

## NOTE ON ARISTOTLE'S PROEMIUM TO NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

Almost every work of Aristotle begins with a Proemium which paves the way for that work. A Proemium should at least show what is being aimed at in the work and the desirability of that end if it is not manifest. If it is not too difficult, the Proemium should also show how one should go forward to that end.

Among the Proemia of Aristotle, the Proemium to the *Fourteen Books of Wisdom* (the so called *Metaphysics* or *After the Books in Natural Philosophy*) and the Proemium to the ten books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* seem to have a special importance. For the Proemium to the *Fourteen Books of Wisdom* is to some extent a Proemium to Looking Philosophy and the Proemium to the ten books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is likewise somewhat a Proemium to Practical Philosophy. (And these are the chief kinds of philosophy.) Hence, Aristotle gives an epilogue to each of these Proemia in which he recalls the two or three things he has done in that Proemium in the reverse order he has done it (recalling the last thing he has done and then back to the first). Aristotle's Proemia usually do not have an epilogue.

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