days and the master asked why he needed such leave.

A. What did Cesano reply?

B. He replied: "To drink and to warm myself up, Signore." For the same reason, Captain Vincentio Lucatello, [-3-] an extraordinary military architect who, as we say, had pissed in every corner of Europe, told me quite appropriately once when he was staying with me during my stay in Ferrara that two very notable opposite features [d. in marg.] of Bologna and this city were wood and wine. He said that Ferrara has sweet wood and strong wine, while Bologna has strong wood and sweet wine.

C. Notable contrapositions for sure.

A. I would not want that the attribution to wine of this epithet of fifth element may distract us from discussing its temperament or mixing with water, so that we would miss this unexpected opportunity to understand what I have been wanting to know for a very long time, namely the meaning of [e. in marg.] Plutarch's words in the ninth of his third book of the Convivial Questions.

C. That we should drink in five or three, but not in four?

A. Precisely.

B. Athenaeus himself (I think that I am not mistaken) reasons about it in chapters eight and nine of his tenth book of the Banquets of the Wise men. This saying originated perahs (thus he recounts, it seems to me) from an extraordinary mixture mentioned (he says) by Diocles in his Bees, namely, of four parts with two. Plutarch, however, tells that those who knew about the Dyonisian harmonic proportions divided them into three consonances made up of wine and water: Diapente, Diatrion and Diatessaron, in imitation of those who understand the rules of Lyric poets, who say, according to Plutarch, that the consonance Diapente is based on the sesquialtera proportion, the Diapason on the dupla and the Diatessaron on the sesquitertia. Is that so?

A. It is.

B. Does he not continue saying, as explanation of that riddle (rather than proverb, as Athenaeus says) that the number five contains the hemiolia proportion, by mixing three glasses of water with two of wine? And that the number three the dupla, as two are placed in one, while the number four contains the Epitrite infusion consisting of three parts of water and one of wine?

[-4-] A. This is the meaning of Xilander's Latin translation, which I find very obscure in one passage.

B. Moreover, if I remember correctly, he shows the purpose for which such mixtures or temperaments have been established. The one with three parts of water to one (mentioned by Iulius Pollux in the second chapter of the sixth book of his Onomasticon with words of this meaning in translation: "And they drank very clear wine, consisting of three parts, or three times as much, water) is a sombre and weak drink suited to princes, who devote their attention to their own court, or to rhetoricians, who squeeze their eyelashes thinking about the changes of the speeches. Of the others, the mixture of two parts of water with one of wine infuses strength, hence one becomes half-drunk, as it does not allow one to become fully drunk and out of control because of the neatness of the wine." Plutarch says that the mix of three parts with two is very famous. Albeit he praises amply this mixture of wine and water and it writes in such a way that none of the surrounding characters disagrees verbally with such words by Ariston, since it is very clear to everyone that he spoke in jest, nevertheless it is de facto rebuked, since he is ordered to discuss that so lauded mixture having picked up a lyre rather than a glass. He refused to do this and said: "One treats that sort of music with proportions, rather than with instruments." As Plutarch shows then how it is necessary to contain and control this god Bacchus with several parts of water in order to render it docile and wise, he tells a tale under the name of his father recounting how it seemed to him that the ancients assigned to Jupiter two nurses, to Juno only one, Euboea, two to Apollo, Verity and Conthaliâ, but many to Bacchus." Thus, I have recited little bi little the whole of Plutarch's Question. I did so only in order to understand fully the difficulty that you state to have with it. I would like you now to explain it to me.

A. It seems to me that all of those proportions relating to the watering down of wine are correct, except for the one consisting of three measures of water and one of one.

B. I believe that to be so also, as I do not like it at all either.

C. Nor do I.

[-5-] A. You are making fun of me.

C. Is one not allowed to do it on this day of Carnival?

[E. in marg.]

A. It is very much part of it, but I do not want to talk about the practical use of such mixture. In fact, I will agree with you, not in jest, but with the craziest wisdom that I possess, that such proportion must be treated with numbers, rather than with glasses. However, to return to my difficulty that three to one consists in a sesquitertia proportion, as one reads in that translation that you have read, I maintain that there is no way that I would agree this to be true in any way. In fact, three to one is a tripla proportion, as it is recognised by every school of mathematicians. The sesquitertia proportion is from four to three and it is superparticular. Therefore, three to one has no relation at all to four to three, because the former means three times as much, as you added that Iulius Pollux refers, while the latter refers merely to an extra third.

B. If we both stay silent, A. will not be satisfied in his desire to hear our opinion.

C. I leave it to you, B., to argue this case. I merely want to listen to it.

A. You shall do what you can, as I want you to please me in any way.

C. Here we come to the battle. However, you will gain little from me. Do expect satisfaction from B. as well

B. What? Do you think you could pass this on to me so easily? Do not believe it, as you would be mistaken, in truth, as I know very well that you have considered this matter in advance.

C. Consider that, if you make me speak, I shall reveal myself to share A.'s doubts rather than able to solve this problem.

B. If we are all in doubt, who shall free us from such doubt?

C. You.

A. You.

B. I? Hang on. Have I not also got the right to be doubtful as well?

A. Yes you do, but you also have a way to free yourself from it.

B. I certainly do not. However, if you want me to tell you what I had already considered about it, I shall be glad to do so.

[-6-] A. I believe that one would be able to wait with greater anticipation to hear something that they want to hear than I am while I await to hear this.

B. Mind that you may not have to say later that large mountains has given birth to a mouse, and deride me for it.

A. Please do start, in God's name.

C. Please do not keep us waiting any longer.

[f. in marg.] B. Here I am, ready to please you. It is certain that the difficulty of the Plutarch's statement of that question consists truly in his association of the mixture of three and one to the consonance Diatessaron, created by the Epitrite proportion. In fact, as you A. said correctly, the proportion of three and one is not a sesquitertia, or augmented by a third, but tripla, namely, three times as large. Should we want to say that Plutarch's intention was to infer that one should add three parts of water to three parts of wine and then an extra part of water (thus forming the Sesquitertia proportion from four to three), and that from this the Dionysian Diatessaron consonance were born (apart from the fact that he would not leave aside the tripla proportion that he later ascribes to sober princes and abstinent dialectics, mentioned by Pollux, as I said, and by Athenaeus, together with the other temperaments adopted in those times by the Greeks, the Romans and by other peoples) one would incur the drawback of rendering the drink purer, or, containing a greater quantity of wine than the other two. In fact, that mixture of two glasses of water and one of wine, which is ascribed to the Dionysian Diapason with the dupla proportion, consists of two thirds of wine, while the one consisting of four parts of water and three of one (which would correspond to the sesquitertia proportion and to the true terms of the Dionysian Diatessaron) would consist of wine for three quarters. Thus, as it contains a greater quantity of wine, it would be more suited and effective at inducing drunkenness, and therefore completely opposed to the one consisting of three parts of

water and one of wine, which, as it corresponds to the tripla proportion and it is associated with good reason by musicians to the Diapasondiapente, is only a third wine. Hence it is a very weak drink, and one that certainly cannot induce drunkenness because of its high water content. [-7-] Moreover, I give you the greatest assurance that this is the reason why [g. in marg.] this passage of Plutarch's text has been suspected to be corrupted. For this reason, it has always been marked with a few asterisks, until Xilander confessed that they were there, but that he had removed them because there appeared to be no sign of corruption to him.

Nothing about this was said by the Author of the great Collection of Proverbs and by the Correctors of said collection, as, apparently, they wanted to infer and show that there was no corruption. I will leave Plutarch's text as it is and I shall apply myself to extract from it as much clarity as possible, in conformity to what I said to you that Athenaeus replies on the matter. I tell you that it seems to me that, when Plutarch talks about [h. in marg.] harmonic consonances, he refers to the proportions truly established by the Pythagoreans with regard of those consonances. However, when he talks about the Dionysian consonances devised in parallel to those, he considers them in a simple and absolute way, namely, apart from the proportions, in the same way as Aristoxenus considered them by referring merely to the sense of hearing and viewing them as a number (five, three and four) ascribed to it. In fact, when he talks about the Diapente, he does not refer to the consonance represented by the hemiolia or sesquialtera proportion, but to the number five, which is referred to by the word Diapente. When he talks about Diatessaron, he refers to the number four, rather than to the sesquitercia or epitrite proportion in the way that it is understood by mathematicians. It seems to me that this can be clearly understood because of his use of the word Diatria, which means 'by three'. In fact, had he wanted to refer to the dupla proportion, he would have said Diapason. However, he did not say it because he did not want to refer precisely to the harmonic proportions, as it was enough to him refer to the similarity in which the Dionysians model the number of their consonances on the number of the consonances of the [i. in marg.] Harmonics, albeit each of them then organised them independently in their own way. Thus, while the Pythagoreans placed them in the format of those certain proportions, the Dionysians expressed them as the [[proportions]] [divisions; corr. supra lin.] that are called arithmetic, namely, when each is divided by the two largest numbers contained within them without breaking the unit, as such division is[-8-] forbidden in mathematics. Therefore, if five has to be divided in the first place by the two largest numbers contained within it, it cannot be divided arithmetically [if add. supra lin.] not into three and two, whose hemiolia proportion must not be considered. Similarly, if one has to divide three by the two largest numbers contained within itself, it can only be divided arithmetically into one and two, whose dupla proportion is equally to be disregarded. Finally, if one wanted to divide the number four into the two largest and equal numbers contained within it, it can only be divided into two and two, as one can read in Eustathius' commentary on the tenth book of the Odyssey marked I. However, since these two numbers are equal and they were considered newly by the Harmonics because they express the unison, which is not a consonance, nor do they belong to any other of the three recognised Dyonisian consonances (this is really that unisonance and _____ described also by Athenaeus and with which we shall deal, if you wish, when we shall discuss the other two that he mentions) that proportion was left aside, and the other one, consisting of three and one, was adopted. This is the reason why they called it Diatessaron, namely, 'by four', without taking into account at all, as they did in the other two, the proportion of one of the numbers to the other one, namely, three and one, in which the number four is divided in this way. This is the epitrite or 'above three' to which Plutarch referred, not, as music theorists interpret it, namely, as the extreme terms of the sesquitercia proportion, but, in the opposite way, as Plato took it at the beginning of the eighth book of the Republic, where he describes that geometric number of his. Here, he calls epitrite root the number seven, as it is obtained by adding together the number four and the number three, which are the root numbers of said sesquitercia proportion. Aristotle did the same in the corresponding passage of his Politics (in the fifth book) where he embraces said Platonic number. This conclusion represents in my opinion the clarity and understanding that it is possible to bring to this obscure and difficult passage of Plutarch. If you please, I beg you to accept willingly this explanation, as

willingly I have offered it to you.

A. I myself accept it very willingly. I am very satisfied with it and I pay you infinite thanks.

[-9-] B. I do not want any payment from you, A., while from you, C., I do not think that I would be able to expect any, even if I wanted.

C. Why do you think that you would not be able to expect any from me?

B. Because I do not see that you accept it as promptly as A. did. On the contrary, I seem to understand that you are not at all satisfied with it. If you feel this way about the whole of my reasoning, I am sorry. However, if you are not convinced by any particular aspect of it, do feel free to ask and I shall try to explain myself better.

C. The reason why I have been slow to acknowledge your reasoning and to thank you infinitely for it is not because I also did not accept promptly this interpretation and explanation of yours. It is simply because I was debating it within myself and I was considering in depth the subtlety of your solution. To speak freely, I have seen a modern writer touch on this point, namely, of having to consider and account only to the number of said Proverb or Enigma in this difficult passage. He does so in this difficult in this difficult passage, however, in a very dry fashion, albeit he made it the topic of a very long chapter endowed with several demonstrations.

B. Please speak freely, as you promised to do, and say that this author is the most learned Zarlino, who (as you must know well) was such a great friend of mine when he was alive. He discusses this conclusion in the eighth chapter of the third book of his Musical Supplements with his pupil Galileo, whom he describes at times as loving, at times as diligent and, at times, as in this precise point as speculative.

[k. in marg.] C. Indeed the writer is Zarlino. However, he deals with this matter in a very obscure and prolix fashion, although he tries to explain himself with various demonstrations, as I said. Moreover, in the first demonstration (which he calls ‘according to the Canonics’ rather than ‘according to the Dionysians’, as he should have done in my opinion) places the number three above the number two under the Diapente, the number two above the number one under the Diatrion and the number three above the number one under the Diatessaron. Thus, he undermines the little clarity that he strived to present through such explanation. Now, it seems to me that he should have placed all of the larger numbers under the smaller ones. In this way he would have demonstrated that the Diatessaron (or [-10-] ‘by three’) is not called triplasion or epitrite in abstract, but it is really epitrite, namely, ‘one above three’, which indicates the third part. This would also be in accordance with what you have explained to us just now, if I am not mistaken, with the addition of the explanation of the procedure easily followed by the Dionysians, which is what illustrates and facilitates the understanding of this. If Zarlino was aware of this, he omitted it with great damage to the reasoning in that chapter of his; if he was not aware of it, I wonder how one could come to the true knowledge of the fact that the Dionysian consonances must be derived from the harmonic proportions but from simple and bare numbers, as the word Diatrion not used by the Harmonics exemplifies. I was considering the whole of your reasoning and I was awaiting other elaborations besides the promised ones on the basis of your premises. Therefore, I was not quick enough to compliment and thank you (as they say in Spanish) for this past reasoning, however central and great. Consider for yourself, however, whether I am obliged to do it.

B. Were you to deem that you have to do so, I would not want you to feel obliged. I wish you to be absolved from this freely *in forma camerae*. As the Archpoet Arnaldo said: “Laws cannot be widened.”

C. What an ingenious and at the same time foolish humor of our time.

B. Do let us attend to other matters. Albeit such ceremonies are considered external and manifest protestation of one’s gratitude and politeness, they are nevertheless utterly useless and excessive empty words of who cannot or does not want provide adequate recompense for them at the right place and moment. In short they are a way to repay gracious actions with four kind words.

A. What will you say of me then? I am someone old-fashioned who is content with the very first thing. However, I found this explanation so easy that, as I felt in my mind immediately relieved of all those difficulties, I rushed to thank you with every satisfaction.

B. Let us stop talking about this, please.

A. Continue, please, to tell us of the ancients' practice of so many other mixtures and temperaments [-11-] of water and wine, which you hinted that Athenaeus discusses.

B. It will be better, perhaps, that we find out way out of this enigma before we say that Plautus gave an interpretation that differs very much from this one of Plutarch and Athenaeus, together with some other attractive variation. [l. in marg.]

C. It will be appropriate, therefore, to call this question an enigma, as you did, [m. in marg.] rather than a proverb, as Athenaeus calls it, as it receives different interpretations. How does Plautus interpret it?

B. He makes the servant Stichus (in the penultimate scene of the last act of the comedy named after this character) answer to the other servant Sangannus, who asked him how many glasses of wine each of them should drink in the banquet that he had told the servant Stephanonion (also their lover) to prepare for them: "As many as you have fingers on both hands". He added that those were the words of a Greek song: "Drink five and three and half of four". However, albeit some texts report the text: "Drink five, three or four," , and others: "Drink five or three and a half or four," I prefer the first reading since it is more appropriate to the action intended by Stichus, namely, how many times one must drink. It had to be ten times because, when one drank in honour of the woman beloved, one would drink as many times as the letters that [n. in marg.] made up her name, as one can see clearly in this case. In fact, the letters that make up the name of their common lover, Stephanonion, are ten, and Stichus says that one has to drink ten times, once for each of those letters. Therefore, the reading of the verse is correct as it stands: "Five times, three times [[and not]] [and half of corr. supra lin.] four [[according to]] [rather than it being corr. supra lin.]: altered, as I said earlier, to: "[[Deink]] Five times [[or thrice or half]] [drink five times or, corr. supra lin.] of four.

A. I do not understand this at all.

B. It means that one must drink five times, three times and then twice (half of four times). Added together, five and three make eight, and two make ten, the whole number of the letter of Stephanonion, the name of that servant, which means 'small crown' in our language. It is taken from the Greek, the language from which Plautus usually takes almost all of the names of the characters of this and of all his other comedies [-12-] according to their meaning.

C. Refined indeed.

A. Ste: three, pha: six , ni: eight, on, ten. Very good, indeed. Did you not say, B., that this was common practice for those people at the time?

B. Not only did I say that this was customary for those people in those times. I add that this practice is observed also in our times by us. This is particularly true [o. in marg.] of the French. While the ancients toasted their gods, princes and lovers, thus the French toast their king, their ladies and other important people. We have, for instance, this famous French song set to music, which says:
I saw the dear come out of the wood

And drink at the fountain.

I drink to you my dear friend

And to you my queen.

We have a very clear example of this practice with regard to particular persons and especially to beloved ladies, both in their presence or otherwise, as witnessed by Martial in the tetrastich entitled 'To sleep' (book one, number 39). I shall translate it as Italian hendecasyllables and recite it to you as it stands, so that you may perceive its original grace, which is almost impossible to preserve in our Italian verses.

Let us raise six glasses to Lesbia,
Seven to Iustina and five to Licas;
Four to Lida and three to Idas.

Let us name each girlfriend
From the quantity of wine poured.

However, since none of them comes,
Come to me Sleep, you come to me.

Lesbia (one reads Neavia in another text) sex Cyathis: Septem Iustina bibatur:

Quinque Lycas: Lyda quatuor: Ida tribus.

[-13-] Omnis ab infuso numeretur Amica Falerno;

Et quia nulla uenit, Tu mihi Somne uenj.

C. Oh what a truly gracious and spirited poet would be this Martial, if only he were not ruined by his widespread obscenity.

B. He knew very well that he was obscene. He not only confesses this to Corconius (whom he praises for his purity in writing by saying in the twenty-seventh Epigram of the third book: “No page of mine is free from sex”) but in many others also, apologising for it. However, he does not abstain from following the style of licentious writers.

A. Do you believe that the ancients also followed our tradition of drinking the residue of wine left in the glass of our beloved after she has drunk from it in the belief that we drink her beauty with that wine left over?

B. I would be drawn to believe that this particular tradition of our time, would Ovid not make me question this belief in a passage of the fourth book of his Art of love, were he says: Fac primum rapias illius tacta labellis

Pocula; quaque bibit parte Puella, bibas.

This corresponds to what he wrote to his lover in the fourth elegy of the first book, namely:

Quae tu reddideris, ego primus Pocula sumam:

Et qua tu biberis, hac ego parte bibam.

Here is the translation:

“I shall be the first one to grab

The glass that you will give back,

And I shall drink from the side from which you have drunk.”

The translation of the first passage is as follows:

“Be sure to grab first the glass touched by her lips, and drink from the same side as she did.”

Let us go back to the intention to drink in honour of a particular person. Martial, at the end of Epigram 83 of the same first book, talks about drinking ten times while referring to Sextilianus, whose name consists of ten letters. He says: “Si plusquam decies, Sextiliane, bibis.” As to drinking to two names at once, after saying (Epigram 50 of the eighth book) first: “Let the letters in the name of Instantius Rufus determine the number of the cups that I am to drink”, he added at the end [-14-]:

“In order to banish all my thoughts,

I shall drink to one name and to the other.”

Conversely, Martial (Epigram 44 of the sixth book) shows how some people were not offered a toast. He says: “Nobody will come near you, Calliodorus”.

Horace makes reference to toasting in honour of the gods in the nineteenth Ode of the third book.

He orders a servant to bring him a drink and says: “

“Do not hesitate, boy, drink to the new Moon,

Drink to the middle of the night,

And to the augurs of Murena.”

Athenaeus himself said a little earlier that Ulpianus said, after having drunk a glass: “I drink first of all this whole glass to my friends, whom I have mentioned, as a most certain pledge of affection.”

At the beginning of the second book of his Dinners of the Philosophers Athenaeus refers that the poet Panyassis said that the first glass of wine is drunk in honour of the Graces, the Hours and Bacchus; the second in honour of Venus and Bacchus; the third one in honour of Hybris, goddess of damage, and Ate, goddess of evil actions. This is why Horace says in the same Ode, demonstrating how many glasses of wine mixed with water one ought to drink: “The drinks of wine shall be mixed in three or nine parts as appropriate”. He highlights the drinkers with these words: “The poet who loves the Muses shall request in his stupor three times three parts”. In other words, the poet, inebriated and drunk, will demand three times three, which is nine, portions because that is the number of the Muses. However, who is wary of fights and disagreements should drink three parts of wine, as the Graces forbid to drink more than that amount: “The Grace, who accompanies their

naked sisters, forbids one to drink more than three parts as they fear a fight". This is confirmed by Anacharsis, as I remember to have read, who says that the first glass belonged to thirst; the second one to joy, the third one to pleasure and the fourth one to madness. It was also Eubulus' opinion [-15-] that the first drink was drunk for a healthy life, the second one for pleasure and the third one to sleep. Ausonius, an ancient poet, but not a pagan, showed this to be a law full of secrets and said at the beginning of the Griphus: "Drink three times or in multiples of three, as the mystic law requires".

A. I like Plautus' interpretation much more than Plutarch's and Athenaeus'.

C. So do I, as one gains possessions and money.

A. How do you mean 'possessions and money'? Is money not a possession?

C. Not in this instance.

B. Joking aside, I truly share A.'s opinion. In fact, while Plautus' opinion is supported by worthy concordances, Plutarch's and Athenaeus' opinions differ very greatly. Athenaeus, moreover, is in conflict with himself as he mentions not only the mixture of an equal number of parts of wine and water, but he refers that in that banquet someone asked that the mixture contained more wine than water and someone else, as I mentioned, with equal parts. A certain good man said that Archippus in the second Amphitryon had said: "Who of you made the unfortunate mixture of equal parts? Cratinus also brings the equal mixture in the dirty wine glass, and I feel sick."

C. What a good mate! He would have liked it to be, if not in epitrite proportion, at least in sesquitertia, eh?

B. Athenaeus takes the opportunity from this to make the diners discuss the mixture of wine employed by the Greeks. He started to say that one of the diners quoted what Menander wrote in his Hero:

"It was to make it sweeter. In fact, he had never drunk one part of water with three parts of wine".

This is the same mixture that we said that had been described by Plutarch. However Alexis in his Titthe [-16-] demanded a more tempered mixture: "A. Now, here is the wine. B. Mix it yourself, as the best mixture will be one part to four. A. You say that it is watery, however do drink it tempered in this way."

Diocles' Bees are quoted next, in a passage in which a character asks in what proportion wine should be tempered with water, while another one answers: "Four parts to two?"

Such mixture, commonly used in our time, but not employed by the ancients, reminds him of the [[proverb]] common proverb, or song or riddle that we are discussing now and we interpret as commanding us to drink five parts of water with two or wine, or three parts of water and one of wine. He states that the poet Ion mentions this temperament in his work Chios with these words, "Palamedes the soothsayer, who knew this, had prophesied to the Greeks, that they would have a favourable voyage if they drank one portion of wine to three of water." He says then that "those who like to drink for a longer time and in larger quantities take two parts of wine to five of water". Accordingly, Nicochares in his Amymone, playing on the name of Oenomaus, says that "he liked mixing two parts and five, like I do and everyone else who drank with him".

I have noticed that it is the second time already, A., that you have appeared to want to say something, but you have refrained from it.

A. I have for sure, but I have refrained from it to avoid interrupting your survey of Athenaeus.

C. I have refrained from it for the same reason.

B. Please, both of you, bear in mind what you wanted to say, as I shall soon have finished talking about Athenaeus and I shall listen eagerly to what each of you wants to say. So, Athenaeus continues talking about this mixture and says that Nicochares himself writes in his Lemnian women: "Here I am Baccus, with all of you. Drink five parts and two". Eupolis in his Goats says: "Hail, Bacchus: Shall we drink perchance five and two?"

Hermippus in his Gods: "nd Hermippus says, in his Gods,

"Then, after we have quenched our thirst by drinking,

this shall be our prayer: Be benevolent and kind to us, o Wine,

On this occasion as we joke and play,

So that we may again mix five and two”.

Finally, Athenaeus adds that he finds in Anacreon that five parts of wine are mixed with two of water. Here is the Italian translation of those verses:

“Hey, do you hear? Bring us a glass,
So that [[I may drink]] before the others I may drink at once
Five parts of wine with two of water”.

Thus, by swapping the terms of that mixture, he unveils the reason for doing so, namely, to drink, become inebriated and become plainly and cheekily furious as a follower of Bacchus. Here I am now ready to listen to you. Please, A. and C., say what you please about such mixtures that appear to us nowadays truly ridiculous. Perhaps it is very true that we do not have some of those wines, Gaurani or Faustians or Falerni, which were specifically called indomitable, hence Martial said in the Distich 108 of his thirteenth book, entitled Mixed wine, with regard to its excellence:”

“Attic honey Attic honey, you thicken the nectar-like Falernian. Such drink deserves to be mixed by Ganymede”.

[-18-] What did happen? Did death destroy those ancient wines? Did it dig up, eradicate, burn down completely those vines? Did it swallow those fields and raze to the ground those hills? No. As Pliny writes on this matter, everyone has an opinion on this according to their taste and the different country from which they hail.

A. Pardon the weakness of my memory, C., if I begin to speak before you of what I happen to want to understand of such mixtures.

C. Let us not stand on ceremony. Did B. not conclude a little while ago and briefly that to do so is redundant? If one were to revere who has a lousy memory, I would be thoroughly respected. Please carry on. Were I even to forget what I had wanted to say, it would matter very little, if at all.

A. If I remember correctly, you said that not only Archippus in his second Amphitryon (according to Athenaeus) called unfortunate the mixture of equal parts of water and wine, but Cratinus also said that drinking this mixture of equal parts made him sick with consumption. I would like very much to now the reason for both these things. In fact, as to the fact that one would call that mixture unfortunate, it seems to me that one would mean that it is too watery and unreasonable. However, if one compares its content of wine with the content of the others mentioned before, it is purer and contains more wine and less water, as it contains as much wine as water. Thus it contains one fourth more wine than the Diatessaron, half as much more than the Diatrion and a third more than the Diapente.

B. The Book of the Reason why is truly a great Book, and who can read well about the Reason required is very lucky indeed. My opinion is that, since the ancients gentiles were extremely superstitious about even and odd numbers, as you know very well, they ascribed odd numbers to benevolent Gods, as they enjoyed them, and to Fortune [-19-] or Luck. Conversely, they assigned even numbers to malevolent Gods, Misfortune and Bad luck. Hence, as it is impossible to mix even numbers (or any odd numbers) without obtaining always even numbers, this is why it was called ‘unfortunate’ by Archippus, as it consists always of an even number.

A. This explanation is correct and I am satisfied with it. What about the other one?

B. The other one? I wonder if we were to interpret it according to Hippocrates or Galen, if we want to stick with this meaning of the word [ektekomai] that I have interpreted as ‘I am sick with consumption’, but that could also be translated as ‘I am rotting’ or ‘I am waning’ or ‘I am being liquefied’. However, it seems to me that one could also say that Cratinus meant that such mixture and temperament was proper of persons who are constantly worried about their health, who for this reason often happen to lose so much of their physical strength that they become, at least in appearance, if not in reality, sad-looking and a little debilitated because of their worry. For instance, towards the end of the tenth Novella of the second giornata of the Decameron, one reads that the crafty Bartolomea approaches good Messer Riccardo di Chincica, banisher of feast days and calendars, telling him that were one to squeeze him thoroughly, one would not draw a small pot of salsa, which matches the description given at the beginning of the Novella by Boccaccio, who portrayed him as thin, bone-dry and lifeless. However, you should know that some texts have the the

word [ektisomai] instead of [ektekomai], which translates 'I shall repay' and corresponds very well to the meaning: "I shall repay him with the same token as he did me". Compare, for instance, how the Parasite taught the vanaglorious captain a lesson in the first scene of the third act of Terence's Eunuch by saying Par pari referto, namely, 'repay him in the same way'. Boccaccio, also, at the end of the last Novella of the Fifth Giornata tells that Pietro da Vinciolo's wife says "Do onto others as they do onto you" after saying earlier: "It is right to behave towards others as they do towards you".

C. I also had a great desire to obtain an explanation of these two doubts, as I did. However, if A. has nothing else [-20-] to ask on the matter or if he has no other points on which to ask you to enlighten us, I have two further questions myself, on which I shall be very glad to hear your own opinion, B.

A. Please, ask away C. I have nothing further to say for now.

B. As you have decided that I should act as the Inquisition or the Saracen towards you and I should sit in cathedra all day today, please carry on merrily with your questions.

C. I shall say first of all that, as to the question that Athenaeus relates as being put by Diocles in his Bees concerning the mixture of four parts of water with two of wine, it seems to me that that mixture is such that its novelty may give rise to the opportunity to adduce the proverb that we are discussing, namely, 'Drink five or three parts, but not four'. Moreover, in the Plutarch explanation, as the number three is divided into its two greater parts (two and one), the diplasia or double proportion is obtained, namely, the one between four and two, as the same four and two and two and one are in the same proportion, as you know very well. This can be gleaned clearly by dividing both numbers (four and two) and by reducing them to their own root numbers, which are two and one.

B. This is true.

C. So, what new-fangled or unusual drink is this? Should one think then that there ought to be some mysterious and hidden meaning? I would like very much, as I said, to learn about it.

B. It would be certainly a great mistake to believe that Athenaeus did not know this fact. Do let us see, if you like, if we can explain it in some way.

C. Let us see.

B. What do you say A.?

A. I shall do what C. did when we (or rather you, B.) reasoned on my two questions.

[-21-] C. Will you stay quiet?

A. I will not speak, but I will listen carefully.

B. So shall I.

C. You shall present your reasons and you will explain to me in particular your opinion on that earlier question of mine.

B. Now, do let us suppose that Athenaeus knew very well that this mixture of four and two is the same as the mixture of two and one as to proportion, but not as to quantity. In fact, as to quantity four to two is twice as large as two to one. Let us imagine that Athenaeus said, referring to quantity, that the four to two was very unusual, as if one were bound to drink in one go what one was used to drink in two separate instances. Let us also add, if you like, that Athenaeus meant that two plus four equal six, which Dionysian consonance imitates, purely as to its number, the Hexachord of the Harmonics. Let us call it, shall I say, Diaecta or 'by six', as the others, Diapente, Diatessaron, Diatria, translate as 'by five', 'by four' and 'by three'. Moreover, as there are two parts of wine and four of water, let us say that it represents the Diaecta, or minor Hexachord, as it is divided in a way, I should say, purely as to its number. In fact, it has the Diatessaron, or 'by four' in its highest part, and the Semiditone, or two intervals, beneath it under the other four. All of them added together equal six intervals. However, if there were four parts of wine and two of water, such Hexachord or Diecta [representing the major Hexachord add. supra lin.] would be divided in its own particular way, purely as to its number, I should say, harmonically, as it would have the Diatessaron, or 'by four', in the low register, and the Ditone, which we could call 'two high [[<....>]] [Intervals corr. supra lin.]' above the other four. [-22-] Equally, when added together, they would add up to six intervals.