**THE CLOUDS
by Aristophanes**

How my son and I first began to bicker I will tell you very soon. You know that we'd been feasting. I asked him for a song, Simoides' Shearing of the Ram, with lyre accompaniment. Lyre music, says he to me, is a stale accomplishment. Only fools, says he, at a table sing, like an old woman grinding grain. I was scarcely able to hold back my temper when Simonides the Old he dubbed a poetic hack! Next I asked for a bit of Aeschylus, holding my temper back. That noisy mouther of trash, says he, that fashioner of claptrap crude! Is Aeschylus really first class?--Though my bosom heaved, I held my mood. So I revised my request. What he gave was Euripides, some tale of vile incest! No longer could I hold it in, with abuse I'd make him smother. He paid me back, as you might guess; one insult provoked another. I brought you up, you shameless wretch, your lisping I understood. If you cried *bry*, I brought you drink, if *mam* I brought you food. Before you'd finish saying *cac* I'd rush you out to the yard. But when I complained and cried to you that cramps were gripping me hard, you take me out of doors. Nowhere does the law provide that fathers should be so treated. My son, if the cock your model you make, be consistent please. Roost upon a bush, and off the dunghill take your meals.