

THE ENCHIRIDION, OR MANUAL, OF EPICTETUS by Elizabeth Carter 1758

I

OF things, some are in our power and others not. In our power are opinion, pursuit, desire, aversion, and, in one word, whatever are our own actions. Not in our power are body, property, reputation, command, and, in one word, whatever are not our own actions.

Now, the things in our power are by nature free, unrestrained, unhindered; but those not in our power, weak, slavish, restrained, belonging to others. Remember, then, that if you suppose things by nature slavish to be free, and what belongs to others your own, you will be hindered; you will lament; you will be disturbed ; you will find fault both with gods and men. But if you suppose that only to be your own which is your own, and what belongs to others such as it really is, no one will ever compel you; no one will restrain you; you will find fault with no one; you will accuse no one; you will do no one thing against your will; no one will hurt you; you will not have an enemy, for you will suffer no harm.

Aiming therefore at such great things, remember that you must not allow yourself to be carried, even with a slight tendency, towards the attainment of the others : but that you must entirely quit some of them and for the present postpone the rest. But if you would both have these and command and riches at once, perhaps you will not gain so much as the latter, because you aim at the former too: but you will absolutely fail of the former, by which alone happiness and freedom are procured.

Study therefore to be able to say to every harsh appearance, " You are but an appearance, and not absolutely the thing you appear to be." And then examine it by those rules which you have, and first, and chiefly, by this: whether it concerns the things which are in our own power, or those which are not; and, if it concerns anything not in our power, be prepared to say that it is nothing to you.

II

Remember that desire promises the attainment of that of which you are desirous; and aversion promises the avoiding of that to which you are averse; that he who fails of the object of his desire is disappointed, and he who incurs the object of his aversion wretched. If, then, you confine your aversion to those objects only which are contrary to the natural use of your faculties, which you have in your own power, you will never incur anything to which you are averse. But if you are averse to sickness, or death, or poverty, you will be wretched. Remove aversion, then, from all things that are not in our power, and transfer it to things contrary to the nature of what is in our power. But, for the present, totally suppress desire: for, if you desire any of the things not in our own power, you must necessarily be disappointed; and of those which are, and which it would be laudable to desire, nothing is yet in your possession. Use only [the requisite acts] of pursuit and avoidance; and even these lightly, and with gentleness and reservation.

III

With regard to whatever objects either delight the mind, or contribute to use, or are loved with fond affection, remember to tell yourself of what nature they are, beginning from the most trifling things. If you are fond of an earthen cup, that it is an earthen cup of which you are fond; for thus, if it is broken, you will not be disturbed. If you kiss your child, or your wife, that you kiss a being subject to the accidents of humanity; and thus you will not be disturbed if either of them dies.

IV

When you are going about any action, remind yourself of what nature the action is. If you are going to bathe, represent to yourself the things which usually happen in the bath: some persons dashing the water; some pushing and crowding; others giving abusive language; and others stealing. And thus you will more safely go about this action if you say to yourself, " I will now go bathe, and preserve my own mind in a state conformable to nature." And in the same manner with regard to every other action. For thus, if any impediment arises in bathing, you will have it ready to say, " It was not only to bathe that I desired, but to preserve my mind in a state conformable to nature; and I shall not preserve it so if I am out of humour at things that happen."

Men are disturbed, not by things, but by the principles and notions which they form concerning things. Death, for instance, is not terrible, else it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the terror consists in our notion of death that it is terrible. When therefore we are hindered, or disturbed, or grieved, let us never impute it to others, but to ourselves; that is, to our own principles. It is the action of an uninstructed person to lay the fault of his own bad condition upon others; of one entering upon instruction to lay the fault on himself; and of one perfectly instructed, neither on others nor on himself .

VI

Be not elated on any excellence not your own. If a horse should be elated and say, " I am handsome," it would be sup portable. But when you are elated, and say, " I have a hand some horse," know that you are elated on what is, in fact, only the good of the horse. What, then, is your own? The use of the appearances of things. So that when you behave conformably to nature in the use of these appearances, you will be elated with reason; for you will be elated on some good of your own.

VII

As in a voyage, when the ship is at anchor, if you go on shore to get water you may amuse yourself with picking up a shell fish, or an onion, in your way, but your thoughts ought to be bent towards the ship, and perpetually attentive lest the captain should call, and then you must leave all these things, that you may not be thrown into the vessel, bound neck and heels like a sheep: thus likewise in life, if, instead of an onion or a shell fish, such a thing as a wife or a child be granted you, there is no objection; but if the captain calls, run to the ship, leave all these things, regard none of them. But if you are old, never go far from the ship: lest, when you are called, you should be unable to come in time.

VIII

Require not things to happen as you wish, but wish them to happen as they do happen, and you will go on well.

Sickness is an impediment to the body, but not to the faculty of choice, unless itself pleases. Lameness is an impediment to the leg, but not to the faculty of choice: and say this to yourself with regard to everything that happens. For you will find it to be an impediment to something else, but not to yourself.

Upon every accident, remember to turn towards yourself and inquire what powers you have for making a proper use of "it. If you see a handsome person, you will find continence a power against this: if pain be presented to you, you will find fortitude: if ill language, you will find patience. And thus habituated, the appearances of things will not hurry you away along with them.

XI

Never say of anything, "I have lost it"; but, "I have restored it." Is your child dead? It is restored. Is your wife dead? She is restored. Is your estate taken away? Well, and is not that likewise restored? " But he who took it away is a bad man." What is it to you by whose hands he, who gave it, hath demanded it back again? While he gives you to possess it, take care of it; but as of something not your own, as passengers do of an inn.

XII

If you would improve, lay aside such reasonings as these: " If I neglect my affairs, I shall not have a maintenance; if I do not correct my servant, he will be good for nothing," For it is better to die with hunger, exempt from grief and fear, than to live in affluence with perturbation; and it is better your servant should be bad, than you unhappy.

Begin therefore from little things. Is a little oil spilt? A little wine stolen? Say to yourself, " This is the purchase paid for apathy, for tranquillity, and nothing is to be had for nothing." And when you call your servant, consider it is possible he may not come to your call; or, if he doth, that he may not do what you would have him do. But he is by no means of such importance that it should be in his power to give you any disturbance.

XIII

If you would improve, be content to be thought foolish and stupid with regard to externals. Do not wish to be thought to know anything; and though you should appear to be somebody to others, distrust yourself. For, be assured, it is not easy at once to preserve your faculty of choice in a state conformable to nature, and [to secure] externals; but while you are careful about the one, you must of necessity neglect the other.

XIV

If you wish your children, and your wife, and your friends to live for ever, you are stupid; for you wish things to be in your power which are not so, and what belongs to others to be your own. So likewise, if you wish your servant to be without fault, you are a fool; for you wish vice not to be vice, but some thing else. But, if you wish to have your desires undisappointed, this is in your own power. Exercise, therefore, what is in your power. He is the master of every other person who is able to confer or remove whatever that person wishes either to have or to avoid. Whoever, then, would be free, let him wish nothing, let him decline nothing, which depends on others else-. he must necessarily be a slave.

XV

Remember that you must behave [in life] as at an entertainment. Is anything brought round to you? Put out your hand and take your share with moderation. Doth it pass by you? Do not stop it, Is it not yet come? Do not stretch forth your desire towards it, but wait till it reaches you. Thus do with regard to children, to a wife, to public posts, to riches, and you will be some time or other a worthy partner of the feasts of the gods. And if you do not so much as take the things which are set before you, but are able even to despise them, then you will not only be a partner of the feasts of the gods, but of their empire also. For, by thus doing, Diogenes and Heraclitus, and others like them, deservedly became, and were called, divine.

XVI

When you see any one weeping for grief, either that his son is gone abroad, or dead, or that he hath suffered in his affairs, take heed that the appearance may not hurry you away with it. But immediately make the distinction within your own mind, and have it ready to say, " It is not the accident that distresses this person, for it doth not distress another man; but the judgment which he forms concerning it." As far as words go, however, do not disdain to condescend to him, and even, if it should so happen, to groan with him. Take heed, however, not to groan inwardly too.

XVII

Remember that you are an actor in a drama, of such a kind as the author pleases to make it. If short, of a short one; if long, of a long one. If it be his pleasure you should act a poor man, a cripple, a governor, or a private person, see that you act it naturally. For this is your business, to act well the character assigned you; to choose it is another's.

XVIII

When a raven happens to croak unluckily, let not the appearance hurry you away with it, but immediately make the distinction to yourself, and say, " None of these things is portended to me; but either to my paltry body, or property, or reputation, or children, or wife. But to me all portents are lucky, if I will. For whichever of these things happens, it is in my power to derive advantage from it."

XIX

You may be unconquerable, if you enter into no combat in which it is not in your own power to conquer. When, therefore, you see any one eminent in honours, or power, or in high esteem on any other account, take heed not to be hurried away with the appearance, and to pronounce him happy ; for, if the essence of good consists in things in our own power, there will be no room for envy or emulation. But, for your part, do not wish to be a general, or a senator, or a consul, but to be free; and the only way to this is a contempt of things not in our own power.

XX

Remember, that not he who gives ill language or a blow affronts, but the principle which represents these things as affronting. When, therefore, any one provokes you, be assured that it is your own opinion which provokes you. Try, there fore, in the first place, not to be hurried away with the appearance. For if you once gain time and respite, you will more easily command yourself.

XXI

Let death and exile, and all other things which appear terrible be daily before your eyes, but chiefly death, and you will never entertain any abject thought, nor too eagerly covet anything.

XXII

If you have an earnest desire of attaining to philosophy, prepare yourself from the very first to be laughed at, to be sneered by the multitude, to hear them say, " He is returned to us a philosopher all at once/" and " Whence this supercilious look? " Now, for your part, do not have a supercilious look indeed; but keep steadily to those things which appear best to you as one appointed by God to this station. For remember that, if you adhere to the same point, those very persons who at first ridiculed will afterwards admire you. But if you are conquered by them, you will incur a double ridicule.

XXIII

If you ever happen to turn your attention to externals, so as to wish to please any one, be assured that you have ruined your scheme of life. 9 Be contented, then, in everything with being a philosopher; and, if you wish to be thought so likewise by any one, appear so to yourself, and it will suffice you.

XXIV

Let not such considerations as these distress you. " I shall live in dishonour, and be nobody anywhere." For, if dishonour is an evil, you can no more be involved in any evil by the means of another, than be engaged in anything base. Is it any business of yours, then, to get power, or to be admitted to an entertainment? By no means. How, then, after all, is this a dishonour? And how is it true that you will be nobody any where, when you ought to be somebody in those things only which are in your own power, in which you may be of the greatest consequence? "But my friends will be unassisted.

' What do you mean by unassisted? They will not have money from you, nor will you make them Roman citizens. Who told you, then, that these are among the things in our own power, and not the affair of others? And who can give to another the things which he hath not himself? " Well, but get them, then, that we too may have a share." If I can get them with the preservation of my own honour and fidelity and greatness of mind, show me the way and I will get them; but if you require me to lose my own proper good that you may gain what is no good, consider how unequitable and foolish you are. Besides, which would you rather have, a sum of money, or a friend of fidelity and honour? Rather assist me, then, to gain this character than require me to do those things by which I may lose it. Well, but my country, say you, as far as depends on me, will be unassisted. Here again, what assistance is this you mean? "It will not have porticoes nor baths of your providing." And what signifies that? Why, neither doth a smith provide it with shoes, or a shoemaker with arms. It is enough if every one fully performs his own proper business. And were you to supply it with another citizen of honour and fidelity, would not he be of use to it? Yes. Therefore neither are you yourself useless to it. " What place, then, say you, shall I hold in the state? " Whatever you can hold with the preservation of your fidelity and honour. But if, by desiring to be useful to that, you lose these, of what use can you be to your country when you are become faithless and void of shame?

XXV

Is any one preferred before you at an entertainment, or in a compliment, or in being admitted to a consultation? If these things are good, you ought to rejoice that he hath got them; and if they are evil, do not be grieved that you have not got them. And remember that you cannot, without using the same means [which others do] to acquire things not in our own power, expect to be thought worthy of an equal share of them. For how can he who doth not frequent the door of any [great] man, doth not attend him, doth not praise him, have an equal share with him who doth? You are unjust, then, and unsatiable, if you are unwilling to pay the price for which these things are sold, and would have them for nothing. For how much are lettuces sold? A halfpenny, for instance. If another, then, paying a halfpenny, takes the lettuces, and you, not paying it, go without them, do not imagine that he hath gained any advantage over you. For as he hath the lettuces, so you have the halfpenny which you did not give. So, in the present case, you have not been invited to such a person's entertainment, because you have not paid him the price for which a supper is sold. It is sold for praise; it is sold for attendance. Give him then the value, if it be for your advantage. But if you would, at the same time, not pay the one and yet receive the other, you are unsatiable, and a blockhead. Have you nothing, then, instead of the supper? Yes, indeed, you have: the not praising him, whom you do not like to praise; the not bearing with his behaviour at coming in.

XXVI

The will of nature may be learned from those things in which we do not differ from each other. As, when our neighbour's boy hath broken a cup, or the like, we are presently ready to say, " These are things that will happen." Be assured, then, that when your own cup likewise is broken, you ought to be affected just as when another's cup was broken. Transfer this, in like manner, to greater things. Is the child or wife of another dead? There is no one who would not say, " This is a human accident." But if any one's own child happens to die, it is presently, "Alas, I how wretched am I?" But it should be remembered how we are affected in hearing the same thing concerning others.



XXVII

As a mark is not set up for the sake of missing the aim, so neither doth the nature of evil exist in the world.

XXVIII

If a person had delivered up your body to any one whom he met in his way, you would certainly be angry. And do you feel no shame in delivering up your own mind to be disconcerted and confounded by any one who happens to give you ill language ?

XXX

Duties are universally measured by relations. Is any one a father? In this are implied, as due, taking care of him, submitting to him in all things, patiently receiving his reproaches, his correction. But he is a bad father. Is your natural tie then to a good father? No; but to a father. Is a brother unjust?

Well, preserve your own situation towards him. Consider not what he doth, but what you are to do to keep your own faculty of choice in a state conformable to nature. For another will not hurt you unless you please. You will then be hurt when you think you are hurt. In this manner, therefore, you will find, from the idea of a neighbour, a citizen, a general, the corresponding duties if you accustom yourself to contemplate the several relations.

XXXI

Be assured that the essential property of piety towards the gods is to form right opinions concerning them, as existing and as governing the universe with goodness and justice. And fix yourself in this resolution, to obey them, and yield to them, and willingly follow them in all events, as produced by the most perfect understanding. For thus you will never find fault with the gods, nor accuse them as neglecting you. And it is not possible for this to be effected any other way than by withdrawing yourself from things not in our own power, and placing good or evil in those only which are. For if you suppose any of the things not in our own power to be either good or evil, when you are disappointed of what you wish, or incur what you would avoid, you must necessarily find fault with and blame the authors. For every animal is naturally formed to fly and abhor things that appear hurtful, and the causes of them and to pursue and admire those which appear beneficial, and the causes of them. It is impracticable, then, that one who supposes himself to be hurt should rejoice in the person who, he thinks, hurts him, just as it is impossible to rejoice in the hurt itself. Hence, also, a father is reviled by a son, when he doth not impart to him the things which he takes to be good; and the supposing empire to be a good made Polynices and Eteocles mutually enemies. On this account the husbandman, the sailor, the merchant, on this account those who lose wives and children, revile the gods. For where interest is, there too is piety placed. So that, whoever is careful to regulate his desires and aversions as he ought, is, by the very same means, careful of piety likewise. But it is also incumbent on every one to offer libations and sacrifices and first fruits, conformably to the customs of his country, with purity, and not in a slovenly manner, nor negligently, nor sparingly, nor beyond his ability

When you have recourse to divination, remember that you know[^] not what the event will be, and you come to learn it of the diviner; but of what nature it is you know before you come at least if you are a philosopher. For if it is among the things not in our own power, it can by no means be either good or evil Do not, therefore, bring either desire or aversion with you to the diviner (else you will approach him trembling), but first acquire a distinct knowledge that every event is indifferent and nothing to you, of whatever sort it may be, for it will be in your power to make a right use of it, and this no one can hinder; then come with confidence to the gods, as your counsellors, and afterwards when any counsel is given you, remember what counsellors you have assumed, and whose advice you will neglect if you disobey. Come to divination, as Socrates prescribed, in cases of which the whole consideration relates to the event, and in which no opportunities are afforded by reason, or any other art, to discover the thing proposed to be learned. When, therefore it is our duty to share the danger of a friend or of our country we ought not to consult the oracle whether we shall share it with them or not. For, though the diviner should forewarn you that the victims are unfavourable, this means no more than that either death or mutilation or exile is portended. But we have reason within us, and it directs, even with these hazards, to stand by our friend and our country. Attend, therefore' to the greater diviner, the Pythian god, who cast out of the temple the person who gave no assistance to his friend while another was murdering him.

XXXIII

Immediately prescribe some character and form [of behaviour] to yourself, which you may preserve both alone and in company.

Be for the most part silent, or speak merely what is necessary, and in few words. We may, however, enter, though sparingly into discourse sometimes when occasion calls for it, but not on any of the common subjects, of gladiators, or horse races, or athletic champions, or feasts, the vulgar topics of conversation: but principally not of men, so as either to blame, or praise or make comparisons. If you are able, then, by your own conversation bring over that of your company to proper subjects; but, if you happen to be taken among strangers, be silent.

Let not your laughter be much, nor on many occasions, nor profuse.

Avoid swearing, if possible, altogether; if not, as far as you are able.

Avoid public and vulgar entertainments; but, if ever an occasion calls you to them, keep your attention upon the stretch, that you may not imperceptibly slide into vulgar manners. For be assured that if a person be ever so sound himself, yet, if his companion be infected, he who converses with him will be infected likewise.

Provide things relating to the body no further than mere use; as meat, drink, clothing, house, family. But strike off and reject everything relating to show and delicacy.

As far as possible, before marriage, preserve yourself pure from familiarities with women, and, if you indulge them, let it be lawfully. But do not therefore be troublesome and full of reproofs to those who use these liberties, nor frequently boast that you yourself do not.

If any one tells you that such a person speaks ill of you, do not make excuses about what is said of you, but answer: " He doth not know my other faults, else he would not have mentioned only these."



It is not necessary for you to appear often at public spectacles; but if ever there is a proper occasion for you to be there, do not appear more solicitous for any one than for yourself; that is, wish things to be only just as they are, and him only to conquer who is the conqueror, for thus you will meet with no hindrance. But abstain entirely from acclamations and derision and violent emotions. And when you come away, do not discourse a great deal on what hath passed, and what doth not contribute to your own amendment. For it would appear by such discourse that you were immoderately struck with the show.

Go not [of your own accord] to the rehearsals of any [authors], nor appear [at them] readily. But, if you do appear, preserve your gravity and sedateness, and at the same time avoid being morose.

When you are going to confer with any one, and particularly of those in a superior station, represent to yourself how Socrates or Zeno would behave in such a case, and you will not be at a loss to make a proper use of whatever may occur.

When you are going to any of the people in power, represent to yourself that you will not find him at home; that you will not be admitted; that the doors will not be opened to you; that he will take no notice of you. If, with all this, it be your duty to go, bear what happens, and never say [to yourself], "It was not worth so much." For this is vulgar, and like a man disconcerted by externals.

In parties of conversation, avoid a frequent and excessive mention of your own actions and dangers. For, however agreeable it may be to yourself to mention the risks you have run, it is not equally agreeable to others to hear your adventures. Avoid, likewise, an endeavour to excite laughter. For this is a slippery point, which may throw you into vulgar manners, and, besides, may be apt to lessen you in the esteem of your acquaintance. Approaches to indecent discourse are likewise dangerous. Whenever, therefore, anything of this sort happens, if there be a proper opportunity, rebuke him who makes advances that way; or, at least, by silence and blushing and a forbidding look, show yourself to be displeased by such talk.

XXXIV

If you are struck by the appearance of any promised pleasure, guard yourself against being hurried away by it; but let the affair wait your leisure, and procure yourself some delay. Then bring to your mind both points of time: that in which you shall enjoy the pleasure, and that in which you will repent and reproach yourself after you have enjoyed it; and set before you, in opposition to these, how you will rejoice and applaud your self if you abstain. And even though it should appear to you a seasonable gratification, take heed that its enticing, and agreeable and attractive force may not subdue you; but set in opposition to this how much better it is to be conscious of having gained so great a victory.

XXXV

When you do anything from a clear judgment that it ought to be done, never shun the being seen to do it, even though the world should make a wrong supposition about it; for, if you do not act right, shun the action itself; but, if you do, why are you afraid of those who censure you wrongly?

XXXVI

As the proposition. Either it is day or it is night, is extremely proper for a disjunctive argument, but quite improper in a conjunctive one, so, at a feast, to choose the largest share is very suitable to the bodily appetite, but utterly inconsistent with the social spirit of an entertainment. When you eat with another, then, remember not only the value of those things which are set before you to the body, but the value of that behaviour which ought to be observed towards the person who gives the entertainment.

XXXVII

If you have assumed any character above your strength, you have both made an ill figure in that and quitted one which you might have supported.

XXXVIII

As, in walking, you take care not to tread upon a nail or turn your foot, so likewise take care not to hurt the ruling faculty of your mind. And, if we were to guard against this in every action, we should undertake the action with the greater safety.

XXXIX

The body is to every one the measure of the possessions proper for it, as the foot is of the shoe. If, therefore, you stop at this, you will keep the measure ; but if you move beyond it, you must necessarily be carried forward, as down a precipice; as in the case of a shoe, if you go beyond its fitness to the foot, it conies first to be gilded, then purple, and then studded with jewels. For to that which once exceeds a due measure, there is no bound.

XL

Women from fourteen years old are flattered with the title of " mistresses " by the men. Therefore, perceiving that they are regarded only as qualified to give the men pleasure, they begin to adorn themselves, and in that to place all their hopes. It is worth while, therefore, to fix our attention on making them sensible that they are esteemed for nothing else but the appearance of a decent and modest and discreet behaviour.

XLI

It is a mark of want of genius to spend much time in things relating to the body, as to be long in our exercises, in eating and drinking, and in the discharge of other animal functions. These should be done incidentally and slightly, and our whole attention be engaged in the care of the understanding. XLIV

When any person doth ill by you, or speaks ill of you, remember that he acts or speaks from a supposition of its being his duty. Now, it is not possible that he should follow what appears right to you, but what appears so to himself. Therefore, if he judges from a wrong appearance, he is the person hurt, since he too is the person deceived. For if any one should suppose a true proposition to be false, the proposition is not hurt, but he who is deceived about it. Setting out, then, from these principles, you will meekly bear a person who reviles you, for you will say upon every occasion, " It seemed so to him.

XLIII

Everything hath two handles, the one by which it may be borne, the other by which it cannot. If your brother acts unjustly, do not lay hold on the action by the handle of his injustice, for by that it cannot be borne; but by the opposite, that he is your brother, that he was brought up with you; and thus you will lay hold on it, as it is to be borne.

XLIV

These reasonings are unconnected: " I am richer than you, therefore I am better"; "I am more eloquent than you, therefore I am better." The connection is rather this: " I am richer than you, therefore my 'property is greater than yours ", "I am more eloquent than you, therefore my style is better than yours." But you, after all, are neither property nor style.

XLV

Doth any one bathe in a mighty little time? Do not say that he doth it ill, but in a mighty little time. Doth any one drink a great quantity of wine? Do not say that he doth ill, but that he drinks a great quantity. For, unless you perfectly understand the principle [from which any one acts], how should you know if he acts ill? Thus you will not run the hazard of assenting to any appearances but such as you fully comprehend.

XLVI

Never call yourself a philosopher, nor talk a great deal among the unlearned about theorems, but act conformably to them. Thus, at an entertainment, do not talk how persons ought to eat, but eat as you ought. For remember that in this manner Socrates also universally avoided all ostentation. And when persons came to him and desired to be recommended by him to philosophers, he took and recommended them, so well did he bear being overlooked. So that if ever any talk should happen among the unlearned concerning philosophic theorems, be you, for the most part, silent. For there is great danger in immediately throwing out what you have not digested. And, if any one tells you that you know nothing, and you are not nettled at it, then you may be sure that you have begun your business. For sheep do not throw up the grass to show the shepherds how much they have eaten; but, inwardly digesting their food, they outwardly produce wool and milk. Thus, therefore, do you likewise not show theorems to the unlearned, but the actions produced by them after they have been digested.

XLVII

When you have brought yourself to supply the necessities of your body at a small price, do not pique yourself upon it; nor, if you drink water, be saying upon every occasion, " I drink water." But first consider how much more sparing and patient of hardship the poor are than we. But if at any time you would inure yourself by exercise to labour, and bearing hard trials, do it for your own sake, and not for the world ; do not grasp statues, but, when you are violently thirsty, take a little cold water in your mouth, and spurt it out and tell nobody.

XLVIII

The condition and characteristic of a vulgar person, is, that he never expects either benefit or hurt from himself, but from externals. The condition and characteristic of a philosopher is, that he expects all hurt and benefit from himself. The marks of a proficient are, that he censures no one, praises no one, blames no one, accuses no one, says nothing concerning himself as being anybody, or knowing anything: when he is, in any instance, hindered or restrained, he accuses himself; and, if he is praised, he secretly laughs at the person who praises him; and, if he is censured, he makes no defence. But he goes about with the caution of infirm people [after sickness or an accident], dreading to move anything that is set right, before it is perfectly fixed. He suppresses all desire in him self; he transfers his aversion to those things only which thwart the proper use of our own faculty of choice ; the exertion of his active powers towards anything is very gentle; if he appears stupid or ignorant, he doth not care, and, in a word, he watches himself as an enemy, and one in ambush.

XXIX

When any one shows himself vain on being able to understand and interpret the works of Chrysippus, say to yourself, " Unless Chrysippus had written obscurely, this person would have had no subject for his vanity. But what do I desire? To understand nature and follow her, I ask, then, who interprets her, and, finding Chrysippus doth, I have recourse to him. I do not understand his writings. I seek, therefore, one to interpret them.'

So far there is nothing to value myself upon. And when I find an interpreter, what remains is to make use of his instructions. This alone is the valuable thing. But, if I admire nothing but merely the interpretation, what do I become more than a grammarian instead of a philosopher? Except, indeed, that instead of Homer I interpret Chrysippus. When any one, therefore, desires me to read Chrysippus to him, I rather blush when I cannot show my actions agreeable and consonant to his discourse.

L

Whatever rules you have deliberately proposed to yourself [for the conduct of life], abide by them as so many laws, and as if you would be guilty of impiety in transgressing any of them; and do not regard what anyone says of you, for this, after all, is no concern of yours. How long, then, will you defer to think yourself worthy of the noblest improvements, and in no instance to transgress the distinctions of reason? You have received the philosophic theorems, with which you ought to be conversant, and you have been conversant with them. What other master, then, do you wait for, to throw upon that the delay of reforming yourself? You are no longer a boy, but a grown man. If, therefore, you will be negligent and slothful, and always add procrastination to procrastination, purpose to purpose, and fix day after day in which you will attend to yourself, you will insensibly continue without proficiency, and, living and dying, persevere in being one of the vulgar. This instant, then, think yourself worthy of living as a man grown up, and a proficient. Let whatever appears to be the best be to you an inviolable law. And if any instance of pain or pleasure, or glory or disgrace, be set before you, remember that now is the combat, now the Olympiad comes on, nor can it be put off; and that, by once being worsted and giving way, proficiency is lost, or [by the contrary] preserved. Thus Socrates became perfect, improving himself by everything, attending to nothing but reason. And though you are not yet a Socrates, you ought, however, to live as one desirous of becoming a Socrates.

LI

The first and most necessary topic in philosophy is that of the use of [practical] theorems, as that, We ought not to lie; the second is that of demonstrations, as, Whence it is that we ought not to lie; the third, that which gives strength and articulation to the other two, as, Whence this is a demonstration. For what is demonstration? What is consequence? What contradiction? What truth? What falsehood? The third topic, then, is necessary on the account of the second, and the second on the account of the first. But the most necessary, and that whereon we ought to rest, is the first. But we act just on the contrary. For we spend all our time on the third topic, and employ all our diligence about that, and entirely neglect the first. Therefore, at the same time that we lie, we are mighty ready to show how it is demonstrated that lying is not right.

LII

Upon all occasions we ought to have these maxims ready at hand:

" Conduct me, Jove, and thou, O Destiny, Wherever your decrees have fixed my station. I follow cheerfully; and, did I not, Wicked and wretched, I must follow still."

" Whoe'er yields properly to Fate, is deemed Wise among men, and knows the laws of heaven."

And this third:

" Crito, if it thus pleases the gods, thus let it be. Anytus and Melitus may kill me indeed, but hurt me they cannot."

THE END OF THE ENCHIRIDION

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