

not worth considering." Huanchu said, "Those who make a show of morality are inevitably slandered on moral grounds; those who make a show of learning are always blamed on account of learning." Lao-tzu said, "To know unconsciously is best; to presume to know what you don't is sick. Only by recognizing the sickness of sickness is it possible not to be sick." The Taoist Master of the Hidden Storehouse said, "Those who are worthy of the name 'wise' do not call themselves wise."

All undertakings begin with counsel.

The master strategist Sun Tzu wrote, "Assess the advantages in taking advice, then structure your forces accordingly." A Chan proverb says, "Strategy at headquarters determines success abroad." Expending energy without direction drains people and renders them ineffective in the long run. The Taoist sage Lao-tzu said, "The journey of ten thousand miles begins with the first step." Without prudent planning, which includes seeking and taking advice from reliable and worthy sources, there is little chance of taking the first step in the right direction. As another Chan proverb says, "The crooked does not hide the straight." According to natural law, the result of an activity must be in conformity with the cause and conditions of its pursuit.

Misguided effort takes us further afield the harder we try. Diligence cannot compensate for misdirection. This is why counsel or guidance naturally includes a realistic assessment of one's situation and abilities. The Master of the Hidden Storehouse said, "The effectiveness of a mirror in showing a leader what he looks like is small compared to the effectiveness of educated people in showing a leader what he is like." The

Master of Demon Valley said, "There is nothing to do but value wisdom. Wisdom employs what is unknown to most people, and can use what is invisible to most people. Once wisdom is in use, one acts on one's own by seeing what can be chosen and working on it; one acts for others by seeing what is unavoidable and working on that."

Fulfillment of what is to be done lies in keeping security of counsel; one who divulges advice ruins the task.

Keeping security of counsel protects plans from the interference of the interloper who aims to take advantage of others, from the attack of the spoiler who seeks the downfall of the able, from the impatience of the overeager one who seeks to profit right away and from the confusion of the controversialist who wants to argue and get his way.

There is, furthermore, also the logic of silence as space in which to act or maneuver. A master plan spoken too soon might become excessively rigidified in the minds of hearers, to the point where necessary flexibility could be lost. Strategic thinker Mei Yaochen wrote, "Insofar as you adapt and adjust accordingly in the face of opposition, how could you say what you are going to do beforehand?"

Through carelessness one will come under
the control of enemies:
counsel is to be kept guarded from all doors.

Inscrutability and impassivity, often thought to be character traits of certain peoples, are ordinarily results of training in the practice of reserve. Reserve, or discretion, is deliberately cultivated for the simple reason, articulated so concisely here by our pundit, that carelessness causes vulnerability. Those who misunderstand the nature of the strategy and take the products and effects of this training too personally inevitably lose out in both affective and competitive interaction with others.

When their brains can be easily picked and their inner thoughts revealed, or their emotions easily triggered and their private sensitivities exposed, people can be readily manipulated by those who seek to turn the frailties of the human condition to their own personal advantage. The Taoist Huainan Masters said, "When like and dislike began to have their says, order and chaos went their ways."

This principle is, quite naturally, emphasized very strongly in strategic literature. The Master of Demon Valley said, "In the use of tactical strategies, it is better to be private than public; and alliance is even better than mere privacy, alliance meaning a partnership that has no gaps."

It is in the state of "having no gaps" that the integrity of an individual, a relationship or a group is maintained. It is in this sense, more than in the sense of sinister secrecy, that the Master of Demon Valley said, "The Way of mastery is in concealment and covertness." Lao-tzu explains, "Is it empty talk, the old saying that tact keeps you whole? When truthfulness is complete, it still resorts to this."

By fulfillment of counsel, dominion grows;
they say keeping counsel secret
is of utmost importance.

Mastery develops through putting good advice into practice. Fulfillment of counsel demands first of all that one recognize what good advice is, how feasible it is, how valuable it is and what is necessary to its execution.

These preliminary discernments may be elementary, but they are not necessarily easy. Not only must one develop one's own perceptions, one must also cultivate the right company.

According to a Chinese Buddhist master of the Sung dynasty, writing at a time when religion and culture seemed to be flourishing, "It is hard to find anyone who will say that what is right is right and what is wrong is wrong, who is balanced, true and upright, free from hypocrisy."

Keeping counsel secret, or confidential, is not only important as a normal security measure; it is also important at an even earlier stage of planning, the stage of assessment of advice. Silently keeping one's peace while in the process of hearing counsel and evaluating it reduces random interference and fosters cool consideration.

The dual function of secrecy, for security and for privacy, is captured perfectly by the Taoist Master of Demon Valley, who explains that internal secrecy maintains the integrity of the group, while external secrecy maintains the integrity of the operation: "Those who are themselves on the inside but speak to outsiders are ostracized; those who are themselves outsiders but whose talk goes too deep are in danger."

Pursuing this line of thought, it can be seen how tactful reserve can enable one to avoid frustration by hostility and contention. The Master of Demon Valley said, "What people do not like should not be forced on them; what does not concern people should not be taught to them." Thus eventual success may be furthered by keeping things confidential until the one who is ultimately responsible has determined the needs and capacities, the mentalities and concerns, of those likely to be affected by a course of action.

*Counsel is a lamp to one in the dark
about what is to be done.*

It is better to do nothing than to act at random and do something wrong. The advantage of gaining other perspectives may be there, but the fact remains that when one does not know what to do oneself, one will not necessarily recognize sound counsel simply by its presence. When in the dark, it is not enough just to follow direction; in order to tell whether it is worth following, one needs some sense of where this direction is to lead.

Following advice blindly when in the dark is to go from darkness to darkness. Authentic counsel, therefore, includes within it means of testing its probity. Proven character, intelligence and knowledge on the part of the person, perceptible logic, reason, and contextual feasibility in the advice—when these are all there, then counsel is a "lamp to one in the darkness" because it does not simply beckon enthusiasm or trust; it removes the darkness itself.

*The faults of others are seen
through the eyes of advisers;
when advice is given, let there be no hostility.*

Personal feelings or private debts of some kind may blind one to the shortcomings of associates in professional life. In such cases, the observations of objective advisers are of inestimable value, considering the loss and injury that can result from keeping the wrong company.

As long as emotional or other biases have indeed compromised one's ability to see people as they really are, one is not likely to be receptive to other points of view. According to a story in a Buddhist scripture, when a king once consulted a sage about which of his sons to designate as heir to the throne, the sage replied with withering criticisms of each and every one of the princes. This so enraged the king that he wanted to have the sage put to death. Now the sage laughingly bade the king to spare his life, for by such candor with a king had he not proven himself a fool, no sage at all, unworthy of a hearing?

While tact is surely needed in advisers, there is a limit to which truth can be covered without compromise. What is also needed is receptivity in those who seek counsel on account of the responsibilities of their positions. One who is impatient with anything but his own opinions has a hard time learning, even from experience.

People in positions of power have a correspondingly powerful need for the clarity to see beyond private feelings and evaluate others objectively. Yagyu Munenori, tutor to a shogun of seventeenth-century Japan, makes this point with great urgency in the context of political organization: "There are only a few people close to a ruler, perhaps five or ten. The majority of people are remote from rulers. When many people resent

their ruler, they will express their feelings. When those who are close to the ruler have been after their own private interests all along, not acting in consideration of the leadership, they serve in such a way that the populace resents the ruler. Then when a crisis occurs, these very ones who are close to the ruler will be the first to set upon him!"

If one is not receptive to information or advice that would make it possible to see hidden treachery before it surfaces, there will always be pitfalls that remain imperceptible. Yagyu wrote, "If you do not see the dynamic of a situation, you may remain too long in company where you should not be, and get into trouble for no reason."

In *Forest of Wisdom*, a Chinese collection of Sung dynasty Chan extracts, it is explained that the best way to learn to take good advice is to learn how to recognize sincere advisers. As one thinker says, "Retain those who are more mature, and keep away opportunistic flatterers. The value in this is that there will be no slander of corruption, and no factionalist disruption."

Opportunistic flatterers may be the very ones to strangle off avenues of sincere advice, and their interference may in fact be perversely welcomed by those who secretly wish to be relieved of responsibility for hard choices and difficult decisions. In any case, however, those who get the reputation of listening to opportunistic flatterers will be abandoned by the intelligent, and mired in the disputes and machinations of self-seeking "courtiers" vying for attention and influence.

Assent is when there is unanimity of three.

Two people may fool or flatter each other into believing themselves to be correct and then enjoy the illusion too much to pay any attention

to another opinion. It is harder for a group of three (or more) to reach any sort of facile, uncritical unanimity, so as a result more questioning, thought and reflection go on before a decision or a determination is reached. Thus the process of advice and consent has a reduced margin of error.

This phenomenon is reflected in a popular Japanese proverb that says, "Three people together have the wisdom of a sage." The nature of everyday reality, moreover, is that of agreement, or convention, as illustrated by the Chinese proverb that says, "If three people call it a turtle, then it's a turtle." When there is "unanimity of three," this means that there is a practical agreement, a working convention, which can be used as a basis of coordinated undertakings and cooperative endeavors.

Advisers are those who see the true reason for what is to be done and what is not to be done.

An aim may be deemed desirable, and a plan conceived for its attainment, yet the enthusiasm and endeavor may turn out to be futile if the aim is unrealistic, the plan is unfeasible or perception of relevant conditions is unclear. The fact remains, however, that when desire produces enthusiasm and enthusiasm spawns effort, cold practicalities may be overlooked in the heat of the moment of inspiration.

Therefore consideration of reason and means is as important as generation of ideas and aspirations. When we truly understand why we are doing one thing or avoiding another, then we can reach the peak of effectiveness. If we only know where we want to go but not how to get there, agitation to get going may delude us into thinking we will find our way as we go along.

Authentic advice, then, does not simply say what to do and what not to do, but makes this clear in the process of explaining why and why not. When causes and effects are understood, advice can be recognized without doubt and applied without distortion. The Master of Demon Valley said, "Strategic planning is the pivot of survival and destruction. If thinking is not fitting, then hearing is unclear and timing is inaccurate, resulting in mistakes in planning. Then intention is unreliable, vacuous and insubstantial."

Advice is betrayed by six ears.

Six ears means three people. There is an ancient Chinese saying that "Six ears do not have the same plans," meaning that it is difficult to maintain security when secrets are shared. The image is made more graphic by the use of the expression "six ears" instead of "three people" insofar as it alludes to "two ears" per person, suggesting that the mind of an individual may also be divided within itself. One ear may be hearing one thing, as it were, while the other ear hears another; one ear may be tuned to a private conference while the other ear may be receiving outside signals. The resulting complexity of differences in views, sources and interpretations then complicates the problem of security.

One whose affection remains sure in adversities is a friend.

It may go without saying that a "fair-weather friend," one who disappears in hard times, is in reality no friend at all, but there is neither wisdom nor consolation in realizing the truth after the fact. The Sufi sage Hadrat Ali counseled his son, "Do not befriend a stingy man, for he will distance himself from you when he is most needed; and do not befriend a profligate, as he will sell you for a trifle."

Although it is therefore desirable to recognize reality and falsehood in people before having anything to do with them, still one can hardly be comfortable in society if one is habitually suspicious and distrusting.

The appropriate balance is not necessarily easy to attain, particularly in a highly competitive society. Confucius said, "They are wise who do not anticipate deception and do not consider dishonesty, yet are aware of them from the start." This degree of serene clarity takes a lifetime of cultivation.

When there is more than individual responsibility involved in personal associations, when the total complex of official, professional, and social rights and duties is influenced by the company one keeps, after-the-fact recognition of fair-weather friends may be disastrous. For this reason, ways of testing people have been developed over the ages by practical thinkers in political, military, religious and professional fields.

Questionnaires and written tests do not necessarily do the job quite thoroughly enough. "The difficulty of knowing people troubles even sages," said a famous Chan Buddhist teacher of Sung dynasty China, explaining that "You cannot know their behavior for sure just from one answer or one question. Indeed, clever talkers cannot always be trusted in fact, while clumsy talkers may have irrefutable reason."

Strategists writing for political and military leaders have considered this issue one of crucial importance. The great Chinese leader K'ung Ming, whose exploits are immortalized in *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, wrote in his manual *The Way of the General*: "Hard though it be to know people, there are ways. First is to question them concerning right and wrong, to observe their ideas. Second is to exhaust all their arguments, to see how they change. Third is to consult with them about strategy, to see how perceptive they are. Fourth is to announce that there is trouble, to see how brave they are. Fifth is to get them intoxicated, to observe their inner nature. Sixth is to present them with the prospect of gain, to see how modest they are. Seventh is to give them a task to do within a specific time, to see how trustworthy they are."

The severity of the methods employed naturally depends on the nature of the situation, especially on the margin for error. The Greek philosopher Plato believed that the essence of whatever method used to evaluate people was to see whether they had greater taste for truth than for material comfort; he said, "You should test someone who resorts to you by deprivation and unjust treatment. If one patiently endures the deprivation but complains about the unjust treatment, you may attach him to yourself and treat him well. If one patiently endures unjust treatment and complains about deprivation, however, you may leave him and avoid him."

Power is attained by winning friends.

The powerful one strives to gain what is lacking.

Gaining what is lacking is not for the lazy.

The lazy one, moreover, cannot keep

even what he has gotten.

What is in the keeping of the lazy one, furthermore, does not grow; he does not direct employees.

Gaining what has not been gained, maintaining it, developing it and employing it; these four are the essentials of sovereignty.

Cooperation, focus, determination and effort are all elements of attaining success. Attentiveness and diligence in consolidating gains and fostering growth, employing the fruits of success effectively, are all elements of maintaining success.

The Master of Demon Valley said, "Solidifying intent refers to formation of mental energy into thought. The mind should be calm and quiet, thought should be deep and far-reaching. When the mind is calm and quiet, then brilliant measures are conceived; when thought is deep and far-reaching, then strategic plans are perfected. When brilliant measures are conceived, then the will cannot be disturbed. When strategic plans are perfected, then achievements cannot be blocked."

The course of practical philosophy depends on the essentials of sovereignty; system and arrangement are based on the essentials of sovereignty.

The Master of Demon Valley said, "Human leaders have a natural pivot, producing, growing, harvesting and storing, which is not to be

9 'Just as the cow of the hunters is milked for hounds, not for Brahmins, so this king is milked for those devoid of spirit, intelligence and eloquence, not for those endowed with qualities of the self; that (other) king knows (how to appreciate) persons of distinction; go to him;' — in this way he should cause the group of the greedy to be instigated.

10 'Just as the well of the Caṇḍālas is of use only to the Caṇḍālas, not to others, so this king, being low, is of benefit only to low persons, not to Āryas such as you; that (other) king knows (how to appreciate) persons of distinction; go to him;' — in this way he should cause the group of the proud to be instigated.

11 When they have agreed with the words 'So (we shall do)' and have become allied (to him) by the making of terms, he should employ them according to their capacity in his own works, with spies (to watch over them).

12 And he should win over the seducible in the enemy's territories by means of conciliation and gifts and those not seducible by means of dissension and force, pointing out (to them) the defects of the enemy.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SECTION 11 THE TOPIC OF COUNSEL

1 When he has secured the allegiance of his own party and the party of the enemy, he should think of the undertaking of works.

2 All undertakings should be preceded by consultation. 3 The place for that should be secluded, not allowing talks to be heard outside, incapable of being peeped in even by birds. 4 For, it is known that deliberations are divulged by parrots and starlings, even by dogs and other animals. 5 Therefore, an unauthorised person must not

9 *duhyate* is as in D. *duḡdhe* is equally good. — *-vākyaśakti-* cf. 1.11.19 above. 14 *asau rājā* is the king on whose behalf the secret agent is working. — In the reading *sevyatām* of G₁M (for *tatra gamyatām*), a *sa* would appear to be necessary before it; Cj seems to have read it.

10 This clearly implies the existence of separate arrangements for water for the untouchables.

11 *samhitān paṇakarmaṇā*: a treaty (*saṁdhi*) with terms (*paṇa*) laid down is meant.

1.15

3 *kathānām anīśrāvī* is from D, also implied in Cb. That is better than *avisrāvī* (*anīśrāvī* necessary as in Cs) 'not allowing (talk) to flow out.' Cj, with *avisrāvī*, has 'free from echoes.' 4 *śukasārikābhir*: Jolly-Schmidt refer to the *Harṣacarita* p. 268 (BSS edition) for illustrations. 5 Cj reads *ayukto* for *anāyukto*.

approach the place should be extirpated.

7 Secret counsels expressions of the king's behaviour other than (on the face) is expected over officers appointed (in completion of) the under-king or in intoxication or business and the like, of counsel. 12 There

13 'The divulging of the well-being of the king he should deliberate' 15 'For, even counsels are given to others still. 16 There is of secret counsel.'

17 'There is sought to be done to know (about it) completed.'

18 'There is a person,' says Viśālā (fold,) directly perceived know what is not known, removal of doubt finding out the rest

8 *ingita* derived from the thoughts of a person natural, such as paleness after *-rakṣaṇam*. — have been better. 11 shown by 9.7.1 and *pr* necessary. Perhaps *pr* be better, in view of the than 'haughtiness' (Cj)

13 D's *hyayoga-* is the illustration of Rāma *Rāmaguptaśarīrasya*. found in s. 60. — A of the quotation from doubted.

19 Cf. 1.9.4 above lākṣa's work, 20 n

approach the place of counsel. 6. One who divulges secret counsel should be extirpated.

7 Secret counsel is indeed betrayed by the gestures and the expressions of the envoy, the minister and the monarch. 8 Gesture is behaviour other than normal. 9 The putting on of an expression (on the face) is expression. 10 Concealment of that (and) vigilance over officers appointed (should be maintained) till the time of (completion of) the undertaking. 11 For, their prattle through negligence or in intoxication or during sleep, their immoderation such as amorosity and the like, or, a person concealed or despised, betrays secret counsel. 12 Therefore, he should guard counsel.

13 'The divulgence of secret counsel is fatal to the security and well-being of the king and the officers appointed by him. 14 Therefore, he should deliberate alone over a confidential matter,' says Bhāradvāja. 15 'For, even councillors have (other) councillors, and these have others still. 16 Thus this series of councillors leads to the divulgence of secret counsel.

17 'Therefore, others should not know about any work sought to be done by him. Only those who undertake it should know (about it) when it is begun or even when it is actually completed.'

18 'There is no attainment of deliberation by a single person,' says Viśālākṣa. 19 'For, the affairs of a king are (three-fold,) directly perceived, unperceived and inferred. 20 Coming to know what is not known, definite strengthening of what has become known, removal of doubt in case of two possible alternatives in a matter, finding out the rest in a matter that is partly known, — this can be

8 *ingīta* derived from *ing* 'to move,' refers to movements or gestures indicative of the thoughts of a person. — *āṅgīgrahaṇam* 'putting on an expression other than natural, such as paleness of the face, etc.' (Cb). 10 A *ca* would seem necessary after *-rakṣaṇam*. — *iti* has no significance; a verb like *kuryāt* or *kārayet* would have been better. 11 *-pralāpāḥ* is from D. Since *kāma* etc. constitutes *utseka*, as shown by 9.7.1 and *pramāda* etc. are unconnected with it, this reading is clearly necessary. Perhaps *pralāpāḥ* in the sing. which seems to be the reading of Cj, would be better, in view of the verb *bhinatti*. — *utsekaḥ* 'immoderation, excess' rather than 'haughtiness' (Cs) or 'self-forgetfulness' (Meyer).

13 D's *hyayoga-* is supported by Cb. — *ayogakṣemakaro rājñāḥ*: Cnn gives the illustration of Rāmagupta betrayed by Dhruvadevi (*yathā Dhruvadevyā kṛto Rāmaguptasārīrasya*). 17 D has a slightly different form of the first line, which is found in s. 60. — An *iti* at the end of the stanza would be better to mark the end of the quotation from Bhāradvāja's work. That this is a quotation can hardly be doubted.

19 Cf. 1.9.4 above. It is possible that even there the s. is derived from Viśālākṣa's work, 20 *niścītabalādhānam*; Jolly-Schmidt have adopted *niścayo*

achieved (only) with the help of ministers. 21 Therefore, he should sit in counsel with those who are mature in intellect.

22 'He should despise none, (but) should listen to the opinion of every one. A wise man should make use of the sensible words of even a child.'

23 'This is ascertainment of counsel, not guarding of counsel,' say the followers of Parāśara. 24 'He should ask the councillors concerning a matter exactly similar to the undertaking he has in mind, "this work was like this, or, if it were to happen like this, how then should it be done?" 25 As they might advise, so should he do that (work). 26 In this way is counsel ascertained and secrecy maintained at the same time.'

27 'No,' says Piśuna. 28 'For, councillors, questioned about a remote affair, whether it has taken place or not, give their opinion with indifference or disclose it. 29 That is a defect. 30 Therefore, he should deliberate with those who are approved for the particular undertakings. 31 Holding counsel with these (only), he achieves success in consultation as well as its secrecy.'

32 'No,' says Kautilya. 33 For, this is a condition without fixity. 34 He should hold consultations with three or four councillors. 35 For, holding a consultation with one (only), he may not (be able to) reach a decision in difficult matters. 36 And a single councillor behaves as he pleases without restraint. 37 Holding consultations with two, he is controlled by the two if united and ruined by them if at war (with each other). 38 With three or four, that becomes possible (only) with difficulty. 39 However, if it does become possible, it

nīcitasya balādhānam from Somadeva's *Nīticākyāmṛta*, where the passage is quoted. 22 After this, too, an *iti* seems necessary.

23 *Pārāśarāḥ*: see 1.8.7 above. 24 *pratirūpakam* 'an exact counterpart.'

28 *vyavahitam* 'distant,' i.e., not the matter which the king has in view at the time. 30 *abhipretāḥ* 'approved,' i.e., considered by the king as experts in the particular matter. 31 *mantrasiddhim* of D is distinctly better than *-buddhim* (in the sense of *upalabdhim*) or *-vṛddhim*. Cf. s. 18 above.

33 *anavasthā*: because every time the king would be consulting new men and there would be no stable group of councillors to advise the king. 38 *taṭ trīṣu gaturṣu vā*: this reading of D is found in Cj and supported by *tatrīṣu* of M; the omission of *nāhāntam* (after *vā*) is supported by Cb. *taṭ* refers to the possibility of *avagraha* or *vināśa* which is there, when there are two ministers. Cn includes the possibility of *mantranīcayānādhigama* and *yatheṣṭācaraṇa* also which is there when there is a single minister. 39 *mahādoṣam* etc.: the idea seems to be: if, however, the possibility of *avagraha* etc. does arise, it would spell disaster. It is not unlikely that this s. is a marginal gloss that has got into the text. Cj seems to explain 'that in which there is the great disadvantage (*doṣa*) of absence of security (*ayogakṣema*), is thus counteracted (*upapanna* i.e. *prativihita*).' Without *taṭ* and with the

involves great with difficulty.

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43 He he should do (for holding he should not long time, no do harm.

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44 *matī* reading of J and is in no councillor to 'when there is he has come to the next s. st. *tesām pakṣīya pakṣīya* which consultations Cn gives the Pāṇḍavas.

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involves great danger. 40 With more (councillors) than that, it is with difficulty that decisions on matters are reached or counsel guarded. 41 However, in conformity with the place, time and work to be done, he should deliberate with one or two, or alone by himself, according to (their and his own) competence.

42 The means of starting undertakings, the excellence of men and materials, (suitable) apportionment of place and time, provision against failure (and) accomplishment of the work — this is deliberation in its five aspects.

43 He should ask them individually as well as jointly. 44 And he should ascertain their different opinions along with (their) reasons (for holding them). 45 Having found a matter (for deliberation) he should not allow time to pass. 46 He should not deliberate for a long time, nor with the partisans of those to whom he would (like to) do harm.

47 'He should appoint a council consisting of twelve ministers,' say the followers of Manu. 48 'Sixteen,' say the followers of Bṛhaspati. 49 'Twenty,' say the followers of Uśanas. 50 'According to capacity,' says Kauṭilya.

addition of *naikāntam* in s. 38 Meyer explains the two ss. 'absence of conclusion or uncertainty (*naikāntam*) is reached (*upapadyate*) with difficulty. When it is reached, however, it becomes highly dangerous.' Cs includes *mahādoṣam* in s. 38 and explains 'a thing resulting in a great calamity (*mahādoṣam* as subject) such as *avagraha* etc. does not necessarily follow (*na ekāntam upapadyate*); if at all it follows, it does so with difficulty. (The matter under consideration *cintyamānaṁ kāryam*) becomes properly dealt with (*upapannaṁ bhavati*).' This explanation is very doubtful. — *yathāsāmarthyam*, i.e., according to his own and the councillors' capability. Cnn remarks that capability implies proficiency in politics, brilliant intellect and skill in practical affairs '*mantra sāmarthyam śāstracakṣuṣmattā niratīṣayā prajñā lokavyavahāraśālanā ca*.'

44 *matipravivekān*: distinctions of opinion, i.e., individual opinions. The reading of Jolly-Schmidt is derived from a commentary on Kāmandaka's *Nītisāra* and is in no way preferable. — *hetu* 'the motive' which apparently led the councillor to hold the opinion offered by him. 45 *avāptārīhaḥ*: this may mean 'when there is a matter on which the holding of a consultation is necessary' or 'when he has come to a decision after consultation.' The former is slightly better, since the next s. still refers to the consultation stage. 46 There can be no doubt that *na teṣāṁ pakṣīyair* of D is the original reading. *parakṣyair* in M₁ is a scribal error for *pakṣīyair* which means the same as *pakṣīyair*. The idea is, the king should not hold consultations with the relatives or partisans of those whom he wishes to harm. Cnn gives the illustration of Duryodhana consulting Vidura, a partisan of the Pāṇḍavas.

47 The opinion here attributed to the Mānavas is not found in the *Manusmṛti* (cf. 7.54). 49 Cb has *ekavimsatim* for *vimsatim*. 50 *yathāsāmarthyam*: the *sāmarthyam* may refer to the capacity of the ministers or the strength of the kingdom.

51 They should think over the (king's) own party and the enemy's party. 52 And (they) should bring about the commencement of what is not done; the carrying out of what is commenced, the improvement of what has been carried out and the excellence of (the execution of) orders, in the case of works.

53 He should look into the affairs with those who are present. 54 With those who are not present he should hold consultations by sending out letters.

55 Indra indeed has a council of ministers consisting of a thousand sages. 56 He has that as his eye. 57 Therefore, they call him 'the thousand-eyed one,' though he is two-eyed.

58 In an urgent matter, he should call together the councillors as well as the council of ministers and ask them. 59 What the majority among them declare or what is conducive to the success of the work, that he should do.

60 And while he is doing that,

the enemies should not come to know of his secret; he should, however, find out the weaknesses of the enemy. He should conceal, as a tortoise does his limbs, any (limb) of his own that may have become exposed.

61 Just as a person not learned in the Veda does not deserve to eat the Śrāddha-meal of good persons, so a (king) who has not learnt the teachings of the science (of politics) is unfit to listen to counsel.

52 *akṣārāmbham* etc.: these functions of the *mantripariṣad*, as distinguished from those of the *mantrins* in s. 42 above, suggest that the *pariṣad* is a body of executive officers, though consultation with it is also recommended (ss. 54, 58-59). The *mantripariṣad* can hardly be regarded as a cabinet. — *nīyogasaṃpadam* refers to the excellence of the way in which commands or instructions have been carried out.

59 *brūyuh* after *bhūyīṣṭhāh* as in D is better than after *vā*; cf. 1.16.28 below. — This s. shows that the majority opinion is not intended to be followed as a rule. Cf. Kāmaṇḍaka, 12.40; *dhyete'pi mantrā mantrajñānīh svayam bhūyo vidoṣayet*.

60 *yat* may refer to *chādra* or *aṅga*; either yields a good sense, though the latter appears slightly better. — Cf. Manu, 7.105.

61 After this stanza D has two stanzas quoted as from Bṛhaspati. They are clearly not original and seem to be marginal notes that have got into the text.

FRANCIS BACON

The Essays

EDITED
WITH AN
INTRODUCTION

BY
John Pitcher

PENGUIN BOOKS

Of Counsel

The greatest trust between man and man is the trust of giving counsel. For in other confidences men commit the parts of life; their lands, their goods, their children, their credit, some particular affair: but to such as they make their counsellors they commit the whole; by how much the more they are obliged to all faith and integrity. The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness or derogation to their sufficiency to rely upon counsel. God himself is not without, but hath made it one of the great names of his blessed Son, *the Counsellor*.¹ Solomon hath pronounced that *in counsel is stability*.² Things will have their first or second agitation: if they be not tossed upon the arguments of counsel, they will be tossed upon the waves of fortune, and be full of inconstancy, doing and undoing. Like the reeling of a drunken man. Solomon's son³ found the force of counsel, as his father saw the necessity of it. For the beloved kingdom of God was first rent and broken by ill counsel; upon which counsel there are set for our instruction the two marks whereby bad counsel is for ever best discerned: that it was young counsel, for the persons, and violent counsel, for the matter.

The ancient times do set forth in figure both the incorporation and inseparable conjunction of counsel with kings, and the wise and politic use of counsel by kings: the one, in that they say Jupiter did marry Metis, which signifieth counsel, whereby they intend that sovereignty is married to counsel; the other in that which followeth, which was thus: they say, after Jupiter was married to Metis, she conceived by him and was with child, but Jupiter suffered her not to stay till she brought forth, but ate her up; whereby he became himself with child, and was delivered of Pallas armed out of his head. Which monstrous fable containeth a secret of empire: how

Texts: *M5, 1632, 1625*

1. Isaiah 9.6.
2. Derived from Proverbs 20.28.
3. Rehoboam, from whom the ten tribes of Israel revolted (see 1 Kings 12).

Of Counsel

kings are to make use of their council of state. That first they ought to refer matters unto them, which is the first begetting or impregnation; but when they are elaborate, moulded, and shaped in the womb of their council, and grow ripe and ready to be brought forth, that then they suffer not their council to go through with the resolution and direction, as if it depended on them, but take the matter back into their own hands, and make it appear to the world that the decrees and final directions (which, because they come forth with prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas armed) proceeded from themselves; and not only from their authority, but (the more to add reputation to themselves) from their head and device.

Let us now speak of the inconveniences of counsel, and of the remedies. The inconveniences that have been noted in calling and using counsel are three. First, the revealing of affairs, whereby they become less secret. Secondly, the weakening of the authority of princes, as if they were less of themselves. Thirdly, the danger of being unfaithfully counselled, and more for the good of them that counsel than of him that is counselled. For which inconveniences, the doctrine of Italy, and practice of France, in some kings' times, hath introduced cabinet⁴ councils, a remedy worse than the disease.

As to secrecy, princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select. Neither is it necessary that he that consulteth what he should do, should declare what he will do. But let princes beware that the unsecreting of their affairs comes not from themselves. And as for cabinet councils, it may be their motto, *Plenus rimarum sum*:⁵ one futile⁶ person, that maketh it his glory to tell, will do more hurt than many that know it their duty to conceal. It is true there be some affairs which require extreme secrecy, which will hardly go beyond one or two persons besides the king. Neither are those counsels unprosperous, for, besides the secrecy, they commonly go on constantly in one spirit of direction without distraction. But then it must be a prudent king, such as is able to grind with a hand-mill,⁷ and those inward counsellors had need also be wise men, and especially true and trusty to the king's ends: as it was with King Henry the Seventh of

4. Secret, unofficial.

5. I am full of leaks (Terence, *The Eunuch*, 1.2.25).

6. Blabbing.

7. Able to conduct his own affairs (i.e. without the elaborate machinery of government).

8. Confidential.

England, who in his greatest business imparted himself to none, except it were to Morton⁹ and Fox.¹⁰

For weakening of authority, the fable¹¹ sheweth the remedy. Nay, the majesty of kings is rather exalted than diminished when they are in the chair of counsel. Neither was there ever prince bereaved of his dependences¹² by his council, except where there hath been either an over-greatness in one counsellor or an over-strict combination in divers; which are things soon found and holpen.¹³

For the last inconvenience, that men will counsel with an eye to themselves; certainly, *non inveniet fidem super terram*¹⁴ is meant of the nature of times, and not of all particular persons. There be that are in nature faithful and sincere, and plain and direct, not crafty and involved: let princes, above all, draw to themselves such natures. Besides, counsellors are not commonly so united but that one counsellor keepeth sentinel over another: so that if any do counsel out of faction or private ends, it commonly comes to the king's ear. But the best remedy is if princes know their counsellors as well as their counsellors know them:

*Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos.*¹⁵

And on the other side, counsellors should not be too speculative into their sovereign's person. The true composition of a counsellor is rather to be skilful in their master's business than in his nature, for then he is like to advise him, and not to feed his humour. It is of singular use to princes if they take the opinions of their council both separately and together. For private opinion is more free, but opinion before others is more reverend.¹⁶ In private, men are more bold in their own humours, and in consort, men are more obnoxious¹⁷ to others' humours. Therefore it is good to take both: and of the inferior sort rather in private, to preserve freedom; of the greater rather in consort, to preserve respect. It is in vain for princes to take counsel concerning matters, if they take no counsel likewise

concerning persons: for all matters are as dead images, and the life of the execution of affairs resteth in the good choice of persons. Neither is it enough to consult concerning persons, *secundum genera*¹⁸ (as in an idea or mathematical description), what the kind and character of the person should be; for the greatest errors are committed, and the most judgement is shown, in the choice of individuals. It was truly said, *Optimi consiliiarii martiri*:¹⁹ books will speak plain when counsellors blanch.²⁰ Therefore it is good to be conversant in them, specially the books of such as themselves have been actors upon the stage.

The councils at this day in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated. And they run too swift to the order or act of counsel. It were better that in causes of weight the matter were propounded one day and not spoken to till the next day; *in nocte consilium*.²¹ So was it done in the commission of union between England and Scotland, which was a grave and orderly assembly.²² I commend set days for petitions, for both it gives the suitors more certainty for their attendance, and it frees the meetings for matters of estate,²³ that they may *hoc agere*.²⁴ In choice of committees for ripening business for the council, it is better to choose indifferent²⁵ persons than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides. I commend also standing commissions, as for trade, for treasure, for war, for suits, for some provinces. For where there be divers particular councils, and but one council of estate (as it is in Spain), they are in effect no more than standing commissions, save that they have greater authority. Let such as are to inform councils out of their particular professions (as lawyers, seamen, mintmen, and the like) be first heard before committees, and then, as occasion serves, before the council. And let them not come in multitudes, or in a tribunitions manner;²⁶ for that is to clamour²⁷ councils, not to inform them. A long table, and a square table, or seats about the walls, seem things

18. According to classes.

19. The best counsellors are the dead (a saying about books attributed to Alonso of Argon, d. 1458; see *Works*, VII. 140).

20. Flatter or gloss over.

21. In the night there is counsel (i.e. the interval of a night brings counsel for the following day).

22. In 1603 James VI of Scotland became King of England: a year later Bacon assisted the commission set up to consider the union of the kingdoms.

23. State.

24. Concentrate on the business in hand.

25. Impartial.

26. Or be turbulent in behaviour (like tribunes).

27. Disturb.

9. Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chancellor, and Cardinal, d. 1500.

10. Bishop of Winchester, Privy Counsellor and Keeper of the Privy Seal, d. 1528.

11. i.e. the story of Jupiter and Metis given above.

12. Perogatives.

13. Remedied.

14. He shall not find faith upon the earth (alluding to Luke 18.8).

15. It is a prince's greatest virtue to know his own men (*Martial, Epigrams*, VIII. 45).

16. Bacon may mean 'reverent' by this.

17. Subservient.

of form, but are things of substance; for at a long table, a few at the upper end in effect sway all the business, but in the other form there is more use of the counsellors' opinions that sit lower. A king, when he presides in council, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth: for else counsellors will but take the wind of him,²⁸ and instead of giving free counsel, sing him a song of *placabo*.²⁹

28. Make themselves conform to his wishes.

29. Will follow his humour.

21.

Of Delays

Fortune is like the market; where many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall. And again, it is sometimes like Siblylla's offer,¹ which at first offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the price. For *Occasion*² (as it is in the common verse) *turneth a bald noddle, after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken; or at least turneth the handle of the bottle first to be received, and after the belly, which is hard to clasp. There is surely no greater wisdom than well to time the beginnings and onsets of things. Dangers are no more light, if they once seem light; and more dangers have deceived men than forced them. Nay, it were better to meet some dangers half-way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their approaches; for if a man watch too long, it is odds he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long shadows (as some have been when the moon was low and shone on their enemies' back), and so to shoot off before the time, or to teach dangers to come on, by over-early buckling towards³ them, is another extreme. The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion (as we said) must ever be well weighed: and generally it is good to commit the beginnings of all great actions to Argus with his hundred eyes, and the ends to Briareus with his hundred hands, first to watch, and then to speed. For the helmet of Pluto,⁴ which maketh the politic man go invisible, is secrecy in the counsel and celerity in the execution. For when things are once come to the execution, there is no secrecy comparable to celerity – like the motion of a bullet in the air, which flieth so swift-as it outruns the eye.*

Text: 1625

1. One of the Silylls, ancient prophetesses, offered to sell nine books to the Roman king, Tarquin. When he refused, she burnt three but asked the same price for the remaining six books. Again Tarquin refused, and she destroyed three more, still asking the original price for the last three. Finally he bought them, and the Silylline Books became precious to the Romans for the prophecies they contained.

2. Opportunity. 3. Charging oneself for.

4. The god of the underworld. During the war between the gods and the Titans, the Cyclops gave Pluto a helmet which made the wearer invisible.