In Eutropium: some abuse passages

1. “Up hastens the Armenian, skilled by operating with unerring knife to make males womanish and to increase their loathly value by such loss. He drains the body’s life-giving fluid from its double source and with one blow deprives his victim of a father’s function and the name of husband. Eutropius lay doubtful of life, and the severed sinews drew a numbness deep down into his furthest brain.” (*In Eutr.* 1.47-51)

2.“So a shepherd chains up a dog and fattens him with milk while yet his strength avails to guard the flock and, ever watchful, to scare away wolves with his barking. But when later this same dog grows old and dirty and droops his mangy ears he looses him, and, taking off his collar, at least saves that.” (*In Eutr.* 1.131-7)

3. ’Twas as though an ape, man’s imitator, had been decked out in sport with precious silken garments by a boy who had left his back and quarters uncovered to amuse the guests at supper. Thus richly dressed he walks upright and seems the more loathsome by reason of his brilliant trappings.” (*In Eutr.* 1.303-7)

4. “When he became but a foul corpse-like body, a mass of senile pendulous flesh [*in rugas totus defluxit aniles* = completely flowed into old woman wrinkles, 39], his masters were anxious to rid their houses of him by giving him away as a present and made haste to foist the loathsome gift on an unsuspecting friend.” (*In Eutr.* 1.38-51)

5. “let not Tiber suffer this disgrace—Tiber whose way was to give the consulship to such men as Dentatus and Fabius though they asked not for it. Shall the Field of Mars witness the canvassing of an eunuch? Is Eutropius to stand with Aemilii and Camilli, saviours of their country? Is thy office, Brutus, now to be given to a Chrysogonus or a Narcissus? Is this the reward for giving up thy sons to punishment and setting the citizen’s duty before the father’s grief? Was it for this that the Tuscans made their camp on the Janiculum and Porsenna was but the river’s span from our gates? For this that Horatius kept the bridge and Mucius braved the flames? Was it all to no purpose that chaste Lucretia plunged the dagger into her bosom and Cloelia swam the astonished Tiber? Were the fasces reft from Tarquin to be given to Eutropius? Let Hell ope her jaws and all who have sat in my curule chair come and turn their backs upon their colleague. Decii, self-sacrificed for your country’s good, come forth from your graves; and you, fierce Torquati; and thou, too, great-hearted shade of poor Fabricius. Serranus, come thou hither, if now thou ploughest the acres of the holy dead and cleavest the fallow lands of Elysium. Come Scipios, Lutatius, famed for your victories over Carthage, Marcellus, conqueror of Sicily, rise from the dead, thou Claudian race, you progeny of Curius. Cato, thou who wouldst not live beneath Caesar’s rule, come thou forth from thy simple tomb and brave the sight of Eutropius. Immortal bands of Bruti and Corvini, return to earth.” (*In Eutr.* 1.436-60, Rome)

6. “If it was thy will to disgrace the consul’s chair with a servile occupant let some “consul” come forward with broken chains, let an escaped jail-bird don the robes of Quirinus—but at least give us a man. There are grades even among slaves and a certain dignity; that slave who has served but one master holds a position of less infamy. Canst thou count the waves of the sea, the grains of Africa’s sands, if so thou canst number Eutropius’ masters.” (*In Eutr.* 1.26-33)

7. “his slave’s mind swelled high within him. The prisons were filled with degraded nobles…

Nothing is so cruel as a man raised from lowly station to prosperity; he strikes everything, for he fears everything; he vents his rage on all, that all may deem he has the power. No beast so fearful as the rage of a slave let loose on free-born backs; their groans are familiar to him, and he cannot be sparing of punishment that he himself has undergone; remembering his own master he hates the man he lashes.” (*In Eutr*.176-86)

8. “he [Stilicho] has given us annals wherein, abandoning the East, an age polluted with servile stains might find a refuge” (Mars, *In Eutr.* 2.131-2, Mars to Bellona)

9. “Mars blushed, Bellona scoffed and turned her from the disgrace of the East whene’er with arrows strung and flashing quiver the aged Amazon practises battle or hurries back as arbiter of peace and war to hold parley with the Getae.” (*In Eutr.*. 1.238-43)

10. “A mixture are you of two ages—child and greybeard and nought between” (In Eutr. 1.469-70)

11. “Meanwhile the arrogant pander prolongs his revels till the dawn, stinking of wine and scattering money amid the crowd to buy their applause. He spends whole days of amusement in the theatres, prodigal of another’s money. But his sister and spouse (if such a prodigy can be conceived) wins the favour of Rome’s matrons by entertainments, and, like a chaste wife, sings the praises of her eunuch husband. ’Tis her he loves, her he consults on all matters of importance, be it of peace or war, to her care he entrusts the keys of the palace, as one would of a stable or empty house.” (*In Eutr.* 2.84-94)